

The BCG Attorney Search 2017 State of the American Lateral Law Firm Legal Market Report

By Harrison Barnes from Los Angeles Office Managing Director

Changes have occurred in the legal world according to the 2016-2017 State of the Market Report. For instance, hiring law firms are far more interested in an attorney's niche practice than a generalist-type attorney.

Niche practices have also shown themselves as more important for job hunting attorneys than where they went to law school.

Summary: This State of the Market Report covers the major trends in legal placements for 2016 and 2017. As this Report explains, one of the most significant features of the new legal job landscape is the increasing demand for specialist attorneys and the decreasing demand for generalist attorneys. In fact, it appears that the new badge of marketability has become the quality of an attorney's "niche" practice area experience as opposed to the quality of the attorney's law school or law firm. This Report tells you what happened with the legal job market across the country in 2016 and what we can expect in 2017.

Through my work at [BCG Attorney Search](#), I participate in or oversee the placement of thousands of attorneys each year in firms throughout the country. [I watch our candidates go through every stage of the job search process](#)--from submitting applications, to going to interviews, to accepting offers. By closely observing this process and the trends that reveal themselves, I am able to get a profound understanding of the legal market and what is in demand in markets and practice areas across the nation.^[i]

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The legal market in 2016 and going into 2017 is changing dramatically at the lateral level. The 2016 calendar year was one of the oddest I recall encountering in my career (and I have been doing this for nearly 20 years) and went through a dramatic three-phase shift throughout the year:

PHASE 1: January through April of 2016. Real estate, corporate, and patent prosecution all saw a lot of activity. Litigation was extremely slow across the United States--almost deathly so. Lots of activity in real estate and corporate are a sign of a very healthy legal market. Corporate, in particular, is an indicator of economic activity and corporate is always busy during the best economies.

PHASE 2: May through August of 2016. The second quarter saw real estate, corporate, and patent prosecution all slow down dramatically. During this period, litigation started getting somewhat busy--but not overly so. This is traditionally a sign of a lack of economic activity. There was also a pick-up in many niche practice areas (ERISA, executive compensation, and healthcare).

PHASE 3: September through December of 2016. During this period, litigation picked up considerably; however, corporate and real estate remained flat, and there was little activity. Niche practice areas began to take off and become very active. Litigation also picked up so much that it became the hottest major practice area.

It is entirely possible that 2017 may be one of the better legal markets on record--comparable with the previous boom years of 1999 and 2005-2006: ***We saw more interviews and placements in the last three months of the year than we have in the last three months of any year since 2006.*** However, what is odd about the current legal market is that while it is very good, it is being led by "niche" practice areas to a great extent.

This dramatic turnaround in the legal market was largely unexpected and may have been a product of the

overall improved job market, the election cycle, and the rise of the stock market during that time; however, why corporate was not busier is anyone's guess. Law firms in 2016 were suddenly busier and more confident in many practice areas than in the past. Law firms that had been uninterested in candidates for weeks or months suddenly wanted to interview candidates during November and December. This was particularly the case with litigation, which suddenly became busier towards the end of 2016. However, despite the enthusiasm of the last few months of the year, the overall market was much slower in 2016 than it was in 2015.

See the following articles for more information:

State of the American Legal Job Market 2016: Hot and Weak Practice Areas of 2016
BCG Attorney Search Comprehensive Practice Area Guide

This report relies heavily upon data and statistics compiled by BCG Attorney Search. We discuss specific data with respect to interviews and placements in various practice areas below. For more detailed information on the data discussed in this article, please see the following links:

[Percentage of BCG Placements by Practice Area with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Percentage of BCG Interviews by Practice Areas with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Placement-Based Chart for Pacific States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Placement-Based Chart for Central/Mountain States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Placement-Based Chart for Eastern States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Interview-Based Chart for Pacific States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#)
[Interview Based Chart for Central/Mountain States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016;](#) and
[Interview-Based Chart for Eastern States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016.](#)

Going into 2017, the practice of law seems to be changing for lateral attorneys--law firms in the last four months of the year were hiring more attorneys in niche practice areas, or with niche skills (in major practice areas), than at any time I have ever seen in the past. Firms were avoiding generalists. The majority of attorneys hired in every practice area had some sort of "niche" skill that was not normally found in the market.

Except for the last few months of 2016, the market was much slower in 2016 than it was in 2015. In fact, the market shows some signs that it may even be somewhat recessionary because there has been a massive slowdown in corporate-related work and an increase in litigation. (Litigation typically gets busy during recessions and corporate cools.) We are not in a recession, of course, but what is going on?

All practice areas go through cycles. During 2008 through 2010, there was very little hiring occurring of entry-level attorneys in corporate and most attorneys went into litigation. During recessions, transactional activity slows down. Corporate hiring did not pick up until 2011, and this created a "glut" of corporate attorneys and, again, law firms started hiring entry level classes in corporate and there may have gradually become an oversupply of these and an undersupply of litigators (this is one theory at least).

See **Why Every Big Firm Practice Area Eventually "Self-Destructs" at Least Once Every Eight Years** for more information.

Interviews, placements, and other indicators were slower throughout most of the year until the end of the year. Practice areas that had a lot of traction in 2015 suddenly seemed to grind to a virtual halt in the last several months of 2016.

The "losers" were the generalists in major practice areas--real estate, corporate generalists, litigation generalists, all forms of patent prosecution, tax and patent litigation. These practice areas all slowed down significantly over the course of the year in most major and smaller markets.

The "winners" (if you can call them that) were practice areas that no one ever thinks too much about--

healthcare, employment, ERISA, executive compensation, bankruptcy, technology transactions, white collar crime, trademark, construction, international trade, immigration, appellate litigation, antitrust, and others. These practice areas did well because there are simply not enough of these attorneys to go around.

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The Rise of the Niche Practice Areas

The sudden growth of the niche practice area represents one of the largest shifts in the lateral attorney market in history. For the past three decades, there has been a constant shift between corporate and litigation: (1) litigation has done well in poor economies and been slow (to dead) in good ones, and (2) corporate has done well in good economies and been slow (to dead) in bad economies. In the present legal landscape, litigation is active, but the most active practice areas are the niche practice areas.

My belief is that: (1) there are now far too many attorneys out there competing for litigation, corporate, and to a lesser extent, real estate jobs, and (2) the major practice areas have become less desirable for lateral attorney hiring. It used to be enough to go to a top 10-law school and get a position with a major law firm to lateral as a litigator, corporate attorney, or real estate attorney, for example. **To my astonishment, this year I have witnessed and come across numerous associates with these sorts of qualifications--in major practice areas with generalist qualifications--who find themselves unable to lateral to other equivalent firms because law firms are simply not interested.**

Law firms are less concerned with what law firm you are coming from, or what law school you went to, than they are with your exact skill set--**and they are emphasizing niche skills more and more in every practice area**. Attorneys with great backgrounds are in oversupply for the number of jobs in major practice areas requiring generalists in most markets. Despite the fact that there was a slowdown in law school enrollment in the past several years, there is still a giant oversupply of attorneys compared to the number of good law firm legal jobs at the lateral level.

Law students, law schools, and others may get the "illusion" of a healthy lateral market based on summer associate and entry-level law firm hiring; however, this is not a barometer of the lateral hiring market at all. The criteria that law firms employ when hiring summer associates should not be confused with the criteria they use to hire lateral attorneys where the standards are at an all-time high. The lateral market is more competitive than it has ever been--especially for attorneys in major practice areas.

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The Growth of Niche Practice Areas

As mentioned above, the number of placements that we are making in niche practice areas as a percentage of our business increased substantially in 2016. In contrast, placements in mainstream practice areas declined as a percentage of our overall business:

Mainstream practice areas for large law firms are considered to be: [litigation](#) and [corporate](#). Many large law firms will also include [real estate](#) as part of a mainstream practice area as well.

Niche practice areas for large law firms are considered to be: [employment](#), [healthcare](#), [ERISA](#), [executive compensation](#), [bankruptcy](#), [immigration](#), [tax](#), and [trust and estates](#). These practice areas are done by most large law firms, but they are not their "bread and butter" typically and most law firms have much smaller teams of attorneys tasked with working in these practice areas. These practice areas are done by the majority of all larger law firms--but not all.

Nontraditional niche practice areas for large law firms are considered to be: [intellectual property litigation](#), [white collar crime](#), [energy and oil and gas law](#), [environmental law](#), [antitrust](#), [international trade](#), [data privacy](#), [project finance](#), [government law](#), [insurance coverage](#), [all forms of patent law](#), [trademark and copyright](#), [government contracts](#), [telecommunications](#), and [food and drug law](#). These are practice areas that

are practiced by some large, prestigious law firms--but not all.

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Placement and Market Demand Is Decreasing for Mainstream Practice Areas

The practice areas of litigation and corporate are considered "bread and butter" mainstream practice areas and everything else a niche practice area. Most law firms have the majority of their activity in these two practice areas.

With respect to both placements and interviews in corporate and litigation, the number of interviews and placements has continued to decline. While [litigators and corporate attorneys comprise the majority of attorneys](#), the demand for them inside of law firms at the lateral level is softening compared to attorneys in mainstream niche practice areas.

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation + Corporate	43.45%	35.65%	-17.95%
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Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation + Corporate	36.49%	31.75%	-12.98%

Real estate for most large law firms also would be considered a mainstream practice area that comprises a substantial portion of their revenue. If you look at the placement activity for real estate, together with corporate and litigation, the falloff in interview and placement activity is even more evident.

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation + Corporate + Real Estate	53.18%	43.17%	-18.82%
Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation + Corporate + Real Estate	45.73%	39.20%	-14.27%

From the perspective of this data, the message the market is sending is clear: Law firms have less demand for generalists.

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Placement and Interview Activity Is Increasing for Mainstream "Niche" Practice Areas

The demand for attorneys in mainstream niche practice areas is taking off like crazy. From placements to interviews, there is far more activity in mainstream niche practice areas and it is increasing. The increase in this activity seems to indicate that the clients of law firms have more need for and are more willing to pay for specialists than they are willing to pay for generalists.

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment + Healthcare + ERISA + Bankruptcy + Immigration + Trust & Estates + Tax	17.25%	28.68%	66.26%
Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment + Healthcare + ERISA + Bankruptcy + Immigration + Trust & Estates + Tax	17.04%	26.25%	54.04%

These numbers do not lie. Law firms (and their clients) are seeking and much more interested in attorneys with experience in mainstream niche practice areas (at the high end) than they are in attorneys with

experience in more mainstream practice areas.

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Placement Activity Has Increased for Nontraditional Niche Practice Areas as Well

Further, there was a slight increase (overall) for the number of placements that occurred in nontraditional niche practice areas. This increase shows that there is growth in this sector (overall) as well.

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law.	22.54%	23.62%	4.79%

Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law.	31.86%	26.22%	-17.70%

The fact that there were fewer interviews is interesting. This is likely due to the fact that among these nontraditional niche practice areas there was a continued slowdown in all forms of patent work and patent litigation, which traditionally have made up a lot of interviews (patent attorneys do notoriously bad on interviews historically and have many interviews before they are placed). If you take these out of the equation, the results clearly show that there is growth in nonmainstream practice areas--besides IP litigation and all forms of patent law. IP and patent law are decreasing in their activity massively. Removing this outlier shows that nontraditional niche practice areas are growing substantially.

Nontraditional Niche Practice Area Placement Percentages without IP Litigation and All Forms of Patent Law	2015	2016	% of Growth
White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications, Food and Drug Law.	6.73%	8.49%	26.15%

Nontraditional Niche Practice Area Interview Percentages without IP Litigation and All Forms of Patent Law	2015	2016	% of Growth
White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications, Food and Drug Law.	9.70%	10.59%	9.17%

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Statistics for Mainstream Niche Practice Areas and Nontraditional Mainstream Practice Areas

Accounting for activity in all niche practice areas (niche and nontraditional) there was clear growth overall.

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment, Healthcare, ERISA, Bankruptcy, Immigration, Trust & Estates, Tax, Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law.	39.79%	52.30%	31.40%

Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment, Healthcare, ERISA, Bankruptcy, Immigration, Trust & Estates, Tax, Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law.	48.90%	52.47%	7.30%

Placements	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law	6.73%	8.49%	26.15%

Interviews	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property Litigation, White Collar Crime, Energy and Oil and Gas Law, Environmental Law, Antitrust, International Trade, Data Privacy, Project Finance, Government Law, Insurance Coverage, All Forms of Patent Law, Trademark and Copyright, Government Contracts, Telecommunications and Food and Drug Law	9.70%	10.59%	9.17%

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How and Why Law Firms Hire Lateral Attorneys

To put this data and these trends in context, it is important to review why law firms hire lateral attorneys. They do so: (1) based on whether the attorneys' existing experience fits in with work the law firm has, and (2) whether the law firm is confident that it has profitable work it can give the attorney to do. When hiring summer associates, the law firm will assume that it can put the new hires where the firm needs them and move them around if they do not have work in one practice area to another (within reason). At the lateral level, however, there are far too many attorneys (from good firms and with good pedigrees) competing for too few jobs in the major practice areas. There is a huge supply of corporate attorneys, litigators, and real estate attorneys in most major markets. In contrast, there are not enough ERISA attorneys, executive compensation attorneys, healthcare attorneys, and bankruptcy attorneys--or litigators and corporate attorneys with highly specialized skills.

The oversupply of lateral attorneys in major practice areas in the market has created a classic "supply and demand" conundrum that makes the lateral market particularly competitive for good law firm legal jobs.

What is a Good Law Firm Legal Job? Most attorneys are chasing the highest paying position, paying the most money--"big law jobs." This is not necessarily the best calculus to understand what a "good law firm job" is. In most cases, the best law firm jobs are those that involve doing work on behalf of stable companies that within reason can afford to write an endless series of checks for having their legal work done and expect their attorneys not to cut corners. This typically means that the attorney will be mainly working for companies that are large enough and have sufficient revenue that legal bills of tens of thousands of dollars a month (or more) do not affect them.

