

Individual Professional Development Plan

Your Individual Professional Development Plan is your roadmap to integrating your coursework, law school experiences, summer employment and ultimate job search into a unique plan for the beginning of your legal career.

Each fall, the Career Development Office sponsors its Professional Development Series which provides a broad overview of legal practice as a means of helping you use this tool to chart your future. Come and learn about how and where you might proceed and use that knowledge to complete this tool!

Name:

Email:

Your Individual Professional Development Plan

This Individual Professional Development Plan seeks to assist students at Notre Dame Law School in planning the initial stages of their legal career beginning from their earliest experiences at NDLS and into the early years in the workplace. This “IPDP” will form the cornerstone of your initial interactions with the Career Development Office that will take place during the fall of your 1L year.

It is important to note that your participation and disclosure of information here is completely voluntary. At the same time, we at the CDO have come to understand the importance of thoughtful planning in pursuing an effective job search. For many of you, developing this IPDP so early in your law school career will seem daunting, but remember that this is simply your initial plan. Your interests and preferences are likely to change as you engage in your coursework and internships, and your IPDP is meant to evolve along with them.

The IPDP consists of four parts:

- 1. Self-Assessment.** First, you will need to do a self-assessment, exploring your strengths and weaknesses, values, goals, beliefs, and life preferences. You will later need to evaluate how you will incorporate these into your future career.
- 2. Initial Employment Preferences.** Second, you will explore your employment preferences by considering career options, practice settings, geographic locations, workplace environments, and compensation benefits.
- 3. Mentorship and Networking Plan.** This section outlines the mentorship opportunities available at NDLS and introduces the importance of mentorship and networking to your professional life. Completing this section will be an ongoing exercise throughout your law school career.
- 4. Career Path Plan.** In this section, you will develop an initial plan for your career path. You will complete it during your initial one-on-one meeting with a CDO counselor and continue to update and revise it throughout your law school career.

Section 1: Self-Assessment

1. Baseline Professional Development Assessment

1.1. Motivation to Attend Law School. As discussed during Welcome Week, experience teaches that there are four basic motivations to attend law school. Please indicate the degree to which these motivations impacted you. There are no correct answers here...only honest ones:

- ***“This was the best option that I had or could create upon completing my undergraduate education.”***

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Motivation -----> Some Motivation -----> Strong Motivation

- ***“I believe that work as a lawyer will help me to create and live a financial lifestyle that I would enjoy.”***

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Motivation -----> Some Motivation -----> Strong Motivation

- ***“I have an understanding of how a lawyer functions as a professional (perhaps in contrast to other types of jobs) and seek that level of responsibility and activity in my work life.”***

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Motivation -----> Some Motivation -----> Strong Motivation

- ***“I want to make changes in society and believe that legal skills will be a valuable tool in these efforts.”***

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Motivation -----> Some Motivation -----> Strong Motivation

1.2. *Baseline in Key Early Workplace Skill Areas*

The ABA Legal Career Center has identified six skills that create a foundation of success in the initial phases of your legal career <http://www.abalcc.org/2015/11/30/law-students-need-professional-development-too/>

In this section of the IPDP, you will be asked to assess your baseline level of skills in each of these areas. With respect, then, to the skills listed below select the appropriate description as follows for each:

1 = I Don't Have a Lot of Experience Yet

2 = I Have Some, But Not a Lot of Experience Yet

3 = My Experience Before Law School Allowed Me to Develop This Skill

1 2 3 **Listening Effectively:** Gathering the information needed to undertake legal analysis is an acquired skill.

- Are you familiar with the process of active listening? See video here: <https://bit.ly/1J2hEMl>
- What professional or personal experiences have you had in which active listening played an important part?
- How have you had to listen actively in other areas of your life?

1 2 3 **Expressing Cogent Conclusions:**

- Have you had the opportunity to present ideas, research, project summaries or the like in the past?
- How would others describe your skills in this area?

1 2 3 **Managing Projects Efficiently:** Lawyers typically work for many clients at the same time. Managing competing, equivalent priorities forms a key skill in the success of lawyers.

- Have you had to manage multiple projects in the past?
- Have you worked for multiple supervisors simultaneously?

1 2 3 **Conveying Complex Information Clearly:**

- What experience have you had explaining complex information to those with no prior understanding or knowledge of the subject?

1 2 3 **Understanding Financial Documents:** Many practices areas require at least some basic understanding of financial documents and terminology

- What is your comfort level with financial terminology and concepts?
- What experience do you have working with financial documents?

1 2 3 **Posing Practical Solutions**

- Have you had the opportunity to develop workable solutions to difficult problems involving divergent interests?
- If so, did you successfully implement those solutions?

1.3 Professional Values and Life Preferences

One of the most important aspects of professional development resides in understanding what you value in your profession. Review the following list of values as a starting point in determining what will be important to you in your professional life.

Description of Potential Professional Values

1. **Achievement:** Your professional work accomplishes demonstrable outcomes.
2. **Location:** Your career choices allow you to choose where you live.
3. **Service:** Your work focuses on benefits to other individuals or society as a whole.
4. **Loyalty:** Your profession and life involve a series of deep and ongoing relationships.
5. **Balance:** Your work facilitates maintaining a health “work/life” balance.
6. **Leadership:** Your work allows you to function in roles in which you lead others.
7. **Personal Development:** Your work allows you to grow continuously and avoid routines.
8. **Security:** Your work follows an established, known pattern with predictable personal outcomes.
9. **Competition:** Your work takes place in a competitive environment.
10. **Community:** Your work and life place you in an important role within your community.
11. **Wealth:** You receive high compensation for your work and accumulate wealth.
12. **Expertise:** Your work allows you to develop as an expert in your field.
13. **Contentment:** Your work environment is more tranquil and/or little pressure.
14. **Recognition:** Your work brings personal recognition from peers and others.
15. **Prestige:** Your work places you among ‘elite’ members of society.
16. **Power:** Your work places you in a position to influence significant events and outcomes.
17. **Independence:** Your work allows you large control of financial outcomes and your time.
18. **Integrity:** Your work environment places great weight on your personal values.
19. **Challenge:** Your work presents continuing intellectual challenges and growth
20. **Creativity:** Your work allows you to try new things, use your ideas and follow new paths.

