

California Attorney Relocating to Portland Finds New Home in Top Firm

The candidate that I just placed, a Class of 2016 Associate at a Big Law firm in Portland, taught me a couple of valuable lessons: 1) Candidates come to you at all different points of their lateral firm searches. Some are ready to hit the ground running and apply broadly, others are interested to see what's on the market, but perhaps only want to submit a couple of applications or a couple of feelers, and still others are not ready to get their search started quite yet, but want to establish a relationship with a Recruiter for when they are ready to hit the ground running.

This candidate was, I think, the latter. He came to us in the Fall of 2018, and was interested in making a move from CA to Portland, but because his wife also needed to find a job in Portland, he wasn't ready to start the search full steam ahead. He was actually a referral from a candidate that one of my colleagues had placed, which is always great for a Recruiter, because it means that we made a favorable enough impression on our candidate that they are willing to recommend us to their friends and colleagues. I also find that referral candidates generally tend to be stronger candidates. Between the Fall of 2018 and March of 2019, my colleague left our company for an in-house opportunity, and I was passed along this candidate's profile. He's a dream candidate - Class of 2016, Big Law, looking to move markets and settle down in the new market long term (a great reason to make a lateral firm move without raising any flight risk eyebrows at firms), moving to Portland, a small market that has trouble finding great candidates with serious ties to the market, real estate transactional / finance (a very marketable practice area), and to top it all off, the nicest guy in the world. I reached out to him about potentially making a move to Portland, and I didn't hear back from him for a couple of weeks, and then one day, out of the blue, he calls me and tells me that he's very ready and eager to get his Portland search started. Such a great day for a Recruiter!

This candidate was also a dream because he trusted me to apply him to basically every strong firm that does real estate transactional / finance in the Portland market, including firms that didn't have a posted opening. While I normally research the best firms for my candidate's practice, especially when they are interested in applying opportunistically, this candidate sent me a list of firms that he wanted me to apply him to, so he made my job very easy. I sent him out to 22 firms in Portland in mid-March. Unsurprisingly, a Big Law firm that has a big presence in the Pacific Northwest and a small to mid-sized firm both reached out wanting to interview him. I wasn't sure how quickly he would get traction, simply because Portland is a small market, his practice area is quite niche (so there aren't a ton of openings), and he doesn't have the OR bar. I really wasn't sure how the latter would play out, but I was hoping that with his stellar credentials, great firms wouldn't care, and indeed they did not!

I ended up placing this candidate at the end of March, within two and a half weeks of submitting him. Both firms that interviewed him moved fast, because he's such a stellar candidate and because his wife already has a job lined up in Portland, and the family is planning on moving there in mid-April.

This candidate seemed very happy with how quickly things moved, and with the two firms that ended up giving him an Offer. He accepted one of the two offers within 24 hours of receiving it, and seems very excited for the opportunity. He tells me: "Amazing! You really are the best! I will be writing a fantastic review / reference / etc., as you absolutely deserve it!" Great candidates like him who are as kind and grateful as they come make me so happy to do this job!