In large cities, these companies may be giant public corporations. In smaller cities, they may be hospitals, local banks, divisions of large national companies, local universities, governments, and other local organizations with healthy revenues and growth.

A good legal job might pay two or even three times as much in a city like New York compared to a city like Albany--but the position is still a good one in Albany. A good law firm job typically offers the prospect of stability, a good income, and upward advancement. Law firms with good legal jobs will typically not do a lot of work for individuals and be somewhat "class conscious" regarding the pedigrees of the attorneys they are hiring. They want to hire people they can "sell" to their clients (and clients expect their law firms' attorneys to look good on paper).

See the following articles for more information:

[The Only Six Factors Prestigious Law Firms Care about When Hiring Lateral Attorneys](#)

[The Top Reasons Why Money Is the Dumbest Thing Any Attorney Should Focus on When Joining a Law Firm](#)

[Never Focus on the Money: Focus on Your Higher Purpose and Contribution](#)

[Why You Should Find Your "Tribe" and Not Just Focus on Money in Making Law Firm Job Decisions](#)

Because they are pumping out so many attorneys into an overly saturated market, over the past several years many law schools have made efforts to make their graduates more marketable by inflating student grades so it is increasingly difficult to separate the "wheat from the chaff." These days, the majority of attorneys from good law schools all have what appear to be "stellar" grades on paper--so they have become almost indistinguishable from one another. This issue is exacerbated when these attorneys become corporate generalists or general commercial litigators and go into practice areas where there formerly was a lot of work but where the work is starting to dry up--real estate, patent prosecution, and patent litigation. ***The new badge of marketability has not become the quality of law school or law firm you are coming from, but the quality of your "niche" experience in your practice area.***

Generalists at top firms got hit hard by the market in 2016, and it is likely to get much worse in 2017. What would have been unthinkable years ago has now become the norm for attorneys seeking "good legal jobs:" A [Harvard Law School](#) graduate in New York practicing general commercial litigation with less than six years of experience at a top firm ***will now encounter significant resistance getting hired laterally.*** A general corporate attorney with significant generalist experience, with less than six years of experience, from a top 10-law firm and law school ***will now encounter significant experience lateralling in Los Angeles.*** A graduate of a top 5-law school at the top of his or her class in his or her third year of practicing general commercial litigation ***will encounter massive resistance in Washington, DC.*** A second-year corporate attorney with generalist skills from a top law firm in the Bay Area ***will encounter resistance in his or her search in the Bay Area.*** A real estate generalist attorney from a top law firm and law school, working in real estate in Los Angeles, ***will encounter significant resistance lateralling in Los Angeles.*** A patent prosecution associate with an advanced degree in electrical engineering working in the Bay Area on generalist patent prosecution matters ***will encounter significant resistance lateralling in the Bay Area.***

In 2010 through 2015, all of the people described above would have been employed easily. But this was simply not the case in 2016, and it does not appear that it will be the case in 2017 either. The market is shunning generalists, and it shows. Law firms are getting overrun by tons of applications from generalists in most large markets. There are far too many generalists out there in major practice areas competing for the same work.

There seems to have been a backlash, of sorts, against "generalist" attorneys--whether they are generalists in corporate, litigation, or even real estate. For attorneys without substantial portable business, the market is most interested in attorneys at the lateral level who have top qualifications and highly specialized niche skills. For attorneys interested in moving laterally to another law firm, or a better law firm:

It is not enough to be just a litigation attorney--you should be a specialist in some type of litigation.

It is not enough to be just a corporate attorney--you should be a specialist in some type of corporate work.

It is not enough to be just a tax attorney--you need to be a specialist in some type of tax work.

If Generalists Have a Difficult Time Getting Hired, What Are They Supposed to Do?

The bright spot in all of this is that generalists are, of course, marketable--but they often have to avoid the largest markets. Returning to smaller markets where they might have grown up or have connections helps alleviate the pressures of supply and demand--if they are trying to work in smaller markets where there are few people like them they are likely to do far better. The law of supply and demand governs everything. Attorneys succeed when they move to markets where there are fewer attorneys like them competing for the same jobs.

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2017 Shows Every Indication That It Will Be the Year of the Specialist

Across the board, law firms are demanding that their lateral attorneys be in niche practice areas, with niche skills. Law firms are consistently shying away from generalists in all practice areas. Law firms are hiring lateral attorneys they cannot cross-train on their own. They are interested in attorneys in practice areas like antitrust, healthcare, executive compensation, employee benefits, employment, bankruptcy, immigration, and other practice areas that have traditionally not gotten too much attention. From the standpoint of being a lateral attorney looking for a position, these practice areas have an advantage in that:

They are highly specialized, and it takes time to learn how to do them. Anytime a practice area is difficult to learn, and it takes time to do so, the law firm cannot train its generalist attorneys to do the work and they need to hire someone who knows how to do the work. If you are in a practice area like this, you are less of a "commodity" than if you are simply a generalist. This makes you more marketable to the law firms that have work. There are fewer of you, and because of this your educational qualifications and experience become even less important. It may also be more difficult to find these sorts of positions--but if you are in a niche practice area, you are benefitted in that there are fewer of you.

Law firms hiring in these practice areas tend to have steady, recurring work from institutional clients.

You will have the most success as a lateral attorney if you are doing work that is recurring in nature and is unlikely to go away. The problem with many practice areas is that the work can go away. Litigation cases can settle, real estate can slow down when interest rates change--and so forth. When law firms have recurring work, this means there is no risk when hiring you and they can even profitably ease you into being a service partner, or counsel role to service these clients as you get more senior. If an attorney is in healthcare, the firm may have existing hospitals and managed care organizations that consistently send it work. If the attorney is in a practice area like ERISA, the law firm may have some strong institutional clients that send it work. The same goes for a practice area like immigration.

Cautionary Advice for Specialists

Despite the demand for specialists, this is not always a good thing. There was a time when being a patent prosecutor with a certain technical background was something that virtually assured you a great job and made you marketable. Knowing of this demand, I have

watched more and more attorneys go into this field over the past twenty years until we got where we are right now: There is an oversupply of patent attorneys. There are so many patent attorneys out there at the moment that they are having a difficult time finding positions unless they have rare, highly-niche skills that law firms simply cannot find elsewhere. I would go so far as to say that so many attorneys have gone into patent law over the past several years that it has become almost a "major" practice area.^[ii]

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State of Individual Practice Areas in 2016

Below we discuss the trends within the various practice areas. In addition to setting out the interview and placement data, we give each practice area an informal health status in terms of what we expect the health of that practice area to be in 2017. The statuses are: 1) Dying, (2) Sick, (3) Stable, (4) Vibrant, or (5) Very Vibrant. Use the images in the key below to quickly identify the health of a practice area.

Practice Area Health Status Key

One note on the charts: To calculate the % of Growth column in the charts found in each practice area, we used the following formula. We subtracted the 2015 percentage from the 2016 percentage, then divided the result by the 2015 percentage and multiplied it by 100, which provided the percentage of growth or decline in a particular practice area from 2015 to 2016.

Practice Area	Percentage of BCG's 2016 Placements
Corporate	17.86%
Litigation	17.79%
Employment	8.36%
Real Estate	7.52%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	6.60%
Intellectual Property - Patent - Hard and Life Sciences	11.34%
Bankruptcy	4.30%
Healthcare	3.85%
Tax	2.78%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	2.36%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	1.97%
Technology Transactions	1.93%
Immigration	1.86%
White Collar Crime	1.63%
Energy and Oil & Gas	1.40%
Intellectual Property - Other	1.34%
Antitrust and Competition	1.17%
Securities Litigation	1.12%
Environmental and Land Use	0.94%
International Trade	0.94%
Trust and Estates	0.94%
Data Privacy	0.41%
Finance - Project Finance	0.33%

Practice Area	Percentage of BCG's 2016 Placements
Government and Government Relations	0.33%
Insurance Coverage	0.25%
Insurance Defense	0.21%
Construction	0.02%
Family Law	0.02%
Food & Drug Administration	0.02%
Government Contracts	0.02%
Other	0.02%
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	0.09%
Telecommunications	0.02%
Workers' Compensation	0.02%
Finance--Banking	0.00%
Municipal Law	0.00%

Corporate (including Corporate Finance)

2017 Corporate Health: Stable

Percentage of Corporate Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Corporate	30.39%	17.86%	-41.23%	1	1

Percentage of Corporate Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Corporate	24.15%	15.52%	-35.73%	1	2

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047678/Corporate-Attorney-General/>

Corporate has always been the leading practice area for attorney placement firms to place lateral attorneys in. The work is specialized, requires specialized skills generally only learned in large law firms, and takes time to learn. Finally, corporate work is done on behalf of corporations "doing deals" and other forms of business where the cost of hiring expensive corporate attorneys is somewhat of an afterthought. Despite the fact that corporate attorneys do not make up the majority of attorneys in the United States, in all but the most recessionary environments they will constitute the majority of placements made by most legal recruiting firms.

The slowdown in corporate was dramatic in the 2016 calendar year. Corporate law is typically the practice area most closely aligned with "big firm" work in large cities that do work on behalf of healthy corporations. The slowdown in this work and placement activity is a potential cause for concern because it could indicate: (1) a slower economy overall, or (2) an oversupply in the market.

My guess (and I am not sure) is that there was some apprehension in the business and legal market before the election and this created less overall hiring. Most of the corporate attorneys I spoke with seemed to be busy; there was just not a lot of interviewing and hiring. What I did notice--and what was very clear to me--was that the majority of hiring seemed to be in "niche" aspects of the corporate practice. [For example, attorneys with experience in private equity or derivatives were much more likely to get hired in large cities than generalists.](#) Even outside of the most major cities, law firms were hungry for specialists compared to generalists.

As was noted earlier, 2016 was the year of the specialist. As such, we saw more of a demand for specialized corporate attorneys, and thus added the category of "corporate finance" in the middle of the calendar year. Since this was new for 2016 and did not cover the entire year, the totals for corporate above include the amounts for corporate finance.

Percentage of BCG Placements in 2016 of Corporate Finance Attorneys: 4.19

Large law firms in New York City, in particular, typically require that their attorneys have very niche skills. They want attorneys with experience in things like structured finance, securities, and other niche areas. The niche experience is important for attorneys because the work done in New York tends to be the most specialized. In most regions of the United States (with the exception of the Bay Area and Chicago), it is enough to be more of a generalist than a specialist. Specialists will always be the most marketable when there are relatively few positions in their practice area and a healthy number of positions.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Corporate Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Corporate	Central / Mountain States	5.34%	6.57%	23.10%
Corporate	Eastern States	15.39%	9.68%	-37.11%
Corporate	Pacific Standard Time	9.55%	1.61%	-83.19%
Corporate	Non US	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Corporate Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Corporate	Central / Mountain States	3.10%	3.63%	17.19%
Corporate	Eastern States	13.15%	8.77%	-33.28%
Corporate	Pacific Standard Time	7.40%	2.98%	-59.76%
Corporate	Non US	0.51%	0.14%	-71.63%

Every region of the United States--with the exception of the Midwest and Colorado--saw a drop in interview and placement activity. The most notable drop came in the Pacific region, which saw an almost complete fall off in placement and interview activity compared to previous years. New York and the East Coast were also slower than they were in years past. International markets for American attorneys were also very slow.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Corporate Attorney?

When the economy is good, corporate attorneys are often in strong demand. The economy seems to be very good in 2017.

Regarding the ability to lateral between states, cities, and even countries, corporate is probably the best practice area to be in. [Corporate attorneys can relocate to different states without a lot of difficulty.](#)

Corporate is also a good practice area for attorneys interested in business and making a lot of money.

When the economy is slow, it can become more difficult for corporate attorneys to move laterally and there are a lot of layoffs.

Corporate is a very difficult practice area to start a career in because attorneys can get laid off and lose their jobs early in their careers and never get the training needed to become seasoned attorneys.

Corporate is the best practice area for attorneys interested in building a book of business. Because corporate attorneys tend to advise their clients on an ongoing basis about a variety of issues, they typically can get spin-off work (litigation, real estate, tax, and so forth) that they can send to other attorneys in their firm.

The majority of placements we are making are for attorneys with specialized corporate skills--specialists as opposed to generalists.

Read More about Practicing Corporate and Corporate Finance Law Here:

[Banking and Finance](#)

[Corporate Practice](#)

[BCG Attorney Search's Guide to Corporate and Finance Practice Areas](#)

[What Is It Like Being a Corporate Lawyer: What Do Corporate Lawyers Do?](#)

[What It Means to Be a Corporate Lawyer](#)

[What Does a Corporate Lawyer Do?](#)

Go Here to Search for Corporate Law Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-2/Corporate-jobs.html>

Go Here to Search for Corporate Finance Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-41/Corporate_Finance-jobs.html

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Litigation

2017 Litigation Health: Stable

Percentage of Litigation Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Litigation	13.16%	17.79%	36.22%	2	2

Percentage of Litigation Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Litigation	12.34%	16.23%	31.48%	2	1

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047686/Litigation-Attorney/>

BCG Attorney Search had a good year placing litigators and also getting litigators interviews. The fact that these numbers were so high, though, should not indicate a high amount of activity in the lateral litigation market. Approximately 40% of all attorneys inside of law firms are litigators--and the percentage is probably much higher (my guess is over 50%) if you count solo practitioners, government attorneys, and other attorneys around the country. The majority of attorneys out there are litigators and the sum total likely exceeds 50%. With so many litigators in the legal market, the fact that recruiters place many of them should not be a surprise. You would think that if more than 50% of attorneys are litigators that our percentage of placements would track that percentage, but that is not the case because there is an oversupply of litigators for the amount of demand.

Much of our success placing litigators in 2016 was because we started to go "downstream" and steer the high number of litigators in the market towards smaller law firms. We did this because there was simply too much of a glut for them in larger markets. We had no choice: **Most large law firms were not hiring litigators-**

-especially in major cities. We started soliciting smaller law firms outside of major cities with our talented candidates willing to move, and it worked. Outside of major cities, there will always be a demand for litigators with good qualifications (if the attorneys are willing to accept lower salaries and less prestige).