Having completed this evaluation as an initial step, now rank the items on the list using the Values Prioritizer Tool on the next page. How to use the Prioritizer?

Step 1. Compare the first entry in Row 1 to the entry in Column 2. (Column 1 should contain the same name as Row 1!). If the Value in Row 1 is more important to you than the Value in Column 2, mark an “X” in the box in where Row 1, Column 2 intersect.

Step 2. Repeat the process across the page for each item in Row 1...and then for each successive Row.

Step 3. When completed, total the number of “X’s” for each Row.

Step 4. Rank each Row in rank order by number of “X’s.” You have now ranked your Values!

Professional Values Prioritizer Worksheet

Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. Total the "X's" for the row. When done, move down to next row and repeat.	1. Achievement	2. Location	3. Service	4. Loyalty	5. Balance	6. Leadership	7. Personal Devel.	8. Security	9. Competition	10. Community	11. Wealth	12. Expertise	13. Contentment	14. Recognition	15. Prestige	16. Power	17. Independence	18. Integrity	19. Challenge	20. Creativity	Total X's This Row	Rank Order of This Row (by number of X's)
1. Achievement																						
2. Location																						
3. Service																						
4. Loyalty																						
5. Balance																						
6. Leadership																						
7. Personal Devel.																						
8. Security																						
9. Competition																						
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19. Challenge																						
20. Creativity																						

Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. When you reach the far right side, move down to next row and repeat.

Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. When you reach the far right side, move down to next row and repeat.		1. Friendship	2. Location	3. Enjoyment	4. Loyalty	5. Family	6. Leadership	7. Personal Devel.	8. Security	9. Wisdom	10. Community	11. Wealth	12. Expertise	13. Service	14. Pers. Accompl.	15. Prestige	16. Power	17. Independence	18. Integrity	19. Health	20. Creativity	Total X's This Row	Rank Order of This Row (by number of X's)
1. Friendship	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	20	1
2. Location	2	X	X																			2	2
3. Enjoyment	3	X	X	X																		3	3
4. Loyalty				X																		1	4
5. Family					X																	1	5
6. Leadership						X																1	6
7. Personal Devel.							X															1	7
8. Security								X														1	8
9. Wisdom									X													1	9
10. Community										X												1	10
11. Wealth											X											1	11
12. Expertise												X										1	12
13. Service													X									1	13
14. Pers. Accompl.														X								1	14
15. Prestige															X							1	15
16. Power																X						1	16
17. Independence																	X					1	17
18. Integrity																		X				1	18
19. Health																			X			1	19
20. Creativity																				X		1	20

Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. When you reach the far right side, move down to next row and repeat.

Work Across the Row, Then Do the Next Row
Ex. In Row 1, If "Friendship" > "Location", Mark with "X"

Professional Values Prioritizer Worksheet

Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. Total the "X's" for the row. When done, move down to next row and repeat.	1. Friendship	2. Location	3. Enjoyment	4. Loyalty	5. Family	6. Leadership	7. Personal Devel.	8. Security	9. Wisdom	10. Community	11. Wealth	12. Expertise	13. Service	14. Pers. Accomp.	15. Prestige	16. Power	17. Independence	18. Integrity	19. Health	20. Creativity	Total X's This Row	Rank Order of This Row (by number of X's)
1. Friendship		X	X								X	X		X	X	X					7	3
2. Location												X			X	X					3	7
3. Enjoyment		X				X					X	X			X	X					6	T4
4. Loyalty											X	X			X	X					5	6
5. Family	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	15	1
6. Leadership	X			X							X	X			X	X					6	T4
7. Personal Devel.	X		X			X					X	X	X	X	X	X				X	10	2
8. Security																						
9. Wisdom																						
10. Community																						
11. Wealth																						
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Enter each row below in sequence and then move left to right. If the item naming the row (below) is MORE important than the item naming the column (across the page), mark the column with a "X". If less important, leave a blank. When you reach the far right side, move down to next row and repeat.

1.4 Personal Situation and Financial Responsibilities

Each of you has certain personal and financial responsibilities that will impact your professional development. These factors can include:

- Existing family obligations
- Existing or anticipated financial commitments (including student loan debt)
- Personal health limitations
- Existing or future dependents
- Spouse, significant other (health, career)
- Geographical limitations
- Existing financial assets
- Ability to call upon family for financial support

What aspects of your personal or financial life will influence the course of your early career?

How will any of these factors influence decisions you might make about your career?

In what ways does your potential student loan debt influence your thinking about compensation for your work?

How do you think your personality type will influence the decisions you might make about your career?

Section 2: Initial Employment Preferences

2.1 General Preference of Substantive Legal Settings

Litigation

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Interest -----> Some Interest -----> Strong Interest

Expert Knowledge

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Interest -----> Some Interest -----> Strong Interest

Transactional

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Interest -----> Some Interest -----> Strong Interest

At this early point in your legal career, which substantive setting, or combination of settings, appeals to you most? Why?

2.2 Indications of Interest: Traditional Practice Areas¹

Place a check by areas that you think would interest you. Over time, as your interests evolve, you can return to this list to update your selections.

