



## DELIVERING STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS ACCA'S 2000 ANNUAL MEETING

American Corporate Counsel Association

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Career Development

Marketing for the Mature Job Seeker

by

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### I. Considerations in Changing Employment After Age 40

A. What is the goal in changing employment

1. Career advancement — bypassing an existing entrenched department management structure

1. Replacing existing position because of job loss
2. Revitalization — change in location/industry/specialty because of boredom or burnout
3. Lifestyle improvement
4. Another legal position or explore non-legal employment alternatives

A. In-house versus private practice

B. Permanent versus contract/temporary employment

C. Should you use a placement agency or an outplacement assistance firm

D. What other resources are available to assist in making the change

E. What special issues make this process different from finding a position after 5-7 years of practicing law

### II. Alternative Career Options

A. In today's market, moving from in-house to private practice may be a viable option

1. Must evaluate whether the issues which caused you to leave private practice in the first place can be addressed — billing, time requirements, client development obligations
2. May provide a bridge from one in-house position to another

A. Non-legal employment options

1. Moving to a business position at your current employer may open career progression opportunities foreclosed in the law department
2. Particular skill sets (e.g., environmental law, employment law) may be readily transferable to the business position
3. Many other skills developed in legal practice are equally applicable to business management positions
4. Hobbies or alternate interests may also provide potential fields for exploration

A. Temporary/Contract Employment

1. May provide an entrée into a corporate legal department or law firm which is not prepared to hire on a permanent basis — many major corporate legal departments use contract hiring as a "try before you buy" way of evaluating prospective employees
2. Offers flexibility not available in permanent positions
3. Many contract employment firms offer at least a basic benefits package
4. Stigma once attached to contract attorneys is largely gone

### III. Placement Agencies and Outplacement Assistance Firms

A. Consider professional assistance in the form of outplacement firms

1. Need to carefully evaluate what skills and services the firms will provide
2. May be able to package and market you in a more professional fashion than you can yourself — resume structuring and presentation,

2. May be able to package and market you in a more professional fashion than you can yourself — resume structuring and presentation, interviewing skills training, contacts
3. Potential disadvantages — costs (not an issue if part of a severance package), need to evaluate what the firm offers for its fee, which can be difficult

#### A. Placement Agencies

1. May hold key to access to particularly attractive opportunities through exclusive agency agreements
  2. If you are placed by a particular agency, keep up the contacts, as familiarity and a successful previous placement may make you a more attractive candidate for the next time. Recognize that most employer paid agencies are precluded from raiding a client for some period of time by contract
1. Not something to rely on as the primary source of employment opportunities
  2. Tend to focus on positions with 3-10 years of experience
  3. Can be maddeningly uncommunicative or non-responsive

### III. Other Resources to Consider in the Marketing Effort

#### A. Technology has greatly expanded the resources available for seeking employment

1. The internet hosts a large number of employment related web sites. (See the attached list for a representative sample of such sites.) Many employers also use their own web sites to advertise openings. ACCA members may also find employment opportunities listed on the Inhouse Jobline on ACCA's web site ([www.acca.com](http://www.acca.com)).
2. Extensive amounts of information about prospective employers may also be accessed via the internet. Public company data such as '33 and '34 Act reports are available on the Securities and Exchange Commission's web site ([www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)). Both public and non-public companies have entered the information age and surprising amounts of information on those companies may be available on their own web sites. NEXIS searches may provide significant amounts of information about prospective employers.

#### A. Don't forget the obvious

1. Networking is still very important.
2. Employers still use less technologically sophisticated tools to find help. Traditional newspaper help wanted advertising, particularly in major metropolitan areas, continues to be a means of hiring for many less sophisticated employers
3. Business and professional weeklies are a major factor in legal employment advertising. Many of these advertisements may be accessed via the internet.

### V. Special Issues for Mature Job Seekers

#### A. Age creates issues which you must be prepared to address

1. Younger managers may view employees older than they are as inflexible, incapable of adapting to change or a threat to their management position
2. Some industries which present very exciting employment opportunities (i.e., the .coms) have employee bases which have an average age nearer to that of your children. This can present some interesting culture clash issues.

#### A. Family situation may limit geographic or economic flexibility.

1. Relocation can be disruptive in family situations, which can negatively impact job performance or satisfaction
2. College age children may make resolving compensation issues difficult, particularly in industries where a substantial portion of the compensation package may be in the form of options or restricted stock.

#### Alternative Career Reference Materials\*

American Bar Association, *Breaking Traditions: Work Alternatives for Lawyers*, ABA, Chicago, IL (1993)

Aaron, Deborah, *What You Can Do with a Law Degree*, Niche Press, Seattle, WA (1997)

Federal Reports, *Landing a Non-Traditional Legal Job, Part I: Suggestions for Changing Careers and Part II: 600+ Things You Can Do with a Law Degree (Other Than Practice Law)*, Federal Reports (1995)

Mantis, Hillary J., *Alternative Careers For Lawyers*, Princeton Review Publishing (1997)

\* This list of materials was originally developed for a presentation of the Lawyers in Transition Committee of the New Jersey Corporate Counsel Association by Phyllis Lieberman, JD, MA.

#### Selected Employment Related Internet Web Sites

Site Name Internet Address

Site Name Internet Address

About Work [www.aboutwork.com](http://www.aboutwork.com)

America's Employers [www.americasemployers.com](http://www.americasemployers.com)

Best Jobs [www.bestjobsusa.com](http://www.bestjobsusa.com)

Career Mart [www.careermart.com](http://www.careermart.com)

Career Path [www.careerpath.com](http://www.careerpath.com)

Careers — Wall Street Journal [www.careers.wsj.com](http://www.careers.wsj.com)

Classifieds2000 [www.classifieds2000.com](http://www.classifieds2000.com)

Find a Job with CareerSite [www.webreference.com/jobs/](http://www.webreference.com/jobs/)

Job Center [www.jobcenter.com](http://www.jobcenter.com)

Job Direct [www.jobdirect.com](http://www.jobdirect.com)

Job Locator [www.joblocator.com](http://www.joblocator.com)

JobTrak [www.jobtrak.com](http://www.jobtrak.com)

100 Hot Job Sites [www.100hot.com/jobs/](http://www.100hot.com/jobs/)

Recruiters Online [www.recruitersonline.com](http://www.recruitersonline.com)

Temp Jobs [www.net-temps.com](http://www.net-temps.com)

US Legal Jobs [www.uslegaljobs.com](http://www.uslegaljobs.com)

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