Regarding jobs with major law firms in major cities, litigation got hit hard all year and the indicators point to things being even slower in 2017. Litigation had multiple layoffs in large law firms (often "stealth layoffs") and attorneys had a very difficult time lateralling in this practice area to the best firms in major markets. Especially hard hit were junior and senior litigators. The market was not at all cooperative with them. Even attorneys with the best qualifications had an extremely difficult time in 2016, and it seems as if this is likely to occur in 2017 as well.

To illustrate how bad the market was, consider some of the following:

Litigation generalists with stellar qualifications (the cream of the crop from top law schools and law firms) in New York, Washington, DC, and the Bay Area got few--if any interviews. Washington, DC and New York were what I would term "bloodbaths." In contrast, in previous years, attorneys with these same qualifications would have gotten numerous interviews.

I came across countless senior attorneys throughout the year who were laid off, fired, and let go from large law firms--there was just no demand for them, and they were left groveling for anything.

I saw many attorneys from top Ivy League law schools lose their jobs and go to work as solo practitioners and take other jobs you normally would not associate with top credentials, including work as insurance defense attorneys and the like. This is just not something I was happy seeing. It was sad watching these attorneys reduced to this.

Towards the end of the year, one major law firm (Kirkland & Ellis) even reduced the equity of the majority of its litigation partners, implying that it viewed them as "service partners." Even large law firms are sending a message to their equity litigation partners that they do not think highly of them.

Litigation has become a very difficult practice area for attorneys to succeed in. There are so many litigators out there that only the very best litigators can lateral to "good firms" successfully. Unlike corporate, patent, real estate, and other practice areas, it is difficult for an attorney to [go in-house](#) and have other options when the attorney becomes more senior. Without substantial portable business, the path of many large law firm litigators is to become solo practitioners and do other sorts of similar jobs after leaving large law firms if they do not become partners. It is very sad, and with an oversupply of litigators in the market, far too many talented litigators are ill advised trusting the large law firm route in large cities.

Top law firms are much more pedigree-conscious with litigators than they are with other sorts of attorneys. They expect their litigators to have clerkships, be on law review, *order of the coif*, and so forth--from top law schools. Even litigators with these sorts of qualifications, though, are experiencing a certain level of hardship moving laterally. Incredibly, in major cities there is an actual oversupply of litigators who clerked for federal circuit judges, attended top law schools, and were at the tops of their classes. In previous years, these sorts of attorneys would see many doors open for them. This is just not the case anymore.

The litigators who have had the most success have often been those coming directly out of federal circuit court clerkships.

The market has gotten so tight that the largest and most prestigious law firms hiring lateral litigators do not even view federal district court clerkships very highly anymore--but there is still interest in federal district court clerks from the Eastern District of New York and a few other select jurisdictions.

The market for litigators has gotten so status conscious that clerking for a federal magistrate is something that actually seems equivalent to attending a fourth-tier law school--permanently barring all but the luckiest attorneys from the most prestigious law firms.

An explanation for the slowdown in lateral hiring is largely due to the laws of supply and demand discussed earlier. There are too many lateral litigators seeking jobs, and this has made the bar for attorneys getting

hired very high. There are just not a lot of positions for litigators with "good law firms" at the moment. Every litigator out there is having serious issues getting a position. The economy has been relatively good, which has decreased to some extent the amount of litigation work available, as people tend to be less litigious in good times than in bad.

I have another theory about why things have gotten so difficult for litigators: grade inflation in law schools. At some top law schools, grade inflation has gotten so severe it is ridiculous. For example, the other day I was speaking with an unemployed attorney from [Georgetown Law School](#). He graduated from law school with a 3.8 grade point average, but was only a *cum laude* graduate in the top 10% of his class. Many large law firms hiring lateral litigators in general commercial litigation now seem to require *order of the coif*, federal circuit court clerkships, law review, and other honors as a matter of course. Even that is often not enough.

Finally, the "niche" trend applied to litigation as well. The large law firm litigators we placed this year often had unusual skills. They may have done products liability, for example, or securities litigation. Litigators are best served in the lateral market when they have niche skills. The market has gotten very competitive at large law firms and litigation is a very tough practice area to be part of.

See this article for more information about the high demand of litigators:

[Why Most Attorneys Have No Business Being Litigators: Fifteen Reasons Why You Should Not Be a Litigator](#)

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Litigation Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation	Central / Mountain States	2.24%	3.06%	36.43%
Litigation	Eastern States	6.96%	5.30%	-23.84%
Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	3.86%	9.43%	144.30%
Litigation	Non US	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Percentage of Litigation Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Litigation	Central / Mountain States	2.45%	2.93%	19.61%
Litigation	Eastern States	5.85%	6.36%	8.62%
Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	3.77%	6.94%	83.83%
Litigation	Non US	0.26%	0.00%	-100.00%

Litigation was busy in California. We saw a lot of this growth in smaller law firms in Los Angeles, San Diego, and Orange County, in particular, where there was a lot of activity all year. The Bay Area overall was very slow. Outside of New York City and in the suburbs, there was also a lot of interview activity with smaller law firms. Overall, the majority of the hiring we observed was all in smaller law firms. Most larger law firms in all areas of the country seem to be over capacity with respect to litigation jobs.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Litigation Attorney?

To be attractive to large law firms in major cities, litigators need to have exceptional qualifications (grades, schools, clerkships, and firm experience). This is because there are so many litigators out there (and litigation is by far the most popular practice group) that credentials help sort the "best" from the "good."

Because litigators need the bar to go to court and sign pleadings, it is also more difficult for them to move laterally and get positions in other states.

Litigation tends to get busy when the economy is slow (because people sue more in search of money), but then litigation slows down when the economy is healthy again. Accordingly, during healthy economies, there is often a glut of litigators and very few jobs.

Read More about Being a Litigator Here:

[Why Does Litigation Hiring Seem to Take So Much Longer Than Hiring for Other Practice Areas?](#)

[Is Contract Work the New Normal for Litigators?](#)

[Top 39 Tips for New Litigation Associates and Trial Lawyers: How to Be a Good Litigation Attorney](#)

[The Pace of Litigation Practice](#)

[All That You Must Know about Litigation Practice](#)

[The Job Profile and Work Involved as a Litigation Attorney](#)

[Go Here to Search for Litigation Jobs:](#)

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-11/Litigation-jobs.html>

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Employment

2017 Employment Health: Very Vibrant

Percentage of Employment Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Employment	5.75%	8.36%	45.25%	7	4

Percentage of Employment Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Employment	4.21%	7.32%	74.13%	5	4

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047679/Employment-Attorney/>

There was a massive growth in hiring and also interview activity for employment in 2016 compared to 2015. The reasons for the growth in employment-related work could be numerous. Historically, employment is a practice area that is busy during recessionary conditions when there are lawsuits and threats of lawsuits. Work can also be generated during good economies when employers are seeking advice and counseling from their attorneys.

What was notable about the placements we made in 2016 was that the majority of them were not with large, "grade A" law firms. Most of the placements were with specialist employment law firms, law firms outside of major markets, and smaller law firms. This tracks our experience with litigation as well. There is demand for labor and employment attorneys, but most larger law firms do not have this demand to the same extent as specialist firms and those in smaller markets.

Another interesting thing about this practice group is that the majority of attorneys we placed tended not to have the best qualifications--but not all. There is enough demand in the market that unlike litigation and corporate, for example, law firms do not necessarily require the attorneys they hire to have "high-brow" qualifications. For example, we saw several major law firms hire attorneys from second-tier law schools and smaller law firms. Attorneys with top law school and firm qualifications can practically write their tickets at the

associate level in this practice area.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Employment Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment	Central / Mountain States	0.29%	1.38%	373.94%
Employment	Eastern States	1.91%	2.55%	33.59%
Employment	Pacific Standard Time	3.56%	4.43%	24.67%
Employment	Non US	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Percentage of Employment Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Employment	Central / Mountain States	0.76%	1.39%	84.24%
Employment	Eastern States	1.87%	1.60%	-14.41%
Employment	Pacific Standard Time	1.59%	4.31%	171.89%
Employment	Non US	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

In both 2015 and 2016, the most active market in the country for employment attorneys was the West Coast of the United States. However, this practice area grew in every region of the country the past year.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Employment Attorney?

Employment is a strong practice area for lateral attorneys, and employment attorneys are generally in demand at all points in time.

Employment is a good practice area because there is a barrier to entry to some extent and employment attorneys are specialists to some extent.

There is a high demand for attorneys of color, women, and gay and lesbian attorneys in this practice area. One problem with this practice area, however, is that it is not that profitable for most major law firms (except wage-hour class actions) because the billing rates that firms charge for this work tends to be lower (since much of it is routine and not that complex).

Employment is a safe practice area for attorneys to be in and there are opportunities for strong employment attorneys at all points in time.

The one drawback is that the compensation attorneys make in this practice area tends to be lower.

Read More about Employment Law Here:

[Labor & Employment Law](#)

[What It's Like Practicing Employment Law](#)

[The Truth about Employment Law Attorneys](#)

Go Here to Search for Employment Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-3/Employment-jobs.html>

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ERISA/Executive Compensation

2017 ERISA/Executive Compensation Health: Very Vibrant

Percentage of ERISA/Executive Compensation Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
ERISA/Executive Compensation	1.07%	6.60%	518.37%	15	6

Percentage of ERISA/Executive Compensation Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
ERISA/Executive Compensation	2.02%	4.09%	102.31%	17	7

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047583/ERISA-Executive-Compensation-Attorney/>

By every single measure, this practice group went gangbusters in 2016. Whether the attorney was senior with more than 10 years of experience, or junior with only one year of experience--firms at every level were "biting" and eager to hire attorneys in this practice area. Compliance has become extremely important in the ERISA and executive compensation field, and this is keeping attorneys busy.

Despite a massive increase in both placements and interview activity, it is important to note that there are traditionally not a lot of openings in this field. Given the size of this practice area and the few attorneys who do this work, the amount of activity that occurred in 2016 was quite notable. It is also notable that interviews in this practice area are more likely to turn into placements than in other practice areas. There are fewer attorneys, so law firms are not as choosy--even top law firms.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of ERISA / Executive Compensation Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Central / Mountain States	0.61%	2.29%	276.15%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Eastern States	0.30%	1.40%	359.09%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Pacific Standard Time	0.15%	2.91%	1805.81%

Percentage of ERISA / Executive Compensation Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Central / Mountain States	0.52%	0.57%	9.77%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Eastern States	0.99%	1.39%	39.66%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Pacific Standard Time	0.51%	2.11%	313.85%
ERISA/Executive Compensation	Non US	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an ERISA/Executive Compensation Attorney?

ERISA/Executive Compensation is a very popular practice area for attorneys to lateral in and there are

typically a fair number of opportunities in most major markets at all points in time.

Also, this practice area has the added benefit that even lateral attorneys who are more senior (and do not have a book of business) can move laterally, or find positions, if they are flexible geographically.

Many law firms have "institutional" clients, and this makes the requirement that an attorney have portable business less important than in other practice areas.

This practice area has always had a fairly healthy lateral market because the expertise that attorneys have here is so rare.

There are not a lot of openings in this practice area and law firms traditionally do not receive a lot of applicants for most positions.

Read More about ERISA/Executive Compensation Law Here:

[What Is an ERISA Lawyer?](#)

Go Here to Search for ERISA/Executive Compensation Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-43/ERISA_Executive_Compensation-jobs.html

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Real Estate

2017 Real Estate Health: Sick

Percentage of Real Estate Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Real Estate	9.73%	7.52%	-22.77%	3	5

Percentage of Real Estate Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Real Estate	9.24%	7.45%	-19.38%	4	4

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047687/Real-Estate-Attorney/>

The falloff in real estate work in 2016 was quite significant. In 2015, real estate comprised the second most popular practice area for placements (after corporate) and in 2016 it was tied for fourth place with ERISA/Executive Compensation. In every sense, real estate took a hit.

Real estate is also likely to get worse.

From New York to Los Angeles, real estate attorneys saw less work than they had the previous year and had a difficult time getting interviews and offers. The market was not in good shape at all.

There was a lot of real estate work in 2014 and 2015, and this seems to have been driven largely by low-interest rates. As 2016 came to a close, interest rates increased. The increase in interest rates added further tension to the market and seemed to have further decreased the amount of work available in the market.

While I am not a seer, it appears that real estate is a more active practice area when interest rates are low and a less popular one when they are high. It also is less active when the stock market is doing well as opposed to when it is not.

These two conditions towards the end of 2016 (increasing interest rates and a high-performing stock market) have created a "perfect storm" of sorts that will likely make the lateral real estate market perform poorly for 2017 and perhaps for some time to come. Real estate attorneys (especially at the senior level) are beginning to flood the market, and law firms are not biting. The prognosis for this practice area for 2017 is not good.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Real Estate Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Real Estate	Central / Mountain States	1.66%	0.31%	-81.60%
Real Estate	Eastern States	2.73%	3.69%	65.10%
Real Estate	Pacific Standard Time	5.34%	3.52%	-34.08%

Percentage of Real Estate Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Real Estate	Central / Mountain States	1.36%	1.67%	23.10%
Real Estate	Eastern States	4.15%	2.56%	-38.21%
Real Estate	Pacific Standard Time	3.70%	3.19%	-13.94%
Real Estate	Non US	0.03%	0.03%	-9.89%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Real Estate Attorney?

This is a very healthy practice area for attorneys to lateral in--but not historically when interest rates are rising, or the stock market is performing well.

It has a high enough barrier to entry that when firms get busy, they need people to do the work.

This practice area is one where it is also not very difficult for attorneys to attract clients and build books of business once they get to know developers and others.

Attorneys with this experience can also more easily move between firms as senior attorneys (without books of business) than they can in other practice areas.