Academic Law	Family Law (Divorce/Custody)
Administrative Law & Regulatory Practice	Food & Drug Law
Adoption Law	General Practice
Agricultural Law	Government Contracts
Air, Sea, & Space Law	Government Service/Relations
Alternative Dispute Resolution	Health Care Law
Animal Rights	Housing/Homelessness
Antitrust/Competition Law	Immigration/Refugee Law
Appellate Law	Insurance Law
Banking and Commercial Finance	Intellectual Property law
Bankruptcy Law	International Law
Business Law	Juvenile Law
Children's Advocacy/Juvenile Justice	Labor & Employment Law
Civil Litigation	Legislative Practice
Civil Rights/Civil Liberties	LGBT+ Law
Commercial Law	Litigation, General
Communications/Media Law	Malpractice
Community Economic Development	Migrant Worker Advocacy
Constitutional Law	Military Judge Advocates/JAG
Construction Law	Municipal Finance Practice
Consumer Protection	National Security Law
Consumer Regulatory	Poverty/Legal Services
Copyright/Trademark/Patent	Prisoners' Rights
Corporate Practice	Privacy Law
Criminal Law	Probate
Cyberspace Law	Public Defense/Death Penalty
DUI Debtor/Creditor	Real Estate & Property Law
Disability Law	Securities Law
Drug Law	Tax Law
Traffic	Telecommunications Law
Education Law	Tort Law
Elder Law	Trusts and Estates Law
Election Law/Voting Rights	Utilities Law
Election Campaign Finance	White Collar
Employee Benefits	Women's Rights
Energy Law	Worker's Compensation
Entertainment & Sports Law	Workplace Disability/ADA
Environmental & Energy Law	Zoning & Land Use
Estates, Wills and Trusts	

¹ Capital University School of Law, Individual Development Plan, <http://law.capital.edu/IndividualDevelopmentPlan/>, accessed August 3, 2018

Employment Settings

Choose 3-5 preferred practice settings to explore further:

Academic

- General Counsel's Office
- Administration/Staff
- Faculty/Teacher

Business

- In-House Counsel
- Government Affairs

Government Agencies

- Federal
- State

Prosecutor/Public Defender Offices

- Federal
- State
- Local

Judicial

- Trial
- Appellate

Law Firms

- Solo Practitioner
- Small (up to 10 attorneys)
- Medium (more than 10 but less than 50 attorneys)
- Large (more than 50 attorneys)

Non-Profit

- Legal Services
- Public Policy
- Advocacy

Location

Choose the location of the employer that best describes your preference

Region

- Northeast
- Southeast
- Midwest
- Central
- Northwest
- Southwest
- Foreign Country

Locale

- City
- Suburb
- Rural
- Combination

Specific Location(s):

Employment Environment

Check the following employer characteristics that best describe your environment preferences.

- Conservative
- Liberal
- Team Oriented
- Independent Work
- Social
- Family Oriented
- Rigorous
- Laid Back
- Flexible
- Individual Office Space
- Challenging Work
- Sufficient Salary
- Interesting Work
- Varied Responsibilities
- Creative
- Structured
- Authority

Other Characteristics:

Salary & Benefits

Prioritize the following salaries and benefits using the following system:

1 = Very Important

2 = Important

3 = Not that Important

1	2	3	High Salary (\$120,000+)
1	2	3	Average Salary (\$55,000+)
1	2	3	Medical Benefits
1	2	3	Retirement Benefits
1	2	3	Vacation Time
1	2	3	Flex Time
1	2	3	Tuition Reimbursement
1	2	3	Loan Repayment
1	2	3	Program
1	2	3	Option for Equity

Other Benefits (*List below*)

My Dream Initial Career Setting

Section 3: Mentorship and Networking Plan

As a law student and a young lawyer, it will be important to develop strong mentors and a deep professional network. NDLS has several programs outlined below that will give you a head start in this regard.

CDO Mentorship Program: The CDO coordinates an annual mentorship program with Notre Dame Lawyers throughout the country. Students who participate are paired with an alumnus or alumna in a geographic and/or practice area that matches their interests. You will receive an email inviting you to register for the program this fall.

CDO Mentor(s): _____

Faculty Advisors: Each student receives a faculty advisor during their 1L year to help guide them through their law school career. We are blessed with an amazing faculty at NDLS, and your faculty advisor can be a terrific mentor if you take the time to engage with him or her. Beyond your faculty advisor, we encourage you to get to know your professors, particularly those who teach in areas that interest you, as they can be great career resources.

Faculty Advisor: _____

Faculty Contacts: _____

SBA Mentorship Program: The SBA coordinates an annual mentorship program that pairs 1Ls with a 2L or 3L based on common backgrounds and interests. Your fellow students are a valuable (and often underutilized) resource when it comes to your professional development, so please take the time to get to know them and ask them about their experiences with networking and the job search.

SBA Mentor: _____

Student Contacts: _____

CDO Summer Mock Interview Program: The CDO coordinates an annual summer mock interview program that enlists Notre Dame lawyers across the country to conduct mock interviews with students working in their geographic area over the summer. The program is designed to prepare students for the fall recruiting season (and all rising 2Ls are required to participate) by giving them opportunities to sharpen their interviewing skills with practicing attorneys in their target market, but it also serves as a powerful networking opportunity.

Mock Interviewers:

Developing Your Professional Network

At Notre Dame, we are fortunate to have one of the best and most loyal alumni networks in the world, and that network will be a critical resource in your professional development. Review the practice areas and geographic markets in which you indicated an interest in Section 2 and identify ten potential alumni contacts who work in those practice areas and/or geographic markets to begin your networking efforts. The CDO can help you do this when you meet with them. You should also consider alumni of your undergraduate institution, family members, friends, and any other people with whom you share a meaningful connection.

Potential Contacts:

As you begin to meet/speak with networking contacts, use the CDO Networking Guide to help guide your efforts. The Networking Guide includes contact management spreadsheet keep track of all the meetings and phone calls you conduct. Taken together, these tools will help you manage your network of contacts and make it easier to maintain those connections over time.



