



The Successful Legal Assistant

“Career Marketing II: Interviewing and Negotiating”

Moderated and Presented by
Linda S. Jevahirian, Legal Search & Management, Inc.



Tuesday, October 28, 2003
11:45 – 1:15 p.m.

Smart Detroit Conference Center
13th floor of the Penobscot Building
645 Griswold, Detroit

Lunch Included
\$10.00 Students and DMBA Members
\$15.00 Non-Members

*For information on joining the DMBA
please contact the number listed below.*

Legal Assistant Section Luncheon Registration

NAME(S): _____

FIRM: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

- Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ for _____ reservations.
- Please charge my MasterCard/Visa account \$ _____ for _____ reservations.

MasterCard/Visa Number: _____ Expiration

Date: _____ Signature: _____

All reservations are final – No refunds. Substitutions allowed.

REGISTER BY FRIDAY October 24, 2003:

MAIL: Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association
Attn: Janet Burek
645 Griswold, Suite 1356
Detroit, MI 48226

Fax: 313-965-0842
Phone: 313-961-6120, ext. 200

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“Career Marketing II: Interviewing and Negotiating”

‘The Successful Legal Assistant,’ series continues to flourish as a monthly destination for Detroit paralegals. Just over a year ago, the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association (DMBA) invited paralegals to join their membership. The networking and educational presentations have been a constructive move to strengthen recognition of legal assistants in Detroit.

“The meetings have been attended regularly and the speakers have done an excellent job of addressing issues that paralegals face every day. It couldn’t be a friendlier and more enthusiastic crowd,” states Linda S. Jevahirian, President and Founder of Legal Search & Management, Inc. Jevahirian was appointed Committee Chairperson from the outset and took the helm voluntarily.

On October 28, 2003, Jevahirian will present the second of a two part series on Career Marketing, which will include tips on interviewing and negotiating. “Interviewing is the hardest part of the Career Marketing process. It really is not much different than an audition. You have to know your lines, and you get one chance and that’s all you get. From the first impression to the walk out the door you must be on your toes and thinking at all times.”

Jevahirian has developed an inventory of questions that force candidates to look at all the dimensions of their career. Designed to prompt a very detailed analysis of a person’s past, present and plans for the future, candidates take a long, serious look at exactly what it is that they are trying to accomplish.

“I encourage all my applicants to sit down with a friend and verbalize the answers. Thinking about the answers is not the same as being able to articulate them in terms that demonstrate problem-solving skills. I can’t emphasize more how much they should take advantage of fact that this is something they can rehearse for,” states Jevahirian.

Although it doesn’t happen very often there are a number of candidates who, after exploring the questions, discover that they are not ready to make a career change. It is not easy to change jobs and a grass might be greener attitude is not necessarily what employers are looking for. The questions are a good exercise in making that determination.

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The session will also look at fine-tuning body language, poise and appropriate and non-appropriate behavior. Included will be some practical advice on paying attention to details even during casual moments. For instance, what is the first thing you do when you walk into someone's office? What are you suppose to talk about when you are waiting for that third person to arrive? If not thought out beforehand these details can be nerve wracking enough to cause even the most qualified candidate to jeopardize an opportunity.

"All in all, the best advice I can give anyone is to be prepared for anything and that means thinking about all the possibilities before going to the interview. You would think that parking wouldn't be a big deal but it is if you give yourself just enough time only to find out there is a convention at Cobo Hall that day," states Jevahirian. There is no tolerance for tardiness, which can be a big 'if' in a profession that demands attention to timeliness.

Negotiating is another tricky part of this process. Most paralegals never learn to negotiate because in most cases they are not doing this on the job. "When I ask them the simple question, 'What kind of money are you looking for?' they respond with, 'Isn't that something you are going to take care of for me?' It is a very real fear to be pressed with this question. Because it is one of the most emotional questions you will respond too, it is easy to shoot from the hip only to realize later that you undersold yourself, and that you answered the question without having the appropriate information," cautions Jevahirian.

Jevahirian has been teaching people how to handle interviewing and negotiating since the inception of her recruiting business in 1989. "I can't promise the highest salary, but I know about maximizing self-worth. In most cases firms are feeling out the applicants just as much as the applicants are feeling them out. The employers don't really know what they want to pay someone until they get a feel for their skills.

The bottom line is still the bottom line. If you are profitable from the get go you are going to be in a much different compensation range than someone who requires a lot of up-front training. Being able to communicate this is what this session is all about."

The DMBA meetings are conveniently scheduled, and offer just enough time to share a meal, to get to know a few people, and to swap ideas about what it takes to succeed as a legal assistant. Participants broaden their resources, and gain useful information about topics that affect their jobs and their daily lives. At the September meeting the new Executive Director, Lorraine Weber will include a short introduction to DMBA membership and be available to answer questions.

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The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 28, 2003 on the 13th floor of the Penobscot Building at the Smart Detroit Conference Center. The meeting runs from 11:45 am to 1:15 pm. Reservations are being taken by the DMBA. Contact Janet Burek at (313) 961-6120 ext. 200. Feel free to contact Linda at Legal Search & Management at (248) 471-3443 or lindajev@aol.com for further information. Legal assistants of all levels are encouraged to attend and to bring a friend.

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