Read More about Real Estate Law Here:

[How Corporate Attorneys Can Market Themselves for Real Estate Positions](#)

[Today's Hot Property: Real Estate Associates](#)

[New York Recruiter Margaret Gilleran: Why Real Estate Law Is a Hot Market](#)

Go Here to Search for Real Estate Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-13/Real_Estate-jobs.html

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Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences

2017 Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Health: Sick

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	8.98%	11.34%	26.28%	4	3

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	12.07%	9.09%	-24.69%	3	3

Read Broader Descriptions of the Hard and Life Science Aspects of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047683/Intellectual-Property-Patent-Hard-Sciences-Attorney/>
<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047684/Intellectual-Property-Patent-Life-Sciences-Attorney/>

Patent prosecution work went down significantly in 2016 and shows no signs of letting up in 2017. Where patent attorneys were once hard-to-find and rare commodities in the market, they are now quite common. Patent attorneys are still marketable, of course, but there are fewer and fewer jobs. More and more law firms are requiring that their patent attorneys have advanced degrees--including Ph.D.'s--and thus the barrier to entry is getting higher and higher.

In 2016, we also began tracking the percentage of placements in the hard sciences versus the life sciences.
2016 Percentage of Placements in the Life Sciences: 2.59%
2016 Percentage of Placements in the Hard Sciences: 3.9%

The market clearly favors attorneys with hard sciences backgrounds. With life sciences attorneys, the law firms seem almost always to demand that they have Ph.D.'s as well.

See [Top 10 Reasons Most General Practice Firms Have No Idea How to Hire Patent Attorneys](#) for more information.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Central / Mountain States	2.44%	2.84%	16.61%
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Eastern States	4.37%	6.52%	49.27%
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Pacific Standard Time	1.58%	1.99%	26.19%
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Non US	0.61%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Central / Mountain States	3.86%	2.03%	-47.39%
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Eastern States	8.87%	4.87%	-17.03%
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	Pacific Standard Time	2.22%	2.19%	-1.56%
Intellectual Property - Patent General /				

Practice Area	North America	Europe	Asia	Latin America	Global
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In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Intellectual Property--Patent--Hard and Life Sciences Attorney?

Patent prosecution traditionally has been a very healthy lateral market for attorneys. From the mid-1990s until 2012, it was the most consistently active practice area for attorneys to lateral in--especially for people with hard science backgrounds. Post-2010, the market began to slow significantly as more and more attorneys started going into this practice area and the number of highly qualified attorneys willing to do the work significantly outweighed the number of positions in the market. One benefit of this practice area is that in addition to major law firms that do this work, there are countless small boutique law firms that also do the work. Due to the number of small firms that do patent prosecution, it is never much of a problem for attorneys to locate positions in the market. It is much easier to move as a patent attorney with expertise in the hard sciences than it is as a patent attorney with expertise in the life sciences.

Read More about Intellectual Property - Patent - Hard and Life Science Law Here:
[Intellectual Property Law Practice Areas Explained: The Differences Between Patent Law, Trademark Law, Copyright Law, Trade Secret Law and Licensing Law Explained](#)
[The Four Types of Intellectual Property Law Careers: Practicing Intellectual Property Law Careers in Intellectual Property Law](#)

Go Here to Search for Intellectual Property - Patent Jobs:
https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-21/Intellectual_Property_Patent-jobs.html

Go Here to Search for Intellectual Property - Patent Attorney - Hard Sciences Jobs:
https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-36/Intellectual_Property_Patent_Hard_Sciences-jobs.html

Go Here to Search for Intellectual Property - Patent Attorney - Life Sciences Jobs:
https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-35/Intellectual_Property_Patent_Life_Sciences-jobs.html

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Bankruptcy 2017 Bankruptcy Health: Stable

Percentage of Bankruptcy Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Bankruptcy	1.28%	4.30%	237.34%	13	7

Percentage of Bankruptcy Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Bankruptcy	2.26%	5.05%	123.95%	10	6

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:
<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047677/Bankruptcy-Attorney/>

Bankruptcy grew a great deal in 2016 and seems poised to grow in 2017 as well--but you never know. There were several energy bankruptcies in 2016, and this created a lot of work for attorneys.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Bankruptcy Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Bankruptcy	Central / Mountain States	0.30%	0.31%	0.30%
Bankruptcy	Eastern States	0.82%	3.08%	276.35%
Bankruptcy	Pacific Standard Time	0.15%	0.92%	501.83%

Percentage of Bankruptcy Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Bankruptcy	Central / Mountain States	0.24%	0.97%	302.85%
Bankruptcy	Eastern States	1.53%	3.35%	118.71%
Bankruptcy	Pacific Standard Time	0.48%	0.70%	46.11%
Bankruptcy	Non US	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

The majority of this work is done in New York.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Bankruptcy Attorney?

Bankruptcy is a good practice area because it is a relatively small bar and in addition to major law firms, there are also much smaller and well-regarded boutiques that do this work.

Bankruptcy is a countercyclical practice area, and this means that when the economy is good, it can be difficult for these attorneys to find work. In fact, in all but the best economies, bankruptcy attorneys worry about work. In 2017, it looks like this practice area may slow down if the economy continues to improve. The improvement in bankruptcy in 2016 was largely due to large energy company bankruptcies that have worked their way through the system.

A major drawback of this practice area is that there are consistently very few jobs in the market and it tends to be very difficult for attorneys to move laterally. Searches often take some time.

On the flip side, most bankruptcy attorneys end up getting jobs, because while firms may move slowly, there is always a law firm that will hire them.

Most large, general practice law firms maintain at least one or two bankruptcy attorneys in most of their offices when they get over 100 attorneys--because work comes in and they could always get a big case.

At the senior level, there is some stability that attorneys get in larger law firms because they always want to have someone around. Larger law firms hired a lot of senior people in 2016, in New York in particular.

Most of the significant bankruptcy work is in New York, and smaller markets are more difficult to get jobs in.

Read More about Bankruptcy Law Here:

[Transitioning to Bankruptcy](#)

[The Benefits of Practicing Bankruptcy Law](#)

[Bankruptcy Law's Ancient Origins and Current Trends](#)

[What Does It Mean to Be a Bankruptcy Lawyer?](#)

[A Career in Bankruptcy Law](#)

[The Diverse Skillset of the Bankruptcy Lawyer](#)

[The Basics of Bankruptcy Law](#)

Go Here to Search for Bankruptcy Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-1/Bankruptcy-jobs.html>

Healthcare

2017 Healthcare Health: Very Vibrant

Percentage of Healthcare Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Healthcare	2.21%	3.85%	74.41%	11	8

Percentage of Healthcare Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Healthcare	1.43%	3.41%	137.63%	16	10

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047591/Health-Care-Attorney/>

Healthcare was an extremely active practice area in 2016. All over the United States, from Los Angeles to New York, this practice area was active. It was active in Washington, DC; Los Angeles; Denver; Chicago; Minnesota--you name it. Senior attorneys with no business, junior attorneys, attorneys from the government transitioning back into private practice all were getting interviews and jobs. The market was the best it has ever been.

In fact, the market was so active that I saw something I had never seen before succeed. I was working with an attorney who was in her late 50s who had never worked in a law firm before. She was considering moving to Denver and was interested in positions. I started marketing her to law firms in Denver and got her an interview with a major law firm. Her first interview was a telephone-screening interview. After coaching her on how to do a telephone-screening interview, I was under the impression that she would do well and scheduled an interview for her. To my astonishment, she showed up on the telephone-screening interview with her husband, and he proceeded to discuss his wife's unreasonable salary requirements and other information without the woman hardly speaking. When the firm told me what had occurred, I apologized profusely and told them how sorry I was. To my absolute astonishment, the firm indicated that they wanted her to come back.

See [Why Most Attorneys Fail Telephone-Screening Interviews](#) for more information.

By every measure, this practice area did very well in 2016 and was very much in demand. Assuming that even more changes in healthcare law are coming down the pipeline in 2017, this is likely to be a very active practice area in 2017 as well.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Healthcare Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Healthcare	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	3.67%	100.00%
Healthcare	Eastern States	2.00%	0.02%	-98.83%
Healthcare	Pacific Standard Time	0.20%	0.15%	-24.77%

Percentage of Healthcare Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Healthcare	Central / Mountain States	0.49%	1.51%	208.46%
Healthcare	Eastern States	0.80%	1.15%	43.16%
Healthcare	Pacific Standard Time	0.14%	0.75%	428.66%

Healthcare was active all over the country.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Healthcare Attorney?

This was a very healthy lateral practice area in 2015 and 2016, and its popularity is likely to increase.

There are opportunities for healthcare attorneys in most major cities and even many smaller ones.

This practice area requires a level of training and expertise that relatively few attorneys have.

Attorneys at all levels find the market quite receptive to them.

It is not uncommon for attorneys to move from the government to law firms and from in-house to law firms.

Even senior attorneys with 20 or more years of experience can find a warm reception from law firms if they are geographically flexible enough.

Read More about Healthcare Law Here:

[What Is a Healthcare Lawyer?](#)

[Choosing a Career as a Healthcare Attorney](#)

Go Here to Search for Healthcare Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-6/Health_Care-jobs.html

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Antitrust and Competition

2017 Antitrust and Competition Health: Sick

Percentage of Antitrust and Competition Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Antitrust and Competition	0.96%	1.17%	22.51%	17	17

Percentage of Antitrust and Competition Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Antitrust and Competition	0.92%	0.82%	-10.98%	20	23

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047579/Antitrust-and-Competition-Attorney/>

This has traditionally not been that active of a practice area for legal recruiters; however, there were positions in New York and Washington, DC in 2016.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Antitrust and Competition Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Antitrust and Competition	Central / Mountain States	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%
Antitrust and Competition	Eastern States	0.85%	0.94%	10.23%
Antitrust and Competition	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.23%	100.00%
Antitrust and Competition	Non US	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Percentage of Antitrust and Competition Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Antitrust and Competition	Central / Mountain States	0.24%	0.20%	-13.49%
Antitrust and Competition	Eastern States	0.45%	0.37%	-16.50%
Antitrust and Competition	Pacific Standard Time	0.13%	0.22%	70.84%
Antitrust and Competition	Non US	0.11%	0.03%	-77.47%

Many of the jobs in this practice area are in New York and Washington, DC.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Antitrust and Competition Attorney?

There is some demand for lateral attorneys in this practice area, but it tends to be very high-end.

Unless you are very intelligent and have an excellent background, you are going to have a very tough time succeeding in this practice area. This is a practice area for the "big boys" because it is so intellectual and the stakes are so high for big companies with a lot of money to spend.

To succeed in this practice area, you need to make a name for yourself inside of a very prestigious firm early in your career.

You need to impress people inside the firm and get them to take you under their wing.

As a partner, you need to stick out from all the rest and be seen as brilliant by companies and your peers to get this work.

Very few attorneys succeed in this practice area, and almost all of the attorneys work in Washington, DC or New York City.

Read More about Antitrust and Competition Law Here:

[What Does It Mean to Work as an Antitrust Lawyer?](#)

Go Here to Search for Antitrust and Competition Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-29/Antitrust-jobs.html>

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Construction

2017 Construction Health: Stable

Percentage of Construction Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Construction	0.61%	0.21%	-66.05%	22	27

Percentage of Construction Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Construction	0.33%	1.37%	314.63%	27	18

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047580/Construction-Attorney/>

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Construction Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Construction	Eastern States	0.61%	0.02%	-96.14%
Construction	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.18%	100.00%

Percentage of Construction Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Construction	Central / Mountain States	0.15%	0.03%	-77.47%
Construction	Eastern States	0.14%	1.18%	734.58%
Construction	Pacific Standard Time	0.04%	0.13%	240.69%
Construction	Non US	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

This practice area is active wherever there is a construction boom happening.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Construction Attorney?

There is a healthy lateral market for construction attorneys, but this is not one where recruiters tend to be as involved.

The issue with this practice area is that the salaries and the quality of the attorneys are not as important as they are in many other practice areas, which means that there is a large supply of people willing to do the work and law firms can be quite selective.

The practice area is popular in areas of the country where there is a lot of construction activity.

Most of the work that construction attorneys are involved in tends to be residential and not commercial-related work, and this keeps fees low.

Read More about Construction Law Here:

[What Do You Need to Do to Get Construction Law Jobs?](#)

Go Here to Search for Construction Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-24/Construction-jobs.html>

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Data Privacy

2017 Data Privacy Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Data Privacy Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Percentage of Data Privacy Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Data Privacy	0.32%	0.24%	-23.87%	28	30

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047689/Data-Privacy-Attorney/>

This practice area became more and more active during the last half of 2016. This seems like it will be a good practice area in 2017 for attorneys with relevant experience.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Data Privacy Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Data Privacy	Eastern States	0.12%	0.02%	-80.71%
Data Privacy	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.38%	100.00%

Percentage of Data Privacy Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Data Privacy	Eastern States	0.09%	0.18%	95.75%
Data Privacy	Pacific Standard Time	0.23%	0.06%	-73.72%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Data Privacy Attorney?

This is a good practice area for attorneys to lateral in if they have strong qualifications (schools and prior firms).

This practice area tends to go in fits and starts and is busiest when the economy is expanding and then slows down (often to a complete standstill) when the economy slows down.

Although this practice area is developing, it is a fairly risky practice area for attorneys because there are not a lot of partnership opportunities. Moreover, there is not a high barrier to entry and it is not too difficult to learn how to do the work.

The projects for clients also tend to be smaller, and this means that it is difficult for law firms to scale up the practice area (with several attorneys) for various matters and generate large bills.

This practice area is limited and a difficult one for attorneys to make names for themselves with, or become very successful financially doing.

Go Here to Search for Data Privacy Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-10/Data_Privacy-jobs.html

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Energy and Oil & Gas

2017 Energy and Oil & Gas Health: Sick

Percentage of Energy and Oil & Gas Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Percentage of Energy and Oil & Gas Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Energy and Oil & Gas	1.34%	1.28%	-4.36%	17	21

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047581/Energy-and-Oil-Gas-Attorney/>

This was a difficult practice area for attorneys in 2016. There were many layoffs all over the country--especially in Texas. This resulted in large part from oil prices going down and shale oil not being as attractive in the market due to the high costs associated with its production. There were several energy company bankruptcies and not a lot of work anywhere.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Energy and Oil & Gas Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Energy and Oil & Gas	Central / Mountain States	0.63%	0.46%	-27.20%
Energy and Oil & Gas	Eastern States	0.00%	0.48%	100.00%
Energy and Oil & Gas	Pacific Standard Time	0.30%	0.46%	50.46%

Percentage of Energy and Oil & Gas Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Energy and Oil & Gas	Central / Mountain States	0.47%	0.28%	-40.53%
Energy and Oil & Gas	Eastern States	0.52%	0.51%	-0.92%
Energy and Oil & Gas	Pacific Standard Time	0.24%	0.46%	93.94%
Energy and Oil & Gas	Non US	0.11%	0.03%	-77.47%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Energy and Oil & Gas Attorney?