Lawyers' Professional Development Matrix

Core Lawyering Skills

- Legal Research
- Written Advocacy
- Oral Advocacy
- Negotiation
- Alternate Dispute Resolution Forums
- Counseling Skills and Decision Theory
- Project Management
- Professionalism in the Workplace
- Managing Client Relationships
- Creating High Quality Work Product
- Computer Applications
- Office Practices: Timekeeping, Filing
- Business Etiquette
- Cross-Disciplinary Applications

- Old and New: Best Practices
- Basic Structures and Forms
- Public Speaking Fundamentals
- Intro to Theory and Process
- Managing Multiple Deadlines
- Principles/PROFESSIONAL
- The Four Expectations
- Plan, Process, Polish
- Internet for Lawyers
- Developing Personal Systems
- Introduction to Etiquette

- Written Advocacy Best Practices
- Oral Advocacy Best Practices
- Getting to Yes
- Intro to Mediation/Arbitration
- Project Management Systems
- Texas Lawyer Tips
- Power of Positive No
- Basic Excel Spreadsheets
- Systems Best Practices
- Accounting for Lawyers

Personal Development

- Understanding Yourself in the Workplace
- Maintaining Work/Life Balance
- Creating Trust in Relationships
- Health and Stress Reduction Strategies
- Accountability Through Group
- Responsible Personal Finance

- Your MBTI and the Workplace
- Time Budget Process
- Developing a Personal Budget

- Type Talk at Work
- Speed of Trust: Covey
- Investment Fundamentals

- Working From Strengths
- Health Assessment
- Master's Forum
- Preparation for Retirement

Management and Leadership Training

- Developing Your Management Style
- Implementing Change in Staff, Clients and Firms
- Developing Effective Teams
- Leading a Professional Organization
- Effective Performance Evaluations

- Principled Accountability
- Law of Employment

- 360 Profile and Analysis
- Overcoming Barriers to Change
- Good to Great I
- Best Practices in Perf. Appr.

- Polarity Management
- Good to Great II
- First Among Equals: Maister

Business of Law

- Business Development Strategies
- Client Identification and Intake
- Law Firm Finances
- Billing Strategies/Alternative Payment Systems
- Business Decision Making
- Business Strategic Planning
- Law Firm Compensation Systems

- Principles of Bus. Development
- Retainer Agreements
- Effective Billing Practices

- Business Develop Workshop
- Lead, Silver, Platinum
- Overview of Law Firm Finances
- Alternatives to Hourly Billing
- Integrated Decision Making

- Budgets and Performance
- Creating Firm Financial Security
- Law Firm Decisions Practicum
- SWOT: Creating a Plan
- Compensation Models

Masters

Advanced

Intermediate

Introductory



Lawyers' Professional Development Matrix

	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced	Masters
Values and Purpose	Your Mission: Bolles Introduction to Diversity	Personal Values Assessment True Professional: Maister	Spirituality in the Workplace You and the Legal System Trusted Advisor: Maister Leading a Diversity Program	Your Mission: Bolles Leading the Profession Half Time: Buford
Ethical Practice	Ethics in the Real World	Ethics in the Client Relationship	Counter-Intuitive Ethics	
Career Management	The Evolution of a Legal Career	Pathway to Partnership What Color is Your Parachute?	Your Career Strategic Plan WCYP Workshop Experience	
PRACTICE AREA SKILLS				
Litigation	Basic Discovery Techniques Introduction to Deposition	Taking and Defending Deposition Effective Mediation Strategies Trial Advocacy Practicum From the Bench: Courtroom Advocacy Creating the Appellate Record	Winning in Arbitration Jury Selection Appellate Techniques	
Transactional	Anatomy of a Contract Introduction/Choice of Entity Introduction to Personal Tax Entity Organization/Ops.	Power of Boilerplate Principles of Business Funding Principles of Owners' Agreements Intro to Bankruptcy Practice	Mastering Purchase Agreements Resolving Owners' Disputes Advanced Business Taxation Advanced Personal Taxation Intellectual Property	
	Personal Purpose, Mission and Spirituality Values and the Legal System Why Your Role as a Lawyer Matters? Diversity			
	Contract Drafting/Standard Provisions Transactional Process Agreements Between Owners Business Taxation Personal Taxation Other Topics			



UNIVERSITY OF
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The Law School

