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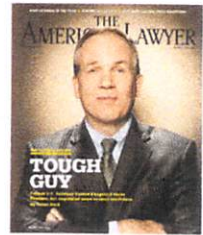
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STAR MAKERS

Amy Kolz's revealing article on the disappointing results of lateral hiring ["Building a Better Lateral," February] notes that an Am Law 50 firm found that lateral hiring had been only a breakeven proposition from 2007-09: Revenues generated by its laterals just covered the compensation paid to them. While those results are discouraging, they understate the problem. Firms do not just lay out compensation to laterals. They pour tremendous resources into recruiting them—as much as [the lateral's] annual compensation, according to the estimate you cite, and up to 50 percent of the valuable time of law firm leaders, according to *The American Lawyer's* Law Firm Leaders Survey.

The head of the Am Law 50 firm said: "We keep searching for [ways to improve], and if we knew what they were, we would do them." The firm chief need not search far. Valuable aids to lateral success sit right down the hallway: the marketing and business development departments.

New laterals continue to underperform as a group despite increasingly elaborate integration plans. Sometimes overlooked in those plans are large firms' significant marketing resources, which when thoughtfully directed toward the support of new laterals can pay very handsome dividends.

Thought leadership and public relations campaigns focused on new laterals and executed throughout their first year at the firm serve a number of the firm's

goals well. First, they often achieve the primary purpose of gaining new business for the lateral. Perhaps more importantly, the attention and care of the firm's marketers typically makes new laterals feel that elusive sense of "support," the lack of which many cite as the reason for leaving their prior firms in the first place. And while partners seemingly lack a direct monetary incentive to follow through on a lateral's integration plans—explaining why many end up in the proverbial drawer—marketers are highly invested: The success of a campaign, as measured by the new lateral's revenue growth, provides an objective demonstration of value to firm leadership.

Campaign plans can be used even earlier in the lateral process, as a valuable part of a firm's recruiting pitch. After all, everyone hears that they are going to be made into a star, but firms that demonstrate how they'll make it happen, and who are able to provide examples of success, will set themselves apart.

JOHN HELLERMAN
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CORRECTIONS

In our Lateral Report [February], George Terwilliger III was described as leading a group of four partners from White & Case to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius last year. The group included three attorneys who were partners at White & Case and one counsel. We regret the error.

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