This practice area tends to be difficult for attorneys to lateral in because there are historically not a lot of opportunities. The market in 2017 is not healthy at all and shows no signs of improving.

While it is difficult for attorneys to lateral in this practice area, it tends to be easier for them to build a book of business than in many other practice areas.

In fact, when energy prices are high, there is a lot of work to go around, and attorneys pick up a lot of work. This is a developing field, and there are opportunities for people attracted to it.

From the standpoint of a career choice, though, it is very risky because attorneys are tying their futures to markets that can change on a whim.

When the energy market is not doing well, many attorneys in this practice area lose their jobs. Work can dry up for partners, as well.

Few major law firms have large energy practices--or can sustain them as well as they might other sorts of practices.

Go Here to Search for Energy and Oil & Gas Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-23/Energy_and_Oil_Gas-jobs.html
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Environmental and Land Use

2017 Environmental and Land Use Health: Sick

Percentage of Environmental and Land Use Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Environmental and Land Use	0.73%	0.94%	28.60%	21	19

Percentage of Environmental and Land Use Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Environmental and Land Use	0.89%	1.38%	55.36%	21	17

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047582/Environmental-and-Land-Use-Attorney/>

In every sense of the word, environmental law seems to be dying. There are very few jobs in the market and apart from a few pockets of activity, there is generally not a lot of work to go around. Regardless of the quality of their law firm, environmental attorneys rarely see that warm of a reception from the legal market.

In contrast, land use is a popular practice area and there does seem to be some activity there. Land use attorneys--while not in high demand--are still in demand and do get hired by firms (especially those with robust real estate practices).

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Environmental and Land Use Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Environmental and Land Use	Central / Mountain States	0.12%	0.00%	-100.00%
Environmental and Land Use	Eastern States	0.20%	0.48%	137.26%
Environmental and Land Use	Pacific Standard Time	0.41%	0.46%	12.84%

Percentage of Environmental and Land Use Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Environmental and Land Use	Central / Mountain States	0.13%	0.03%	-79.98%
Environmental and Land Use	Eastern States	0.56%	0.22%	-60.30%
Environmental and Land Use	Pacific Standard Time	0.20%	1.11%	450.22%
Environmental and Land Use	Non US	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Environmental and Land Use Attorney?

This has typically been a dying practice area and very difficult for attorneys to lateral into, or get into, inside of law firms.

There was a time when this was a booming practice area in the late 1970s through the 1980s, but the work that drove this boom has largely gone away.

Very few large law firms do significant work here anymore, and the practice area is a difficult one for attorneys.

There are not a lot of opportunities to lateral into major law firms and have not been for some time.

There are some pockets of success in major law firms, but these tend to be small pockets of attorneys and these attorneys are often concerned about their futures.

From a lateral perspective, when there are opportunities, there are often only a few attorneys who are qualified for them.

This can make getting these jobs less difficult for a qualified candidate than it could be in other practice areas.

Notwithstanding, there are far more attorneys who would like to practice environmental law than there are attorneys who can find jobs inside of law firms doing the work.

This is an exceptionally difficult practice area to get into, stay employed in, and lateral in.

Read More about Environmental and Land Use Law Here:

[What Does It Mean to Work as an Environmental Law Attorney?](#)

[Choosing a Career as an Environment Attorney](#)

[Finding an Environmental Lawyer Job](#)

[Environmental Lawyers](#)

Go Here to Search for Environmental and Land Use Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-4/Environmental_and_Land_Use-jobs.html

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Family Law

2017 Family Law Health: Stable

Percentage of Family Law Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Family Law	0.15%	0.02%	-84.57%	27	31

Percentage of Family Law Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Family Law	0.03%	0.09%	228.10%	32	33

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047585/Family-Law-Attorney/>

Due to the consumer facing nature of this practice area, recruiters are not that active in placing family law attorneys.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Family Law Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
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Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Family Law	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Family Law	Eastern States	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%

Percentage of Family Law Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Family Law	Central / Mountain States	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
Family Law	Eastern States	0.00%	0.09%	100.00%

While there is always a certain demand for family law attorneys in every area of the country, it is not a busy practice area for recruiters.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Family Law Attorney?

There are lateral positions in this practice area--some even filled by legal recruiters--but due to the intimate size of these practice groups and the firms that do this work, recruiters are not frequently used.

Also, the quality of an attorney's academics and the firm is not important for most firms doing this work and therefore law firms often do not require the sourcing of high-end attorneys.

The experience that good family law attorneys get is transferable quite easily to other family law firms.

Also, this is a relatively easy practice area for attorneys to build a client base in.

Read More about Family Law Here:

[Advantages and Disadvantages of Family Law](#)

[Legal Subspecialties in Family Law](#)

[Is Being a Family Lawyer the Right Choice for You?](#)

[Family Law Jobs: Legal Services for the Family](#)

[Looking for Family Law Jobs?](#)

Go Here to Search for Family Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-39/Family_Law-jobs.html

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Finance--Banking

2017 Finance--Banking Health: Stable

Percentage of Finance--Banking Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Finance - Banking	0.03%	0.05%	80.22%	33	35

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047587/Finance-Attorney/>

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Finance--Banking Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Finance - Banking	Central / Mountain	0.00%	0.05%	100.00%

Practice Area	State	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Finance - Banking	Eastern States		0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%

Banking law is most in demand in major cities, especially New York City.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Finance--Banking Attorney?

This is an active practice area at the junior to the midlevel range for attorneys, but it becomes more difficult for attorneys to lateral into firms as they get more senior.

Attorneys in this practice area typically can find positions (in a good economy) quite easily, provided they have less than eight years of experience.

The majority of attorneys who go into this practice area go in-house later in their careers.

The majority of activity is traditionally in the New York legal market.

Read More about Finance--Banking Law Here:

[**What Does It Mean to Be a Banking and Commercial Finance Attorney?**](#)

Go Here to Search for Finance-Banking Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-50/Finance_Banking-jobs.html

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Finance--Project Finance

2017 Finance--Project Finance Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Finance--Project Finance Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Finance--Project Finance	0.91%	0.33%	-63.99%	20	24

Percentage of Finance--Project Finance Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Finance--Project Finance	1.46%	0.65%	-55.71%	15	26

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047586/Finance-Project-Finance-Attorney/>

The market for project finance attorneys has become extremely difficult for attorneys to find jobs in. Most of the positions are with the most prestigious law firms and they are interested only in attorneys with top qualifications. Because the number of positions is so small, there tends to be a great deal of competition for the positions that do exist.

One bright spot in 2017 is that it is likely that the market will improve if new infrastructure and other spending occurs with the new presidential administration. This seems entirely likely given Trump's statements while on the campaign trail about building roads and other infrastructure projects. The market is likely to be much stronger in 2017 and going forward than it has been in years.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Finance--Project Finance Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
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Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Finance - Project Finance	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.33%	100.00%
Finance - Project Finance	Eastern States	0.30%	0.00%	-100.00%
Finance - Project Finance	Pacific Standard Time	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Finance--Project Finance Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Finance - Project Finance	Central / Mountain States	0.08%	0.12%	57.70%
Finance - Project Finance	Eastern States	1.14%	0.47%	-58.89%
Finance - Project Finance	Pacific Standard Time	0.22%	0.03%	-84.33%%
Finance - Project Finance	Non US	0.03%	0.03%	-9.89%

The majority of opportunities are in Washington, DC and New York City, as well as internationally in Hong Kong, Singapore and to a lesser extent London.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Finance--Project Finance Attorney?

Project finance looks like it will grow in 2017, provided there are new infrastructure projects planned and implemented by the new presidential administration.

This is a healthy practice area for lateral attorneys when they are younger.

There tends to be opportunities for them in New York; Washington, DC and also internationally (Hong Kong, Singapore and to a lesser extent London).

There is a relatively small community of attorneys who do this work and just a few firms as well, and most of the major firms that do this work have attorneys in them that formerly worked for the other firms.

At the senior level, advancement is difficult for attorneys without significant business.

This is a difficult practice area to have a long-term career in unless you are exceptional.

Attorneys who succeed in the long-term in this practice area tend to have exceptional qualifications.

Read More about Finance-Project Finance Law Here:

[BCG Attorney Search's Guide to Corporate and Finance Practice Areas](#)

Go Here to Search for Finance-Project Finance Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-34/Finance_Project_Finance-jobs.html

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Food & Drug Administration

2017 Food & Drug Administration Health: Sick

Percentage of Food & Drug Administration Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Food & Drug Administration	0.10%	0.02%	-76.85%	31	32

Percentage of Food & Drug Administration Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Food & Drug					

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047588/Food-Drug-Administration-Attorney/>

This is not an active market for legal recruiters. Given the low number of positions in the market and the relatively small size of the bar, opportunities are few and far between. There are typically at least a few openings nationally at all times, but never a ton of them.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Food & Drug Administration Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Food & Drug Administration	Eastern States	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%
Food & Drug Administration	Non US	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Food & Drug Administration Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Food & Drug Administration	Eastern States	0.00%	0.21%	100.00%
Food & Drug Administration	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.05%	100.00%

Most of this work is done in Washington, DC.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Food & Drug Administration Attorney?

This is a difficult practice area for attorneys outside of Washington, DC.

There is not a healthy market for attorneys with this expertise; however, there is a market.

Since this is a relatively small bar, many of the attorneys know each other and attorneys may enjoy the sense of camaraderie and cooperation that comes from working in this practice area.

Because of the narrowness of this practice and the few number of attorneys doing the work, it is not overly difficult to build a book of business.

Read More about Food & Drug Administration Law Here:

[Attorney Job Opportunities at the Office of the Food and Drug Administration](#)

Go Here to Search for Food & Drug Administration Law Jobs: https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-30/Food_Drug_Administration-jobs.html

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Government and Government Relations

2017 Government and Government Relations Health: Sick

Percentage of Government and Government Relations Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Government and Government Relations	0.93%	0.33%	-64.44%	19	23

Percentage of Government and Government Relations Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Government and Government Relations	0.69%	0.62%	-10.90%	22	27

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047589/Government-and-Government-Relations-Attorney/>

This is not an active market for legal recruiters.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Government and Government Relations Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Government and Government Relations	Central / Mountain States	0.29%	0.00%	-100.00%
Government and Government Relations	Eastern States	0.33%	0.02%	-92.89%
Government and Government Relations	Pacific Standard Time	0.30%	0.31%	0.31%

Percentage of Government and Government Relations Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Government and Government Relations	Central / Mountain States	0.12%	0.25%	104.58%
Government and Government Relations	Eastern States	0.45%	0.29%	-35.39%
Government and Government Relations	Pacific Standard Time	0.12%	0.08%	-38.82%

Much of this work is done in Washington, DC, or in state capitals across the country, but this is not an active market for recruiters.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Government and Government Relations Attorney?

This is not a healthy lateral practice area because it tends to be driven by individuals and not large teams of attorneys.

The practice areas tend to be focused in state capitals and in Washington, DC, which limits where you can move to.

Read More about Government and Government Relations Law Here:

[Government Relations/Public Affaris/Consumer Affairs/Public Relations Jobs for Lawyers](#)

[Things You Must Know If You Want to Get into Government Law Practice](#)

[A Legal Career in Government Practice](#)

[Law Job Opportunities for Legal Professionals in Government](#)

[Consider Becoming a Government Attorney](#)

[The Career Path to Becoming a Government Attorney](#)

Go Here to Search for Government and Government Relations Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-5/Government_and_Government_Relations-jobs.html
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Government Contracts

2017 Government Contracts Health: Sick

Percentage of Government Contracts Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Government Contracts	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%	33	33

Percentage of Government Contracts Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Government Contracts	0.51%	0.10%	-80.00%	25	32

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047590/Government-Contracts-Attorney/>

This is not a practice area for legal recruiters. There have not been a lot of opportunities over the past several years.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Government Contracts Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Government Contracts	Eastern States	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%

Percentage of Government Contracts Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Government Contracts	Eastern States	0.45%	0.10%	-77.49%
Government Contracts	Pacific Standard Time	0.06%	0.00%	-100.00%

Most of this work is done in Washington, DC.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Government Contracts Attorney?

This is not a very active lateral market for attorneys.

The majority of the work tends to be in Washington, DC and it is very difficult for attorneys to lateral to other markets.

Despite all of this, attorneys who become experts in this area of law are in demand and if they cannot lateral to another law firm are often well received by large in-house companies.

Read More about Government Contracts Law Here:

[Things You Must Know If You Want to Get into Government Law Practice](#)
[A Legal Career in Government Practice](#)
[Law Job Opportunities for Legal Professionals in Government](#)
[Consider Becoming a Government Attorney](#)

The Career Path to Becoming a Government Attorney

Go Here to Search for Government Contracts Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-32/Government_Contracts-jobs.html

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Immigration

2017 Immigration Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Immigration Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Immigration	0.10%	1.86%	1728.65%	30	13

Percentage of Immigration Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Immigration	0.36%	1.49%	317.95%	26	15

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047592/Immigration-Attorney/>

Immigration has become a healthy practice area on both coasts. In fact, many large law firms have gotten into this "niche" practice area and are staying busy doing the work. This has become an excellent practice area despite the fact that there are a limited number of opportunities in it. There are a dearth of attorneys at the "high end" with experience from well-regarded law firms and good law school credentials.

Regardless of what is driving this growth, the success of many immigration attorneys I have worked with has been nothing short of remarkable. This is truly a practice area where there is a lot of opportunity for well-credentialed attorneys (who, unfortunately, are rare in this practice area).