Networking Guide

Career Development Office

1150 Eck Hall of Law | Email: lawjobs@nd.edu

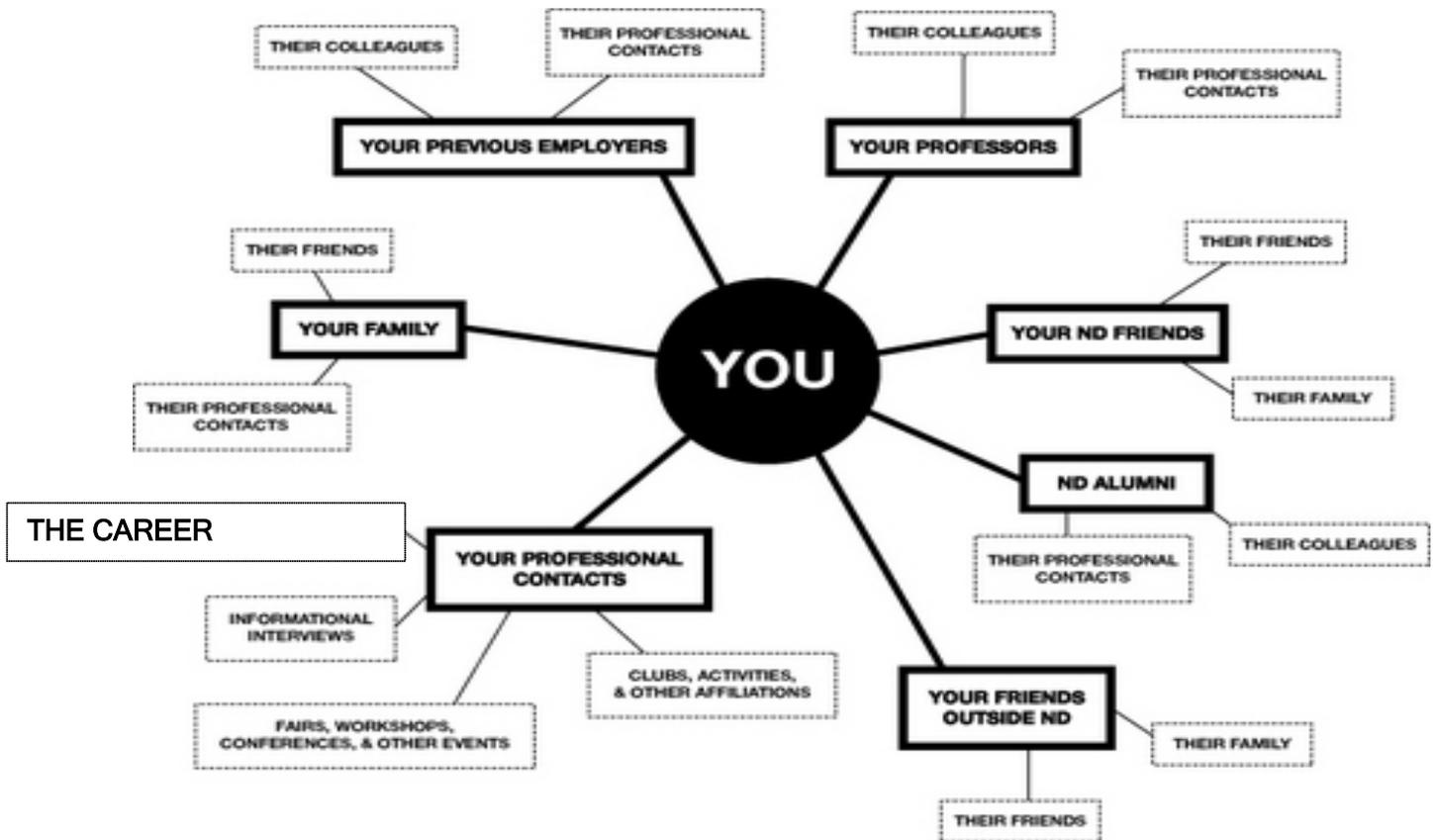
Phone: 574-631-7542 | Fax: 574-631-4789

Website: law.nd.edu/for-current-students/career-resources/

Notre Dame Law School Career Development Office Networking Guide

Approximately 80% of all jobs are found through networking, rather than on-campus interviews or job postings. More importantly, career counseling professionals estimate that at least 50% of the jobs that are filled are never even advertised. Networking helps you identify this “hidden job market” and maximizes your chances of securing employment. Some experts put that number between 70% – 80%. Even if a position you want is advertised, networking can make the difference between being selected for an interview and being just another resume in the pile.

Whether you realize it or not, you already have a network in place. Your family, friends, previous employers and other existing contacts form the foundation of your professional network. As a law student, your task is to grow your network by establishing new contacts who will be helpful to you in your search for a post-graduation position, your work as an attorney and future career transitions.



What is Networking?

Think about how many times in your life you have asked others for assistance in matters unrelated to a job search:

- Could you recommend a good restaurant?
- Could you refer me to your insurance agent/mechanic/plumber/etc.?
- I need a favor. I remember you said you know...
- I could use some help with...

The people who can recommend a good place to eat, a friend in a certain professional field or someone who can help you get tickets to the big game are your networking contacts. Networking can be summarized in two words: building relationships.

Networking is an important part of any job search. Networking occurs when people meet to exchange ideas, information, and contacts. It can take place in a formal networking meeting, an office, an airplane, bar, holiday party—anywhere two people are talking and building a relationship. The topic of conversation is irrelevant as long as people are building a rapport, a level of trust or a bond with each other.

Why Should You Learn to Network?

In this technology-driven age, networking has become even more valuable in distinguishing yourself from other applicants. It is not unusual for a firm to place a job announcement on a website and within days receive hundreds of resumes in response to that single posting. Having network connections can allow your resume to receive consideration it otherwise would not have.

Consider the importance of networking from the employer's perspective. If you were a hiring partner at a law firm, would you rather spend thousands of dollars advertising a job, sift through hundreds of resumes, conduct multiple interviews, then hire someone and hope he/she is a good employee, OR interview candidates referred to you by your trusted partners and associates who put their good reputations on the line for their referrals?

You may prefer to think of networking as a treasure hunt. It is unlikely any one person will lead you to the perfect opportunity, but each person you meet will likely give you ideas, advice and insight that will lead to your next contact. If you are gracious and proactive, the relationships you build will eventually lead to future referrals and job opportunities.

How to Network

The following steps will help you build a successful professional network.

1. Call or e-mail the networking contact requesting a meeting or telephone conversation. Ask for information only, *not* a job.
2. Conduct your meeting/telephone conversation.
3. Send a thank you note after you meet or talk with a contact.
4. One month later, send a follow up e-mail, letter or phone call to networking contacts with whom you have had a positive experience. The conversation is simply to update the networking contact of your progress. This step is often forgotten, but it will produce better results.
5. Maintain contacts. Repeat the step above on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Major calendar events can give you a reason to contact someone (e.g., the holidays, end of a semester or upcoming break).

Preparation for Your First Outreach

Before you start the networking process, you need to prepare by addressing some of the basics.

Prepare Yourself and Your Image

To prepare yourself and your image, you should focus on (1) how you present yourself in person and (2) your public image online. First, look at how you present yourself. Always dress for your audience and not yourself. Polish your shoes. Dress in a professional manner. If you are going to a law firm where there is a dress code, wear business attire. It is always better to be overdressed than too casual.

