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Why Should I Become an Associate at a Large Law Firm? And if I Do, Then What Should I Expect and How Do I Succeed?

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Despite horrific accounts about working in ?Big Law? from former partners and associates, every year top law students from all over the country accept junior associate positions at large law firms. This article discusses whether someone considering working for a large law firm should do so and what they should expect when they work at a large law firm.

This article provides a first-hand look at the advantages of working at a large law firm, what to expect, how to succeed, and how to make partner. This article also provides practical, tangible advice for junior attorneys starting out at large law firms about how to approach work assignments, work-life balance, billable requirements, how to bill, pro bono, and how to deal with clients, colleagues, and opposing counsel. Much of the advice in the article, which I have given throughout the years to many law students and junior associates, also applies to any junior attorney starting his/her practice at any organization, including a small firm, medium-sized firm, a corporation (as in-house counsel), or a governmental entity (such as the state attorney's office). The advice is also useful to summer associates and law students who intern or extern.

This article concludes that working at a large law firm is not right for everybody, but it is right for some people. It can be a tremendous building block in your career, and you can be happy after making the decision to work at a large law firm. Succeeding at a large law firm takes a tremendous amount of commitment, perseverance, and hard work.

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