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Immigration Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Immigration	Central / Mountain States	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%
Immigration	Eastern States	0.00%	0.94%	100.00%
Immigration	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.92%	100.00%

Percentage of Immigration Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Immigration	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.41%	100.00%
Immigration	Eastern States	0.23%	0.87%	286.44%
Immigration	Pacific Standard Time	0.13%	0.20%	57.70%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Immigration Attorney?

This is a good practice area for attorneys to lateral in.

There tend to be opportunities in most major markets at all times, and some of these are even with major law firms.

Attorneys in this practice area can also often build large books of business through referrals and be marketable from this as well.

Immigration attorneys who are flexible geographically also tend not to have a difficult time finding positions.

Read More about Immigration Law Here:

[Career in Immigration Law](#)

[What Does an Immigration Lawyer Do?](#)

[The Job Functions and Profile of an Immigration Attorney](#)

Go Here to Search for Immigration Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-7/Immigration-jobs.html>

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Insurance Coverage

2017 Insurance Coverage Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Insurance Coverage Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Insurance Coverage	0.58%	0.25%	-56.34%	23	25

Percentage of Insurance Coverage Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Insurance Coverage	0.52%	0.86%	62.53%	24	22

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047604/Insurance-Coverage-Attorney/>

This is a good practice area, but not a great one. During the 2016 calendar year, our candidates were able to get interviews and get placed, but the activity was minimal. There are not a lot of insurance coverage attorneys in the market and there are not a lot of lateral opportunities. As a general rule, the bar for insurance coverage attorneys is relatively small and many attorneys feel adverse to moving. There is also a high likelihood of conflicts when attorneys move in this practice area.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Insurance Coverage Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Insurance Coverage	Eastern States	0.58%	0.25%	-56.34%

Percentage of Insurance Coverage Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Insurance Coverage	Central / Mountain States	0.04%	0.25%	553.31%
Insurance Coverage	Eastern States	0.39%	0.26%	-33.51%
Insurance Coverage	Pacific Standard Time	0.09%	0.36%	277.78%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Insurance Coverage Attorney?

This is a healthy practice area for attorneys to lateral in.

There is a high barrier to entry in this practice area because it takes some time to learn.

Attorneys who do this work can often lateral as more senior attorneys (with more than ten years of experience) without a lot of business, due to the nature of the work and demand for attorneys with this expertise.

Read More about Insurance Coverage Law Here:

[The Marketability of Insurance Attorneys](#)
[Insurance Attorneys](#)

Go Here to Search for Insurance Coverage Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-8/Insurance_Coverage-jobs.html

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Insurance Defense

2017 Insurance Defense Health: Stable

Percentage of Insurance Defense Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Insurance Defense	0.00%	0.25%	100.00%	32	26

Percentage of Insurance Defense Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Insurance Defense	0.08%	0.76%	905.27%	31	25

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047605/Insurance-Defense-Attorney/>

Because insurance companies typically negotiate rates down a great deal for law firms doing insurance defense work, there does not tend to be a lot of work for legal recruiters making insurance defense placements.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Insurance Defense Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Insurance Defense	Eastern States	0.00%	0.25%	100.00%

Percentage of Insurance Defense Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Insurance Defense	Central / Mountain States	0.08%	0.31%	316.77%
Insurance Defense	Eastern States	0.00%	0.24%	100.00%
Insurance Defense	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.21%	100.00%

There is insurance defense work in most of the country, but this is not an active area for recruiters in any particular area of the country.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Insurance Defense Attorney?

The lateral market for attorneys (at the low end) is typically very healthy.

At the high end, the practice area is not typically all that healthy for lateral attorneys.

Read More about Insurance Defense Law Here:

[The Marketability of Insurance Attorneys](#)

[Insurance Attorneys](#)

Go Here to Search for Insurance Defense Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-40/Insurance_Defense-jobs.html

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Intellectual Property--Litigation

2017 Intellectual Property--Litigation Health: Dying

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Litigation Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property--Litigation	2.48%	2.36%	-4.54%	9	10

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Litigation Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property--Litigation	5.50%	3.83%	-30.37%	5	8

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047681/Intellectual-Property-Litigation-Attorney/>

This subset of litigation had a very difficult time in 2016, as well as more general litigation. This is not much different from its horrible performance in 2015, but it was much worse in 2016 than the previous year. Patent litigation attorneys continued to lose their positions. Hiring all over the United States was dim for the most part. While there was some hiring in Silicon Valley and isolated hiring in other areas of the United States, the overall market enthusiasm for this practice area was low.

A great deal of the slowdown has come as a result of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Alice Corp. v. CLS Bank International* (2014), which held "that certain business methods, previously thought to be patentable, are not." This has slowed the work of patent trolls significantly, led to layoffs, reduced work, and created tremendous competition for the few jobs that there are.

There are a lot of sad stories I am hearing about intellectual property litigators losing their jobs--both partners and associates. The market is poor, there is an oversupply of attorneys, and there is not enough work. While there are certain firms that have managed to stay busy, this has become the exception and not the rule. Intellectual property litigators with Ph.D's in electrical engineering who are graduates of top law schools and coming from top firms with one to six years of experience are marketable. Other than that, there are few opportunities.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Litigation Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Central / Mountain States	0.30%	0.18%	-39.82%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Eastern States	1.10%	1.77%	60.11%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	1.07%	0.41%	-61.31%

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Litigation Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Central / Mountain States	2.22%	1.70%	-23.37%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Eastern States	2.02%	1.13%	-44.04%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	1.22%	1.00%	-18.30%
Intellectual Property - Litigation	Non US	0.04%	0.00%	-100.00%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Intellectual Property--Litigation Attorney?

This practice area has slowed dramatically since a series of Supreme Court decisions starting in 2011 and then 2013 that have made life very difficult for patent trolls and slowed a great deal of the patent litigation.

Since this decision, the litigation landscape with patent litigation has slowed dramatically, and patent litigation has become more of a dying practice area than a growing one.

In prior years, patent litigation was among the busiest practice area there was for the largest law firms.

Read More about Intellectual Property Law Here:

[Intellectual Property Law Practice Areas Explained: The Differences Between Patent Law, Trademark Law, Copyright Law, Trade Secret Law and Licensing Law Explained](#)

[The Four Types of Intellectual Property Law Careers: Practicing Intellectual Property Law Careers in Intellectual Property Law](#)

Go Here to Search for Intellectual Property-Litigation Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-20/Intellectual_Property_Litigation-jobs.html

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Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright

2017 Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Health: Sick

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright	1.00%	1.97%	96.20%	16	11

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Intellectual Property--					

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047685/Intellectual-Property-Trademark-Copyright-Attorney/>

Like all forms of intellectual property, trademark and copyright did not have a good year in 2016. There are generally very few positions in this field and we did not see many in 2016 either. Trademark work is something that is not that complex, that law firms do not charge a lot to do, and that is often given to patent attorneys in firms to do when they are slow. The few firms that have dedicated trademark attorneys only rarely hire for positions and when they do the competition is fierce: There are so few trademark jobs that attorneys who want to move traditionally compete fiercely for them.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Central / Mountain States	0.15%	0.00%	-100.00%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Eastern States	0.60%	0.33%	-44.67%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Pacific Standard Time	0.15%	1.64%	973.27%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Non US	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Central / Mountain States	0.25%	0.64%	61.74%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Eastern States	0.39%	0.72%	45.38%
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	Pacific Standard Time	0.56%	0.60%	7.29%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an Intellectual Property--Trademark/Copyright Attorney?

From a legal recruiting standpoint, there have never been a ton of positions in trademark law.

At any one time, there are very few trademark attorneys across the country at major law firms. This is a very difficult practice area for attorneys to last very long in.

What is most frightening about this practice area is that in a down economy, or when an attorney loses his or her job (for whatever reason), the attorney may have a next to impossible time finding a position with another law firm.

Read More about Intellectual Property Law Here:

[Intellectual Property Law Practice Areas Explained: The Differences Between Patent Law, Trademark Law, Copyright Law, Trade Secret Law and Licensing Law Explained](#)

[The Four Types of Intellectual Property Law Careers: Practicing Intellectual Property Law Careers in Intellectual Property Law](#)

Go Here to Search for Intellectual Property-Trademark/Copyright Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-25/Intellectual_Property_Trademark_Copyright-jobs.html

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International Trade

2017 International Trade Health: Stable

Percentage of International Trade Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
International Trade	0.41%	0.94%	131.47%	24	21

Percentage of International Trade Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
International Trade	0.28%	0.82%	190.67%	29	24

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047593/International-Trade-Attorney/>

This is traditionally not an active practice area for legal recruiters.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of International Trade Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
International Trade	Eastern States	0.30%	0.94%	208.63%
International Trade	Non US	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of International Trade Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
International Trade	Central / Mountain States	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
International Trade	Eastern States	0.07%	0.72%	943.54%
International Trade	Pacific Standard Time	0.19%	0.10%	-45.15%

The positions tend to be on the East Coast, especially in Washington, DC.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as an International Trade Attorney?

This is a difficult position for most attorneys to lateral in.

There tend not to be a lot of positions, and almost all of these are centered in Washington, DC.

Go Here to Search for International Trade Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-33/International_Trade-jobs.html

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Municipal Law

2017 Municipal Law Health: Stable

Percentage of Municipal Law Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Municipal Law	0.00%	0.11%	100.00%	36	31

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047595/Municipal-Law-Attorney/>

Because the work is done on behalf of cities, there tends to be downward pressure on billable hours and the work tends to be done by smaller, specialist firms that do not care as much about an attorney's qualifications and do not pay market salaries. Accordingly, legal recruiters typically are not that involved in municipal law-related work.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Municipal Law Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Municipal Law	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%
Municipal Law	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	0.08%	100.00%

There is work in municipal law in every major city, but this is not typically an active area for recruiters (except at the high end).

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Municipal Law Attorney?

This is a relatively safe practice area to lateral in because there tends to be a steady demand for attorneys with this expertise.

At the upper end, this is a healthy lateral market, and recruiters play an integral role.

Many attorneys in this practice area are also frequently able to generate respectable books of business when they have one or more significant municipal clients.

Read More about Municipal Law Here:

[Municipal Law Job Description](#)

Go Here to Search for Municipal Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-48/Municipal_Law-jobs.html

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Patent Agents/Technical Specialists

2017 Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Health: Sick

Percentage of Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	3.97%	0.09%	-97.73%	7	28

Percentage of Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Patent Agents/Technical					

Specialists	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
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Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047596/Patent-Agent-Technical-Specialist-Attorney/>

This practice area got hit hard in every sense of the word in 2016 and it does not look like things will be better in 2017. Given an overall low demand for patent attorneys, there was very little need to send this work "downstream" to patent agents.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Central / Mountain States	0.61%	0.00%	-100.00%
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Eastern States	0.20%	0.07%	-65.28%
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Pacific Standard Time	3.15%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Central / Mountain States	1.22%	0.75%	-38.69%
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Eastern States	0.57%	0.05%	-91.39%
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	Pacific Standard Time	1.67%	0.56%	-66.40%

Most of this work is done in Boston and Silicon Valley.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Patent Agent/Technical Specialist?

This is not an active practice area in the legal recruiting realm because there tend to be far more highly qualified technical specialists and patent agents than there are jobs.

Nevertheless, there is a lateral market for patent agents, but legal recruiters are not frequently used because there is just not a lot of demand.

The busiest areas for this work tend to be in Boston and Silicon Valley.

Read More about Patent Agents/Technical Specialists Here:

[What Makes a Strong Patent Agent Candidate?](#)

[Do I Need to Meet the Patent Experience Requirements for Patent Agent Opportunities at Major Law Firms?](#)

[I'm a Patent Agent, When Should I Start Searching for a Job?](#)

[Gaining Experience as a Patent Agent: Tips by BCG Attorney Search](#)

[What Advice Do You Have if I Want to Be a Patent Agent?](#)

[How to Become a Patent Lawyer](#)

[How to Become a Patent Attorney](#)

Go Here to Search for Patent Agents/Technical Specialist Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-28/Patent_Agents_Technical_Specialists-jobs.html

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Securities Litigation

2017 Securities Litigation Health: Sick

Percentage of Securities Litigation Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Securities Litigation	1.27%	1.12%	-11.48%	14	18

Percentage of Securities Litigation Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Securities Litigation	1.49%	1.89%	26.61%	14	14

This was not a very active practice area in 2016 and it does not seem like it will be very active in 2017, either.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Securities Litigation Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Securities Litigation	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.31%	100.00%
Securities Litigation	Eastern States	0.91%	0.02%	-97.43%
Securities Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	0.36%	0.80%	123.54%

Percentage of Securities Litigation Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Securities Litigation	Central / Mountain States	0.00%	0.14%	100.00%
Securities Litigation	Eastern States	0.48%	0.77%	61.28%
Securities Litigation	Pacific Standard Time	0.98%	0.95%	-2.86%
Securities Litigation	Non US	0.04%	0.03%	-9.89%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Securities Litigation Attorney?

The lateral market does not appear to be very strong for this practice area, except for certain very highly trained attorneys with "niche" expertise.

Read More about Securities Litigation Here:

[The Securities Fraud Job Market](#)

Go Here to Search for Securities Litigation Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-27/Securities_Litigation-jobs.html

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Tax

2017 Tax Health: Sick

Percentage of Tax Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Tax	4.05%	2.78%	-31.47%	6	9

Percentage of Tax Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Tax	5.00%	3.43%	-31.33%	6	9

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047688/Tax-Attorney/>

Tax has not been that active of a practice area for the past several years. There are just too many tax attorneys in the market for the number of available positions. I have profound respect for tax attorneys because they really connect with their subject matter. Most go to expensive LL.M. programs and many take jobs in accounting firms and try and transition into law firms. Most never make it into law firms. This intellectually challenging and interesting practice area has far too many attorneys in it competing for far too few jobs.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Tax Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Tax	Central / Mountain States	0.85%	1.38%	62.03%
Tax	Eastern States	2.59%	1.40%	-45.99%
Tax	Pacific Standard Time	0.61%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Tax Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Tax	Central / Mountain States	0.93%	0.82%	-11.45%
Tax	Eastern States	3.46%	2.17%	-37.46%
Tax	Pacific Standard Time	0.60%	0.44%	-26.78%

Most of this work is done in major markets, especially in New York City.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Tax Attorney?