Second, run a search of your name, including your maiden name if applicable, and any other personally identifiable information on different search engines (e.g., Google and Yahoo!). You might be surprised what you discover about yourself online. Take the time to review every search result to see what an employer might see. Are there inappropriate photos? Comments? Language? If so, you should assume an employer will see them and remove them if possible. You want to be sure a potential employer sees your best professional image. If you belong to any other online sites, check those as well, edit what needs to be edited and check your privacy settings.

Resume

Have your resume reviewed by a career counselor so you can provide it if one of your contacts requests it. You want to make a positive impression and having a clean, tailored resume helps convey the message you are serious about this networking interaction.

Meeting Request

Have your networking message reviewed by a career counselor to manage the tone you are setting. We have included samples later in this guide for you to use when drafting your networking correspondence. If you make it clear in your initial correspondence you are looking for information rather than a job, your potential contact will be more likely to agree to a meeting.

Research

Before contacting anyone for networking purposes, conduct research on the person, his/her employer, his/her practice area, his/her job, his/her city, etc. This research will help you formulate questions to ask the networking contact. A sample of basic networking questions to help you start tailoring your research is included later in this guide.

Building Your Contacts

Networking can be frustrating if you feel you have no one you can contact. To begin the networking process, start with the people you already know well and who you are willing to ask for some assistance. Family, friends, neighbors, past co-workers, professors, etc. should be the first group to approach because you have an existing relationship with these people, and they are usually willing to help.

Next, contact people with whom you have something in common. In particular, Notre Dame alumni (including both NDLS alumni and ND undergraduates who attended other law schools) are perhaps the best people with whom to network because you have a Notre Dame degree in common. Fellow members of churches, social clubs or service organizations also share an immediate common interest with you and can be easy and useful networking connections to make.

Informational Meetings

Informational meetings are a vital aspect of networking in which you are asking for information, *not a job*. The knowledge gained from an informational meeting can help you determine which courses and qualifications are necessary for a specific career path and the types of firms, jobs, companies, or organizations best suited for you. Informational meetings can also aid your job search by:

- Discovering jobs that are not publicly advertised;
- Expanding your knowledge of the job market in the field you want to explore;
- Learning how to make yourself a more qualified candidate; and
- Building support for your job search.

Thirty-Second Message (the Elevator Pitch)

You are in an elevator and happen to strike up a conversation with the person standing next to you. Can you give a thirty-second speech that will let that person know who you are, what you do, and what your career interests are? Can you quickly articulate your personal brand eloquently?

Often people can and want to help you, but they will not know how unless you communicate this information to them. By developing a “thirty-second message,” you will make a good impression and increase the likelihood of making a new contact.

A good thirty-second message includes:

- Relevant background information, including your education and experience;
- Summary of your career interests; and
- A question or request for assistance from the other person.

Networking with Notre Dame Alumni

Notre Dame has some of the most loyal alumni in the world. Connecting with Notre Dame Lawyers provides students with an excellent opportunity to network. Notre Dame Lawyers include NDLS graduates, as well as Notre Dame undergraduates who attended law school elsewhere. They serve as a valuable resource to our students, offering insights into the legal market in a particular city and helping connect them with professionals who may be able to assist in their job search. Below are some resources to identify Notre Dame Lawyers in your geographic and/or practice area(s) of interest.

Notre Dame Lawyer Committees

Notre Dame Lawyer Committees have been formed in cities across the United States. These groups are comprised of Notre Dame Lawyers, and one of their stated goals is to connect with Notre Dame Law School students interested in their geographic area for networking and social events. As a result, this is a great place to start your networking efforts. To find contact information on the Notre Dame Lawyer Committees go to <http://law.nd.edu/alumni/directory-and-networking/notre-dame-lawyer-committees/>.

IrishCompass

IrishCompass is Notre Dame’s Professional Online Community which the Notre Dame Alumni Association launched in the summer of 2017. This platform provides you access to ND alumni who have volunteered to be contacted and allow you to you to filter them by industry and location. The platform will match people based on interest and career goals with mentorship opportunities. You can join Industry Groups to chat with people doing the work that interests you, and explore the library of helpful videos, webinars, books, articles, guides and worksheets that address a variety of career-related topics. To start using IrishCompass go to IrishCompass.nd.edu.

Martindale and Westlaw

Martindale and Westlaw are online resources that allow students to identify Notre Dame Lawyers. Through Martindale (www.martindale.com), you can search for NDLS alumni by geographic area and practice area. Westlaw has a Directories database that includes biographies of attorneys and judges nationwide. After signing in to WestlawNext, simply click on the “Directories” link and then the “Attorney & Judges” link. You will arrive at a

search page that will allow you to identify Notre Dame Lawyers by geographic area and practice area. Simply select the city and state you are targeting and input “Notre Dame” in the “Key Search Terms” field. You can then filter your results by practice area and other criteria. This method can also be useful for identifying alumni of your undergraduate institution.

myNotreDame Alumni Directory

NDLS students can have full access to the Notre Dame Alumni Association’s online directory by creating their own accounts at <http://www.my.nd.edu>. Once logged in, you can search for Notre Dame alumni by degrees earned at Notre Dame (e.g., NDLS graduates), degrees earned at other institutions (e.g., Notre Dame undergraduates who attended law school elsewhere), geographic area, employer name, or any other element from alumni profiles. If you have any questions or trouble, contact the myNotreDame Help Desk at 574-631-1579 or onlinehelp@alumni.nd.edu.

