

Eight Tips to Keep Your Law Career on Track: Guidance for UB School of Law Students

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By Marc Davies

1. **Self-assess and cover the basics.** Food, housing, physical and mental health, financial, dependent care, and other needs: if you are experiencing current issues with basic needs and they are interfering with or posing an obstacle to your well-being or your academic progress, reach out for assistance. Contact [Bernadette Gargano, Vice Dean for Student Affairs](#), and notify your career advisor. UB counseling services information can be found [here](#).
2. **Assess connectivity and sustain continuity of learning.** If you are unable to access classes or class resources remotely, notify your professor and develop a plan. [Tools for accessing class and UB learning resources, email, Zoom, WebEx, etc.](#) Look for work-arounds and contact Law IT if necessary.
3. **Establish and/or maintain communication with current or anticipated employer.** If you are currently working, or if you are inbound for a summer position or a post grad position, touch base with your supervisor, the recruiting attorney, human resources contact, or other contact with whom you have a relationship. Realize that each situation is unique for each employer or placement setting and virtually all entities are experiencing disruption and learning to adapt to remote/alternative work arrangements. Within NYS at least, the ability to forecast timelines and plans is extremely limited over the next few weeks as all entities adapt and focus on health, safety and continuity of business. Be professional at all times, patient, persistent, and empathetic. Maintaining and strengthening relationships is absolutely key. Loop in your career advisor with updates and meet remotely to revise your strategies accordingly.
4. **If your search is in progress, continue to apply when you have the time.** Review the postings in [LOCK](#) and set up saved searches based on your geographic preferences and graduation year. New postings can be funneled right into your email inbox. Utilize your network as well as third party resources, including [Indeed.com](#) and [LinkedIn](#) (LI) for searching in your target markets.
5. **Polish your materials.** Update and hone your resume and upload to LOCK for review/storage. Save an updated transcript and writing sample. Offer to review and copyedit cover letters and resumes of your classmates.
6. **Hone your virtual presence.** Utilize Zoom and other conferencing software for real-time, remote communication. Meet remotely with friends and classmates, check in with your mentor, meet with your career advisor, and your academic advisor. Practice interview peers and become comfortable interfacing professionally via video conference. Use the recording feature on Zoom and respond to anticipated interview questions. Firms, agencies, courts, and businesses are all serving their constituents via alternate means. The better you appear and present online the more confidence others will place in you and your ability to get the job done. Your next project, interview, client meeting, or court appearance may very well be done virtually. Polish and update your LI profile.
7. **Deepen your practice competencies.** Track developments in areas of law in which you are interested, summarize changes, and publish your summaries online (via LI, blog, etc.). If you are on LI, follow firms and attorneys you admire and watch what they are doing to keep clients and constituents up to date on changes in the law and what they mean. This could be the future you. Get advanced certifications in legal skills such as research, e.g., in Westlaw and LexisNexis.
8. **Look for ways to add value and serve.** These are unprecedented times, with the unprecedented capacity to collaborate, share knowledge and resources, and effect real change for the betterment of society. Embrace it and adapt. Evaluate your ability to contribute and serve. Your time may be now, it may be in a few weeks, it may be after several months. I would anticipate an incredible need for attorneys in all facets of life, commerce, governance, and administration of justice. Take care of yourself and stay on track to admission so you're ready when called upon.