This has traditionally been a very difficult area for attorneys to lateral between firms in.

There are typically numerous applicants for each position in the market.

There are a high number of tax LL.M's and attorneys in accounting firms who are hungry for most positions. Since tax lawyers typically are in a supporting role for corporate attorneys and tend to be introverted, they often do not generate business and all but a few get weeded out when they get more senior (this is a very difficult practice area to make partner in).

Also, because the work is so specialized, the majority of the positions tend to be in major markets (New York City, in particular) and tax attorneys generally cannot move to smaller markets.

Read More about Tax Law Here:

What It Is Like to Be a Tax Law Attorney - Tax Attorney Careers

The Benefits of Choosing a Career as a Tax Attorney

What Is a Tax Attorney?

Taxes: No Longer Just for Accountants

How to Start a Career as a Tax Attorney

Go Here to Search for Tax Law Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-14/Tax-jobs.html>

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Technology Transactions

2017 Technology Transactions Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Technology Transactions Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Technology Transactions	2.46%	1.93%	-21.33%	10	12

Percentage of Technology Transactions Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Technology Transactions	2.51%	2.73%	8.41%	9	11

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047599/Technology-Transactions-Attorney/>

This practice area has been relatively stable in Silicon Valley and there are a fair number of openings on an ongoing basis for attorneys in this market coming from good firms, with good law firm pedigrees. While the numbers do not indicate this, I believe that this practice area will grow in 2017.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Technology Transactions Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Technology Transactions	Central / Mountain States	0.20%	0.00%	-100.00%
Technology Transactions	Eastern States	0.63%	0.33%	-47.73%
Technology Transactions	Pacific Standard Time	1.52%	1.61%	5.32%
Technology Transactions	Non US	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%

Percentage of Technology Transactions Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Technology Transactions	Central / Mountain States	0.46%	0.13%	-72.45%
Technology Transactions	Eastern States	0.39%	1.35%	248.54%
Technology Transactions	Pacific Standard Time	1.66%	1.24%	-25.18%

Much of this work is done in Silicon Valley.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Technology Transactions Attorney?

This has become an increasingly popular practice area in the lateral market. Attorneys in this practice area coming from large law firms generally can get interviews all over the country if the economy is growing and the conditions are right. It can be among the "hottest" practice areas there is.

However, when the economy slows down and this work is not popular the inverse is true: The work comes to a complete stop, and there is not a lot of work out there.

This work tends to move in fits and starts, and layoffs are common when the economy slows.

This is a difficult career for attorneys who want to work in law firms for their entire careers.

It is also a difficult practice area for law firms to scale because clients are often cost conscious with this sort of work.

Go Here to Search for Technology Transactions Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-26/Technology_Transactions-jobs.html

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Telecommunications

2017 Telecommunications Health: Dying

Percentage of Telecommunications Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Telecommunications	0.35%	0.02%	93.19%	26	30

Percentage of Telecommunications Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Telecommunications	0.12%	0.09%	-29.33%	30	34

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047600/Telecommunications-Attorney/>

This practice area has been sliding downhill since 2001. It just keeps getting worse and worse. There are not many opportunities for attorneys in this practice area.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Telecommunications Placements By Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Telecommunications	Central / Mountain States	0.12%	0.00%	-100.00%
Telecommunications	Eastern States	0.22%	0.02%	-89.48%

Percentage of Telecommunications Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Telecommunications	Central / Mountain States	0.04%	0.00%	-100.00%
Telecommunications	Eastern States	0.06%	0.06%	-2.58%
Telecommunications	Pacific Standard Time	0.02%	0.03%	12.64%

Many, but not all positions in this practice area are in Washington, DC.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Telecommunications Attorney?

This has not been an active lateral market for some time.

There was a period in the 1990s when this practice area was extremely active, but since that time it has slowed down a great deal, and there are not a lot of lateral opportunities for attorneys in this practice area. Most of the positions in this practice area are in Washington, DC; however, there are typically positions in other markets as well.

Read More about Telecommunications Law Here:

[The Job Functions and Profile of a Telecommunications Attorney](#)

[What Is a Telecommunications Attorney?](#)

[Choosing a Career as a Telecommunication Attorney](#)

[Telecommunications Attorney Job Description](#)

Go Here to Search for Telecommunications Law Jobs:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-15/Telecommunications-jobs.html>

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Trust and Estates

2017 Trusts and Estates Health: Vibrant

Percentage of Trust and Estates Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Trust and Estates	2.80%	0.94%	-66.40%	8	19

Percentage of Trusts and Estates Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Trust and Estates	1.77%	1.45%	-17.94%	12	16

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047601/Trusts-and-Estates-Attorney/>

Despite appearances, this practice area should experience some growth in 2017. Law firms on the West Coast and also the East Coast have had a consistent number of openings and appear interested in hiring laterally. We have had great success with trust and estates attorneys with good to excellent qualifications.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Trusts and Estates Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Trust and Estates	Central / Mountain States	0.24%	0.00%	-100.00%
Trust and Estates	Eastern States	1.95%	0.02%	-98.79%
Trust and Estates	Pacific Standard Time	0.61%	0.92%	50.46%

Percentage of Trusts and Estates Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
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Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Trust and Estates	Central / Mountain States	0.42%	0.42%	-1.25%
Trust and Estates	Eastern States	1.26%	0.59%	-53.15%
Trust and Estates	Pacific Standard Time	0.09%	0.45%	376.90%

Markets in both the East and West Coasts have positions in this practice area.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Trusts and Estates Attorney?

Because this is not a particularly profitable practice area for most law firms, there do not tend to be a lot of lateral opportunities in trust and estates.

Most of the opportunities for laterals tend to be midlevel to senior trust and estates attorneys who are taking over and assisting with "legacy practices" of attorneys who are getting senior and ready to retire at law firms around the country.

One nice thing about this practice area, however, is that it is quite conducive to building a book of business since attorneys tend to interact with a lot of people who know people like themselves and refer work.

Read More about Trusts and Estates Law Here:

[Choosing a Career as a Trusts and Estates Attorney](#)

Go Here to Search for Trust and Estates Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-16/Trust_and_Estates-jobs.html

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White Collar Crime

2017 White Collar Crime Health: Sick

Percentage of White Collar Crime Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
White Collar Crime	0.12%	1.63%	1235.80%	28	14

Percentage of White Collar Crime Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
White Collar Crime	1.71%	2.32%	35.23%	13	12

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047602/White-Collar-Crime-Attorney/>

This is typically not an active practice area for legal recruiters. Most placements and interviews have been for attorneys coming from the US Attorney's Office, or in law firms with "niche" experience in a certain type of white collar crime (money laundering, for example). The more niche the attorney's experience the more marketable the attorney has been.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of White Collar Crime Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
White Collar Crime	Eastern States	0.12%	0.48%	295.44%
White Collar Crime	Pacific Standard Time	0.00%	1.15%	100.00%

Percentage of White Collar Crime Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
White Collar Crime	Central / Mountain States	0.16%	0.29%	75.07%
White Collar Crime	Eastern States	1.02%	1.15%	11.95%
White Collar Crime	Pacific Standard Time	0.53%	0.88%	68.08%

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a White Collar Crime Attorney?

There typically are very few lateral attorney positions open in major law firms for white collar litigators. Most of the positions that are available tend to be filled with attorneys from the US Attorney's Office who are recruited there by people they know already working inside of law firms. This is an extremely difficult job to lateral in.

Read More about White Collar Crime Law Here:

[White Collar Crime Fighters of the Corporate World](#)

Go Here to Search for White Collar Crime Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-17/White_Collar_Crime-jobs.html

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Workers' Compensation

2017 Workers' Compensation Health: Stable

Percentage of Workers' Compensation Placements

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Workers' Compensation	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%	34	34

Percentage of Workers' Compensation Interviews

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Workers' Compensation	0.00%	0.04%	100.00%	37	36

Read a Broader Description of This Practice Area Here:

<https://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900047603/Workers-Compensation-Attorney/>

Because this is a consumer-facing branch of law, legal recruiters typically do not place a lot of Workers' Compensation attorneys.

Geographic Observations

Percentage of Workers' Compensation Placements by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Workers' Compensation	Eastern States	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%

Percentage of Workers' Compensation Interviews by Geographic Region

Practice Area	Time Zone USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
	Central / Mountain			

Practice Area	State	Time Zone	USA	2015	2016	% of Growth
Workers' Compensation	Eastern States			0.00%	0.01%	100.00%

While you can find attorneys practicing this type of law throughout the country, this is not a busy practice area for recruiters.

In 2017, What Are the Prospects for Moving Laterally as a Workers' Compensation Attorney?

This is a fairly easy practice area for attorneys to lateral to other firms in.

Since the quality of the attorneys and the salaries tend not to be the highest, legal recruiters are rarely involved in these placements. There is also an oversupply of attorneys interested in doing the work.

Read More about Workers' Compensation Law Here:

[How to Become a Workers' Compensation Lawyer](#)

[How to Become a Compensation Lawyer](#)

Go Here to Search for Workers' Compensation Law Jobs:

https://www.bcgsearch.com/attorney-jobs/pa-42/Workers_Compensation-jobs.html

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Conclusions

This past year, the most interesting trend I have seen--and expect to continue to see in 2017--is an increased demand by law firms for specialists. Generalists have fallen out of favor and law firms now more than ever want attorneys who have "niche" practice area experience--in both mainstream and (to a lesser extent) nontraditional niche practice areas.

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[i] I run a national legal recruiting firm with recruiters reporting to me from all over the United States. I manage these recruiters and also am a legal recruiter myself--the only recruiter in our company who recruits nationally and works with attorneys all over the United States. For all of 2016, except for a three-week summer vacation, I recruited from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm every workday and spoke with thousands of attorneys. I also spent each Sunday writing articles based on my observations from the past week.

Frankly, I love recruiting and am extremely dedicated to it. I am deeply invested in this profession, and my observations come from the vantage point of someone who has thrown himself into this completely. When I am working full-time, I typically make at least one placement per week and have multiple people interviewing most days. BCG's other recruiters also are very busy and make placements each week as well. BCG as a company typically makes at least one placement per day. I closely monitor everything that happens in our company and with our candidates and pay close attention to what law firms will pay in every type of market.

I also operate a legal job site, [LawCrossing](#), which monitors the hiring needs of every law firm and corporation in the United States. This company has over 100 employees and is the most trafficked legal job site in the world. This gives me a unique insight into the legal market, as well, because I can see the openings, demand from employers, and demand from job seekers at all levels.

As a general matter, I do not spend a lot of time attending conferences, giving talks, or writing papers because most of my time is consumed by recruiting. Just like a doctor is available at all times for his or her patients, as a legal recruiter, I am available at all times for my candidates. Nevertheless, as a result of my work, I am in the center of things relating to the legal market, and I truly believe I have a solid understanding of the state of that market. To share this information with those who can benefit from it, I make the time to write articles and reports such as this one.

[ii] For more information about how one assesses the strength of the legal market, and about Law Firm Hiring Paradigms and the Market, please please see [State of the American Legal Job Market 2016: Hot and Weak Practice Areas of 2016](#).

Statistical Data Related to BCG's 2017 State of the Market Report

Percentage of BCG Placements by Practice Area with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Antitrust and Competition	0.96%	1.17%	22.51%	17	17
Bankruptcy	1.28%	4.30%	237.34%	13	7
Construction	0.61%	0.21%	-66.05%	22	27
Corporate	30.39%	17.86%	-41.23%	1	1
Data Privacy	0.12%	0.41%	232.75%	29	22
Employment	5.75%	8.36%	45.25%	5	4
Energy and Oil & Gas	0.93%	1.40%	49.70%	18	15
Environmental and Land Use	0.73%	0.94%	28.60%	21	20
ERISA/Executive Compensation	1.07%	6.60%	518.37%	15	6
Family Law	0.15%	0.02%	-84.57%	27	31
Finance - Project Finance	0.91%	0.33%	-63.99%	20	24
Food & Drug Administration	0.10%	0.02%	-76.85%	31	32
Government and Government Relations	0.93%	0.33%	-64.44%	19	23
Government Contracts	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%	33	33
Health Care	2.21%	3.85%	74.41%	11	8
Immigration	0.10%	1.86%	1728.65%	30	13
Insurance Coverage	0.58%	0.25%	-56.34%	23	25
Insurance Defense	0.00%	0.25%	100.00%	32	26
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	8.98%	11.34%	26.28%	4	3
Intellectual Property - Litigation	2.48%	2.36%	-4.54%	9	10
Intellectual Property - Other	0.38%	1.34%	255.97%	25	16
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	1.00%	1.97%	96.20%	16	11
International Trade	0.41%	0.94%	131.47%	24	21
Litigation	13.06%	17.79%	36.22%	2	2
Other	2.12%	0.02%	-98.89%	12	29
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	3.97%	0.09%	-97.73%	7	28
Real Estate	9.73%	7.52%	-22.77%	3	5
Securities Litigation	1.27%	1.12%	-11.48%	14	18
Tax	4.05%	2.78%	-31.47%	6	9
Technology Transactions	2.46%	1.93%	-21.33%	10	12

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Telecommunications	0.35%	0.02%	-93.19%	26	30
Trust and Estates	2.80%	0.94%	-66.40%	8	19
White Collar Crime	0.12%	1.63%	1235.80%	28	14
Workers Compensation	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%	34	34

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Percentage of BCG Interviews by Practice Areas with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Antitrust and Competition	0.92%	0.82%	-10.98%	20	23
Bankruptcy	2.26%	5.05%	123.95%	10	6
Construction	0.33%	1.37%	314.63%	27	18
Corporate	24.15%	15.52%	-35.73%	1	2
Data Privacy	0.32%	0.24%	-23.87%	28	30
Employment	4.21%	7.32%	74.13%	7	5
Energy and Oil & Gas	1.34%	1.28%	-4.36%	17	21
Environmental and Land Use	0.89%	1.38%	55.36%	21	17
ERISA/Executive Compensation	2.02%	4.09%	102.31%	11	7
Family Law	0.03%	0.09%	228.10%	32	33
Finance - Banking	0.03%	0.05%	80.22%	33	35
Finance - Project Finance	1.46%	0.65%	-55.71%	15	26
Food & Drug Administration	0.00%	0.26%	100.00%	35	29
Government and Government Relations	0.69%	0.62%	-10.90%	22	27
Government Contracts	0.51%	0.10%	-80.00%	25	32
Health Care	1.43%	3.41%	137.63%	16	10
Immigration	0.36%	1.49%	317.95%	26	15
Insurance Coverage	0.52%	0.86%	65.53%	24	22
Insurance Defense	0.08%	0.76%	905.27%	31	25
Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	12.07%	9.09%	-24.69%	3	3
Intellectual Property	0.03%	0.02%	-18.90%	34	37
Intellectual Property - Litigation	5.50%	3.83%	-30.37%	5	8
Intellectual Property - Other	1.14%	1.35%	18.71%	19	20
Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	1.20%	1.96%	64.11%	18	13
International Trade	0.28%	0.82%	190.67%	29	24
Litigation	12.34%	16.23%	31.48%	2	1
Municipal Law	0.00%	0.11%	100.00%	36	31
Other	0.58%	0.45%	-22.25%	23	28
Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	3.46%	1.36%	-60.69%	8	19
Real Estate	9.24%	7.45%	-19.38%	4	4
Securities Litigation	1.49%	1.89%	26.61%	14	14
Tax	5.00%	3.43%	-31.33%	6	9

Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth	2015 Rank	2016 Rank
Technology Transactions	2.51%	2.73%	8.41%	9	11
Telecommunications	0.12%	0.09%	-29.33%	30	34
Trust and Estates	1.77%	1.45%	-17.94%	12	16
White Collar Crime	1.71%	2.32%	35.23%	13	12
Workers Compensation	0.00%	0.04%	100.00%	37	36

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Placement-Based Chart for Pacific States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Pacific Standard Time	Antitrust and Competition	0.00%	0.23%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Bankruptcy	0.15%	0.92%	501.83%
Pacific Standard Time	Construction	0.00%	0.18%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Corporate	9.55%	1.61%	-83.19%
Pacific Standard Time	Data Privacy	0.00%	0.38%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Employment	3.56%	4.43%	24.67%
Pacific Standard Time	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.30%	0.46%	50.46%
Pacific Standard Time	Environmental and Land Use	0.41%	0.46%	12.84%
Pacific Standard Time	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.15%	2.91%	1805.81%
Pacific Standard Time	Finance - Project Finance	0.30%	0.00%	-100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Government and Government Relations	0.30%	0.31%	0.31%
Pacific Standard Time	Health Care	0.20%	0.15%	-24.77%
Pacific Standard Time	Immigration	0.00%	0.92%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	1.58%	1.99%	26.19%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Litigation	1.07%	0.41%	-61.31%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Other	0.15%	0.46%	200.92%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	0.15%	1.64%	973.27%
Pacific Standard Time	Litigation	3.86%	9.43%	144.30%
Pacific Standard Time	Other	0.81%	0.00%	-100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	3.15%	0.00%	-100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Real Estate	5.34%	3.52%	-34.08%
Pacific Standard Time	Securities Litigation	0.36%	0.80%	123.54%
Pacific Standard Time	Tax	0.61%	0.00%	-100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Technology Transactions	1.52%	1.61%	5.32%
Pacific Standard Time	Trust and Estates	0.61%	0.92%	50.46%
Pacific Standard Time	White Collar Crime	0.00%	1.15%	100.00%

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Placement-Based Chart for Central/Mountain States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Central / Mountain	Antitrust and Competition	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Bankruptcy	0.30%	0.31%	0.31%

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Central / Mountain	Corporate	5.34%	6.57%	231.0%
Central / Mountain	Employment	0.29%	1.38%	373.94%
Central / Mountain	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.63%	0.46%	-27.20%
Central / Mountain	Environmental and Land Use	0.12%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.61%	2.29%	276.15%
Central / Mountain	Family Law	0.15%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Finance - Project Finance	0.51%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Government and Government Relations	0.29%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Health Care	0.00%	3.67%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Immigration	0.10%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	2.44%	2.84%	16.61%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Litigation	0.30%	0.18%	-39.82%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Other	0.10%	0.18%	80.55%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	0.15%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Litigation	2.24%	3.06%	36.43%
Central / Mountain	Other	0.30%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	0.61%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Real Estate	1.66%	0.31%	-81.60%
Central / Mountain	Securities Litigation	0.00%	0.31%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Tax	0.85%	1.38%	62.03%
Central / Mountain	Technology Transactions	0.20%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Telecommunications	0.12%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Trust and Estates	0.24%	0.00%	-100.00%

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Placement-Based Chart for Eastern States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Eastern	Antitrust and Competition	0.85%	0.94%	10.23%
Eastern	Bankruptcy	0.82%	3.08%	276.35%
Eastern	Construction	0.61%	0.02%	-96.14%
Eastern	Corporate	15.39%	9.68%	-37.11%
Eastern	Data Privacy	0.12%	0.02%	-80.71%
Eastern	Employment	1.91%	2.55%	33.59%
Eastern	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.00%	0.48%	100.00%
Eastern	Environmental and Land Use	0.20%	0.48%	137.26%
Eastern	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.30%	1.40%	359.09%
Eastern	Family Law	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%
Eastern	Finance - Project Finance	0.00%	0.33%	100.00%
Eastern	Food & Drug Administration	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%
Eastern	Government and Government Relations	0.33%	0.02%	-92.89%
Eastern	Government Contracts	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Eastern	Health Care	2.00%	0.02%	-99.88%
Eastern	Immigration	0.00%	0.94%	100.00%
Eastern	Insurance Coverage	0.58%	0.25%	-56.34%
Eastern	Insurance Defense	0.00%	0.25%	100.00%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	4.37%	6.52%	49.27%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Litigation	1.10%	1.77%	60.11%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Other	0.12%	0.70%	470.97%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	0.60%	0.33%	-44.67%
Eastern	International Trade	0.30%	0.94%	208.63%
Eastern	Litigation	6.96%	5.30%	-23.84%
Eastern	Other	1.01%	0.02%	-97.66%
Eastern	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	0.20%	0.07%	-65.28%
Eastern	Real Estate	2.73%	3.69%	35.10%
Eastern	Securities Litigation	0.91%	0.02%	-97.43%
Eastern	Tax	2.59%	1.40%	-45.99%
Eastern	Technology Transactions	0.63%	0.33%	-47.73%
Eastern	Telecommunications	0.22%	0.02%	-89.48%
Eastern	Trust and Estates	1.95%	0.02%	-98.79%
Eastern	White Collar Crime	0.12%	0.48%	295.44%
Eastern	Workers Compensation	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%

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Interview-Based Chart for Pacific States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Pacific Standard Time	Antitrust and Competition	0.13%	0.22%	70.84%
Pacific Standard Time	Bankruptcy	0.48%	0.70%	46.11%
Pacific Standard Time	Construction	0.04%	0.13%	240.69%
Pacific Standard Time	Corporate	7.40%	2.98%	-59.76%
Pacific Standard Time	Data Privacy	0.23%	0.06%	-73.72%
Pacific Standard Time	Employment	1.59%	4.31%	171.89%
Pacific Standard Time	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.24%	0.46%	93.94%
Pacific Standard Time	Environmental and Land Use	0.20%	1.11%	450.22%
Pacific Standard Time	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.51%	2.11%	313.85%
Pacific Standard Time	Finance - Project Finance	0.22%	0.03%	-84.33%
Pacific Standard Time	Food & Drug Administration	0.00%	0.05%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Government and Government Relations	0.12%	0.08%	-38.82%
Pacific Standard Time	Government Contracts	0.06%	0.00%	-100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Health Care	0.14%	0.75%	428.66%
Pacific Standard Time	Immigration	0.13%	0.20%	57.70%
Pacific Standard Time	Insurance Coverage	0.09%	0.36%	277.78%
Pacific Standard Time	Insurance Defense	0.00%	0.21%	100.00%

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	2.22%	2.19%	-1.36%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Litigation	1.22%	1.00%	-18.30%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Other	0.15%	0.45%	209.35%
Pacific Standard Time	Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	0.56%	0.60%	7.86%
Pacific Standard Time	International Trade	0.19%	0.10%	-45.15%
Pacific Standard Time	Litigation	3.77%	6.94%	83.83%
Pacific Standard Time	Municipal Law	0.00%	0.08%	100.00%
Pacific Standard Time	Other	0.03%	0.07%	152.31%
Pacific Standard Time	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	1.67%	0.56%	-66.40%
Pacific Standard Time	Real Estate	3.70%	3.19%	-13.94%
Pacific Standard Time	Securities Litigation	0.98%	0.95%	-2.86%
Pacific Standard Time	Tax	0.60%	0.44%	-26.78%
Pacific Standard Time	Technology Transactions	1.66%	1.24%	-25.18%
Pacific Standard Time	Telecommunications	0.02%	0.03%	12.64%
Pacific Standard Time	Trust and Estates	0.09%	0.45%	376.90%
Pacific Standard Time	White Collar Crime	0.53%	0.88%	68.08%

[TOP](#)

Interview Based Chart for Central/Mountain States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Central / Mountain	Antitrust and Competition	0.24%	0.20%	-13.49%
Central / Mountain	Bankruptcy	0.24%	0.97%	302.85%
Central / Mountain	Construction	0.15%	0.03%	-77.47%
Central / Mountain	Corporate	3.10%	3.63%	17.09%
Central / Mountain	Employment	0.76%	1.39%	84.24%
Central / Mountain	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.47%	0.28%	-40.53%
Central / Mountain	Environmental and Land Use	0.13%	0.03%	-79.98%
Central / Mountain	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.52%	0.57%	9.77%
Central / Mountain	Family Law	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Finance - Banking	0.00%	0.05%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Finance - Project Finance	0.08%	0.12%	57.70%
Central / Mountain	Government and Government Relations	0.12%	0.25%	104.58%
Central / Mountain	Health Care	0.49%	1.51%	208.46%
Central / Mountain	Immigration	0.00%	0.41%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Insurance Coverage	0.04%	0.25%	553.31%
Central / Mountain	Insurance Defense	0.08%	0.31%	316.77%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	3.86%	2.03%	-47.39%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Litigation	2.22%	1.70%	-23.37%
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Other	0.16%	0.18%	12.99%

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Central / Mountain	Intellectual Property - Trademark/Copyright	0.25%	0.64%	161.35%
Central / Mountain	International Trade	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Litigation	2.45%	2.93%	19.61%
Central / Mountain	Municipal Law	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Other	0.00%	0.14%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	1.22%	0.75%	-38.69%
Central / Mountain	Real Estate	1.36%	1.67%	23.10%
Central / Mountain	Securities Litigation	0.00%	0.14%	100.00%
Central / Mountain	Tax	0.93%	0.82%	-11.45%
Central / Mountain	Technology Transactions	0.46%	0.13%	-72.45%
Central / Mountain	Telecommunications	0.04%	0.00%	-100.00%
Central / Mountain	Trust and Estates	0.42%	0.42%	-1.25%
Central / Mountain	White Collar Crime	0.16%	0.29%	75.07%
Central / Mountain	Workers Compensation	0.00%	0.03%	100.00%

[TOP](#)

Interview-Based Chart for Eastern States with Comparison between 2015 and 2016

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Eastern	Antitrust and Competition	0.45%	0.37%	-16.50%
Eastern	Bankruptcy	1.53%	3.35%	118.71%
Eastern	Construction	0.14%	1.18%	734.58%
Eastern	Corporate	13.15%	8.77%	-33.28%
Eastern	Data Privacy	0.09%	0.18%	95.75%
Eastern	Employment	1.87%	1.60%	-14.41%
Eastern	Energy and Oil & Gas	0.52%	0.51%	-0.92%
Eastern	Environmental and Land Use	0.56%	0.22%	-60.30%
Eastern	ERISA/Executive Compensation	0.99%	1.39%	39.66%
Eastern	Family Law	0.00%	0.09%	100.00%
Eastern	Finance - Banking	0.03%	0.00%	-100.00%
Eastern	Finance - Project Finance	1.14%	0.47%	-58.89%
Eastern	Food & Drug Administration	0.00%	0.21%	100.00%
Eastern	Government and Government Relations	0.45%	0.29%	-35.39%
Eastern	Government Contracts	0.45%	0.10%	-77.49%
Eastern	Health Care	0.80%	1.15%	43.16%
Eastern	Immigration	0.23%	0.87%	286.44%
Eastern	Insurance Coverage	0.39%	0.26%	-33.51%
Eastern	Insurance Defense	0.00%	0.24%	100.00%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Patent General / Hard and Life Sciences	5.87%	4.87%	-17.03%
Eastern	Intellectual Property	0.00%	0.02%	100.00%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Litigation	2.02%	1.13%	-44.04%
Eastern	Intellectual Property - Other	0.83%	0.72%	-13.40%

USA Time Zone	Practice Area	2015	2016	% of Growth
Eastern	Intellectual Property	0.39%	0.72%	83.09%
Eastern	Trademark/Copyright			
Eastern	International Trade	0.07%	0.72%	943.54%
Eastern	Litigation	5.85%	6.36%	8.62%
Eastern	Other	0.55%	0.24%	-57.21%
Eastern	Patent Agents/Technical Specialists	0.57%	0.05%	-91.39%
Eastern	Real Estate	4.15%	2.56%	-38.21%
Eastern	Securities Litigation	0.48%	0.77%	61.28%
Eastern	Tax	3.46%	2.17%	-37.46%
Eastern	Technology Transactions	0.39%	1.35%	248.54%
Eastern	Telecommunications	0.06%	0.06%	-2.58%
Eastern	Trust and Estates	1.26%	0.59%	-53.15%
Eastern	White Collar Crime	1.02%	1.15%	11.95%
Eastern	Workers Compensation	0.00%	0.01%	100.00%