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com)

LinkedIn is a popular professional networking site with millions of experienced professionals. As a student, you can create a profile and join the “Notre Dame Alumni Network” group and the “ND Lawyers” subgroup to instantly be connected with thousands of Notre Dame Lawyers and other alumni. To find ND Lawyers in your target market, type Notre Dame Law School in the search bar. When you reach the NDLS page, click on the Alumni link. From there you can search for NDLS alumni by a number of different criteria, including geography. Repeat the steps above for the University of Notre Dame to find undergraduate alumni who are lawyers (you will need to specifically search for those in legal practice) and for your undergraduate institution (and its law school if applicable). Make sure you look through the lists to ensure you are finding the best fit for your networking efforts. People typically keep their LinkedIn profiles up to date, so this is an excellent tool for current information.

Notre Dame Alumni Clubs

Notre Dame alumni clubs connect you with people in your geographic area(s) of interest. Club websites allow students to review upcoming events that provide an opportunity to network with alumni – some sites even allow you to upload your resume and others even have job and internship postings. You can also try to connect with the young alumni representative of the club. Look up alumni club information at <http://www.my.nd.edu>.

Social Media

Step One: Edit your Online Presence to Reflect a Professional Image

Given advances in technology, you must consider your online image to be part of the complete application package you provide to potential employers. What you post publicly online may be just as important as what you have printed on a formal resume. Therefore, you should carefully scrutinize your online image and take advantage of the online privacy controls offered on certain social networking sites.

In order to scrutinize your online image, you should first examine the information you have posted online, whether in the form of status updates, photographs or responses to friends' comments. You do not have to be posting about illicit behavior to raise concern. For example, consider the following Facebook or Twitter updates:

“Just got an offer! I get to sell myself to the devil to pay my law school loans, but at least I will have financial security.”

“I am stuck on a video interview with a moron.”

“So ... I have an offer in Phoenix. Too bad I really want to work in Chicago.”

Just because you post something on a friend's Facebook page does not mean it will be kept private from people seeking information about you. Even if your pages are private, your friends' pages may be public. As a result, personal information they have posted about you may be discoverable. Similarly, Facebook friends may tag photos of you without your knowledge that may also be discoverable online. When interacting with a friend online, assume your friend has no privacy controls and anything you share or communicate will be viewable by potential employers.

For example, beyond interacting on a friend's page, a friend may post material on your page that you may not wish to be public, such as:

“Wow! We were out drinking until 3:00AM, and you still made it to work on time this morning? Impressive!”

“Just heard the exciting news. You are going to be a GREAT mom!”

Think carefully about the image you convey online in any status update, photograph, or blog posting. You should review this information as if you are a hiring partner who is cautious about the public image of those he/she hires into the firm and delete permanently any material that could cause concern.

Step Two: Manage Your Online Image to Meet Your Social Networking Goals

You should implement a strategy that will take into consideration the perspective of an employer looking to hire. While you may not be able to erase all negative information about you found online, you still want to create positive online content through strategic networking that will mitigate any negative content.

For example, you should set up a professional profile on LinkedIn. LinkedIn has high search engine optimization, meaning it appears at the top of a list of search engine results. The higher on the list positive online content may be seen, the lower on the list negative information is likely to appear. Please ensure your online information matches your offline resume.

Further, Twitter caters to both professional and personal networking, but there are ways to use it that can enhance your professional online image. Similar to LinkedIn, Twitter has a

high search engine optimization and can be used as a medium to characterize yourself as an expert in a particular field. If you choose to use Twitter professionally, it is highly recommended you create separate accounts for professional and personal commentary. Mixing the two in a single account can detract from the professional image you are trying to cultivate.

Finally, “Google Alerts” allow you to sign up to receive e-mail updates based on your search criteria. Setting up an alert now will allow you to monitor your online image going forward. You should also conduct periodic searches independently to uncover any online information that could be damaging to your professional image.

Networking Resources

Sample Request for Meeting - Initial Contact E-mail

To: Michael Simpson
From: Kelly Smith
Subject: Meeting with Notre Dame Law Student
Dear Mr. Simpson:

I am a second-year student at Notre Dame Law School, a member of Moot Court, and an alumna of UCLA. I grew up in San Diego and plan to return to the city to practice after graduation.

I am very interested in learning more about litigation and, more specifically, white-collar defense work. I would sincerely appreciate a meeting or telephone call with you to discuss your experiences in that field. Please let me know if you are available to meet or speak in the coming weeks, and many thanks in advance for your help.

Sincerely,
Kelly Smith
kelly@nd.edu
123-456-7890

- Be concise.
- Make a connection between you and the reader – e.g., alumnus of your school, mutual acquaintance, etc.
- State your purpose without pressuring the reader.
- Request a meeting or telephone call at a mutually convenient time.
- Provide your e-mail address and telephone number so the person knows how to contact you.

An e-mail should be crafted like a letter – there should be a proper salutation, body text and signature. Spelling and grammar must be correct.

Sample Questions for Informational Interviews and Networking

Open-ended questions encourage people to speak freely and provide longer, more thorough answers. Starting a conversation with rapport-building questions to establish a connection is a great way to ease into a conversational mode before progressing to more substantive topics. By doing the necessary research about the contact or his/her employer before your meeting, you will discover some good discussion topics: where your contact went to school, where they are originally from, common interests or experiences. Start with these more personal aspects to establish a comfort level.

1. Why did you choose to practice in the field of _____?
2. Why did you choose to practice in [city]?
3. What would you recommend someone in my position do in order to become an attractive applicant?
4. What are the trends you see developing in [specific field]?
5. What is the future of [practice area/industry]?
6. What was harder than you expected in this field?
7. What do you like best about what you do? What do you like least?
8. What is the most interesting project you are currently working on?
9. What practice areas are growing at the fastest rate?
10. If you were in my position, who else would you recommend that I speak with?
11. Do you mind if I mention to _____ that you gave me his/her name, or would you prefer to contact them before I do?

