

## *Should I Conduct a Summer Search or Wait for the Fall?*

**Question:** I am a fifth year associate and I have been considering a lateral law firm move for a few months. I have finally decided that I am ready to submit my resume to law firms, but have heard the summer season is slow. Should I start my search now or wait for the fall?

### **Answer:**

Very timely inquiry! You should absolutely start your search immediately! I know that it has been rumored that summer is a slower season. [Yes, recruitment coordinators are handling their Summer Associates and preparing for the incoming class of new attorneys.](#) [Yes, some Partners are taking off on vacation.](#) However, summer is the perfect time to start your search.

**Here is your great advantage: Everyone has heard the same rumors as you and therefore, you have a better chance at securing a job.**

Let's address some of the general objections to summer law firm submissions:

### **My resume will be overlooked.**

As I mentioned, everyone has heard the same summer-downtime rumors as you, and therefore, fewer attorneys are focusing on their job search. Many people would rather take a summer break and gear up for their job search in the fall. Don't follow the crowd! If there are less resumes being submitted for a particular position, your resume will stand out to the recruitment coordinator and you will have a better chance of being selected for an interview.

To make absolutely certain that your resume is not overlooked, you should consider working with a good recruiter, who will certainly follow up with busy recruitment coordinators and make sure you are on the firm's radar.

The competition for [law firm positions](#) remain fierce, so anything you can do to have your resume stand out from the pile is a plus, even if it's taking advantage of a theoretical seasonal "lull."

### **Everyone is on vacation.**

While it's true that many people go on vacation during the summer, the recruitment coordinators generally stick around since they play a key role in Summer Associate programs. Therefore, it's more likely to catch them in the office. They actually tend to be more responsive to submissions and follow ups during the summer months.

Yes, Partners go on vacation and so the interview process may take a little longer. Guess what? Partners are out of the office for one reason or another throughout the entire year! The length of the interview process has to do with the immediacy of the law firm need, the current state of the market, and how many candidates the firm plans to interview. Most likely, if there are less qualified applicants, the firm will arrange fewer interviews. If selected for an interview, you have a better shot at landing the job.

### **There are no openings.**

To the contrary. Firms actually have more pressing needs during the summer than other times of year. Unlike the turn of the year, when firms make decisions about their upcoming hiring needs and have a planned approach to selecting lateral candidates, firms searching over the summer typically have more immediate needs. These are needs for which they did not plan.

Many attorneys choose to give their two-week notice during summer months so that they can time their departure with a family vacation. This leaves the firm with an open slot that they need to fill (and fast). The firm's clients aren't going on vacation. Until this slot is filled, the other associates and partners in the group have to work longer hours to maintain the workload and keep their clients content. Believe me, they will be more than happy to see qualified candidates walk through the door for interviews. You are a solution to a problem.

For your case in particular, keep in mind that the process generally lasts a few months. As a recruiter, we typically see more lateral positions for a 4-5 year attorney than a 6-7 year attorney. Unless you bring with you a certain level of business, you are more marketable as a 5th (going on 6th) year attorney. Waiting, even a few months, could close off potential opportunities with law firms that could be a great fit for you. Even if you are just considering a move (especially at this level), I would strongly suggest working with a good recruiter that can keep you updated with the pulse of the market and present you with current openings.

**See [6 Things Attorneys and Law Students Need to Remove from Their Resumes ASAP If They Want to Get Jobs with the Most Prestigious Law Firms](#) for more information.**

The combination of fewer resumes with more pressing needs makes summer a great time to submit your materials to law firms. Even if you do not land a position during the summer months, you are way ahead of the attorneys that choose to start their search in September.

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