



Week of **July 14, 2009**

Think Before You Decide, "I Want Out"

LawBiz® Forum is now live! Lawyers are invited to join this online destination at no cost and participate with their questions and support for other lawyers. We are creating a community, unique in the legal world. But as more lawyers opt into this focused community, it seems apparent that many in our profession are looking to opt out. The crisis situation of the past year has led many lawyers to wonder whether the grass would be greener elsewhere, either by retiring or otherwise exiting from the practice of law altogether, or by leaving their current firms and starting a practice of their own. Especially when driven by emotion, the decision to make such a change should not be taken lightly.

Lawyers, like all successful people, work long hours and are focused and passionate about what they do. If they suspect the grass may be greener elsewhere, it is not that they want to pursue a life of leisure - it reflects a desire to reignite their passion. Lawyers contemplating a change in their lives should ask themselves why they went to law school, why they became a lawyer. Do they still love the law and enjoy helping people? Is a career as a lawyer the best way to achieve their goals? A number of LawBiz® Forum participants have discussed wanting greater peace of mind or greater control of their practice. They're not getting it now, their colleagues can't help them and their families don't know how. The Forum plays a useful role for these lawyers

The dynamics of legal practice are such that when lawyers (who have been trained that they should know solutions or be able to find the right answers) feel their lack of control and passion means they have not achieved success, leaving for greener pastures may seem the only option. If you feel that way, ask yourself several questions:

- Why do you want to leave your practice?

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Clients include attorneys, managing partners, executive directors and financial directors at small, mid-size, and large law firms. We have seen many of our clients increase their revenue by five or six figures-that's \$50,000 to \$400,000 based on reports thus far.

Many of my clients have experienced:

- Increased revenue with long-term

- What do you want to do with your life once you leave practice?
- Do you want to quit working and retire, or start a new adventure?
- Can you achieve the same objective without leaving the practice of law?

Leaving your current practice by any route is an emotional process. You must want to do so, and believe you have no other alternative. Basically, you must answer the question, "What do I want to be/do when I grow up?" Each person's answer is unique, and can change over time. Making a decision does not have to mean that you've burned bridges to your past life, or that you have erected a wall against future change. Remember the words of Confucius: "Pursue a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life."

strategies for sustainability

- Attainment of partnership level
- Enhanced performance resulting from focused energy and reduced stress
- Feelings of increased control over professional life
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Personal Commentary

Our maiden voyage has begun! Over the weekend, I picked up our Airstream vintage trailer. It's been under construction for 1 ½ years. As in building a house, it took twice as long to complete and cost twice as much as anticipated.

Disappointed client expectations. In reviewing our experience with the builder, I was reminded of my advice to the lawyers whom I coach. Manage your client's expectations! Most lawyers get into trouble because they "puff" the client's expectations beyond what is realistic in the unfounded fear that the client will go elsewhere if you don't. Normally, that's just not the case. Telling the client what to realistically expect from you and the judicial process will serve you far better, and create a loyal client for the long term. And, a client whose expectations are met is generally one who pays their

What Readers Are Saying...

"I look at Ed as my business partner now—my once-a-week essential business meeting to take the pulse of my practice. During our one-hour phone conversations, we hash out the larger and smaller business challenges of my law firm. I always come away from those conversations enlarged, challenged, and sometimes even quite shaken, but with the tools necessary to move forward down the path he and I are constantly

bill!

Join us at www.lawbizforum.com to discuss best practices of operating and growing your law practice!

Best wishes,

Ed Poll

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