Sample Follow-Up Correspondence

Mr. Jones:

Thanks again for [meeting/speaking] with me on Tuesday morning. At your suggestion, I contacted Ms. Amy Smith and have actively pursued job openings with ABC Inc., XYZ Ltd., and the 123 Co. I will keep you advised about any progress with them, but please feel free to provide me with additional thoughts or suggestions that come to mind.

Go Irish!
John Johnson

Maintaining Contacts

Whether you use your smart phone, Google Sheets, Excel, a three-ring binder, or note cards, be sure to record the name, contact information, meeting notes and the date of your

last contact with each connection you make. You may choose to be more detailed and include additional information, but at least have the basics. A sample contact sheet is included at the end of this guide and can be downloaded from our website.

Networking Success for the Job Search

Although networking can be the most powerful tool in your job search, it requires some key ingredients to yield the most effective results. Important points to remember include:

1. Make at least one contact per week during the semester. Remember that looking for a job is like taking another class, so set time aside each week to conduct your search.
2. Set weekly and monthly goals for yourself. It is important to recognize the small steps you take will help you reach your goal.
3. Expect to call or meet with each contact several times to establish a networking relationship. Networking is not a one-time conversation, and thank you notes should be included after initial contact is made.
4. Keep notes on all meetings, conversations and correspondence in order to stay organized.
5. With follow-up calls or meetings, be prepared to ask for assistance in different areas by continuing to do research on other target firms or organizations.
6. Follow through quickly on the leads provided by your contacts. Be sure you complete all you were asked to do by a contact before you contact them again for additional guidance. Remember to express your continued appreciation for their assistance.
7. Share good news and advise networking contacts about any positive outcomes as they occur. If they referred you to someone who was helpful, let them know. Doing so is common courtesy and demonstrates you are worth the time they are investing in helping you.
8. Be sure to thank each member of your network when you accept your position and extend an offer to help them should they or anyone they are assisting ever need it.

Problems with Your Networking Strategy

1. You are a Selfish Networker

Networking should not be seen as a one-way street where you do all the asking and your contacts provide all the help and resources. You should be open to, and offer to, repay the kindness that has been extended to you by your contacts if they should ever need your assistance. A networking contact may ask you to speak to his college-aged son or daughter about why you chose Notre Dame Law School, or a future NDLS student may ask you to assist her in evaluating your hometown as a place to work. Right now, you may not think you have much to offer your networking contacts, but you do and will in the future.

2. You Wait too Long to Follow Up

Don't you hate when you have a great conversation with someone and you never hear from them again? How about when they wait too long to reach out to you and you don't remember what you talked about with them? Do not be that person. Follow up within 24 hours of your conversation, then make a note of your conversation so you can remember it. Use the Sample Contact Management Sheet at the end of this guide to help you do this.

3. You do not Keep in Touch

Another frustrating thing is when people only reach out to you when they need something. It is important to nurture your network, even when you do not need it. Sending a friendly e-mail to see how business is going, sharing an article you think they might find interesting or giving them the latest news on their favorite sport or hobby is all you need to stay fresh in your connection's mind.

Tips on Networking in a Group Setting

Body Language

- When you enter a room, look like you want to be there.
- Make eye contact and have a smile on your face.
- Be aware of your gestures, postures, movements and appearance.
- Keep an open body posture.
- Lean forward in your seat to show interest.
- Maintain consistent eye contact.
- Do not fidget or bite your lip.
- Do not put your hands on your hips.

- Do not cross your arms.

One-on-One Conversations

- Maintain eye contact.
- Use a warm tone.
- Extend your hand and introduce yourself using a firm grip.
- Ask questions and listen.
- Reflect on what the other person is saying by asking follow-up questions.
- Stick to safe topics. Stay away from discussions of religion or politics.

Group Conversations

- Position yourself at the edge of the circle.
- Make eye contact with the person who is speaking.
- Nod to acknowledge you are listening.
- Introduce yourself to the group if you do not know them.

Be Memorable

- After meeting someone, send a thank you card or e-mail. State a unique discussion point.

Prepare and Demonstrate Value

- Find out who will be at the event and who you would like to meet prior to attending the event.
- Research the individual or types of individuals you are targeting.
- Show a connection to a person's business, interests or geography.

Transition between Business and Personal

- Keep a connection to the current conversation.
- Be prepared with open-ended questions.
- Confirm that the other person is interested in transitioning by asking a question about the new topic and actively listening to their response.

Exit a Conversation

- Thank the person for their time.
- Express that you have enjoyed meeting them or appreciated the conversation.
- If they are persistent and will not let you go, suggest others for them to meet or simply excuse yourself to get a beverage or use the facilities.
- Ask for their business card if you plan to follow up or feel it is appropriate.

Section 4: Career Path Plan

In this Section, you will identify your long-term career goals and work backward to chart your career path. Consider the information you provided in Sections 1 and 2 of this IPDP. What do you hope to be doing ten years after you graduate from law school? In the space below, identify or describe the position you hope to hold and/or the type of employer you hope to work for. Be as specific as possible realizing that you can always change course as your goals and interests evolve.

10-Year Position:

Now that you have identified a long-term goal, work with a CDO counselor to develop a plan for getting there. Start by identifying post-graduation positions that align with your goal and work backward to your 1L summer.

Post-Graduation

Potential Positions:

Hiring Timelines:

Target Markets:

2L Summer

Potential Positions:

Hiring Timelines:

1L Summer

Potential Positions:

Hiring Timelines:

Use a spreadsheet to keep track of all your applications and employment leads.

Coursework and Externships

The courses you choose to take in law school can be used to help promote your career goals. Review the course offerings at NDLS, including the extensive experiential learning opportunities available through the clinics and externship programs. Make a list of courses and experiential learning opportunities that align with your intended career path outlined above.

Courses:

Clinics/Externships:
