

Overview of the Fall Recruiting Season

What is the Fall Recruiting Season?

During the fall recruiting season (or On-Campus Interviews - OCI), certain segments of the legal employment market begin hiring in early August and last through September. The fall recruiting season is competitive, but there are still numerous opportunities for every student. Utilize them while you can!

Fall Recruiting Program aims to call to your attention representatives of some, but not all, employers who recruit in the fall for the upcoming fall, spring following that, summer following, and for at-graduate opportunities. In addition to paid positions, employers advertise for externships (course credit) positions as well.

The majority of employers participating in Fall Recruitment are larger law firms and government agencies, given their ability to determine their hiring needs one to two years in advance. However, many other government, judicial, and public interest organizations also hire through this process. These employers are particularly focused on hiring 2L-Day and 3L-Evening students for next summer, although they may also consider 3L-Day and 4L-Evening students for post-graduate positions.

Why Participate in the Fall Recruiting Season?

Graduates who have practical legal experience on their resumes in addition to law clinic experience are valued by employers. Such opportunities are available during the fall recruiting season.

Students participating in summer programs of large law firms and government agencies are generally offered employment opportunities after graduation. It is extremely important that you interview this fall for a summer internship with these companies after graduation if you are serious about working for them following graduation. As a part of the Law Fall Recruiting Program, employers expect that you will apply via the program.

What Types of Positions are Available?

Several law firms and government agencies, as well as local employers, participate to fill their needs for school-year and summer law clerks. Consequently, law clerk positions will be available for fall, spring, and summer. Most of these positions will be filled well before their actual start dates. Recruiting opportunities for fall include:

- Federal Government Summer Honors and Internship Programs (e.g., SEC, DOJ).
- Fall and spring Externship positions with government and public interest organizations.
- Fall and spring Judicial Externship positions.
- Fall and spring small and medium law clerk positions.

Large private sector employers usually hire participants in their summer programs for entry-level positions, so 3L students have limited opportunities. In the event you are interested in joining a large law firm, but did not participate in their summer program, talk to your career advisor about how you might gain experience that would make you an attractive lateral candidate (an attorney with previous experience in another field).

Is the Fall Recruiting Season Only for the Top of the Class?

Not at all! The Fall Recruiting Season offers many opportunities for students. Also, regardless of your class rank, the Fall Recruiting Program should be a part of all law students' job search. Despite the strict grade cutoffs at many large law firms, some are interested in interviewing candidates with diverse backgrounds or with other compelling credentials (e.g., bachelor's degree in technology, master's degree in life sciences, prior professional experience, etc.).

When hiring during the fall recruiting season, most government and nonprofit organizations evaluate candidates as a "whole person."

Preparing for On-Campus Recruiting This Fall

Recruiting success at your key schools over the years means you are prepared to head back to those schools this fall with your same on-brand tablecloth and turnkey swag. Recruiting early talent once evoked images of busy on-campus career fairs.

Do you remember the piles of branded pens strewn upon your tablecloth, the suitcases full of binders, and the parade of students filing in and out of different booths? The events were generally time-consuming, limiting, and ineffective, from distracting conversations to apparently missed connections.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, everything we knew about campus recruiting was forever changed, just like other industries that once relied heavily on in-person events. An employer's school network is no longer limited to the schools they once visited in person. Instead, it is infinite and exists outside of a physical setting.

People are anxious to get back to normal life now that vaccines are more widely available. If we have learned anything from the past year, it is that we should not stick to the old ways and that some groups were excluded.

That began to change with virtual recruiting.

Students with traditional biases, particularly women and students of color, can level the playing field through virtual career events. As an employer, equity became paramount in how they source and engage students, as well as how they evaluate them intentionally.

Networks became open and equity prevailed when recruiting transferred from person to online. New connections could be forged anywhere and anytime from the convenience and comfort of the students' homes.

Over the past year, we have learned many lessons that will carry over into the future. This will result in increased adoption of hybrid digital and in-person recruiting for the fall 2021 recruiting season - a model that prioritizes accessibility, convenience, and comfort as the primary characteristics of virtual recruiting.

4 Tips to Prepare for Fall On-Campus Recruiting

1. Identify your goals and talent pipeline requirements

This fall, maybe you want to hire a few entry-level salespeople? Could it be that your team is having a hard time filling 12 open roles with engineers from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs)?

Could there be more requests throughout the year for early career candidates? What is the best way to create a qualified talent pool?

As you develop your on-campus recruitment mission statement, take the time to assess your talent needs. Your talent personas should define the technical skills, behaviors, and competencies required to navigate and succeed in your open roles by now.

Use those attributes to fuel your idea of your ideal talent persona profile once you have identified those unique characteristics. It is possible to define different personas for each entry-level position if you are hiring

for multiple roles at the same time.

Create concrete goals and talent personas for your career, then access Handshake to find schools that match your skills and interests. You can register for on-campus events on Handshake.

You can find the right candidates with the help of talented personas. By ensuring the tone and language in your job roles and talent personas are neutral, you can look out for and combat unconscious biases in them.

2. Ramp up your qualified candidate pipeline

Your career fair and on-campus events are now at the most critical stage (as a marketer, this is certainly the most exciting part). Remember when college recruiters were occasionally able to secure resumes in hand? What do you do to make sure your presentation stands out?

The solution is pretty straightforward - leverage technology to help you market and scale your efforts before you set foot on campus.

The fact that students can see who will be visiting their campus is very important, but a more proactive approach will be key to your on-campus success. Let them know you will be there!

We know that most college students are engaged with employers that send personalized, proactive outreach. What is the process for doing that?

Segmentation allows you to define and save your hiring criteria, then drive interest in your funnel and engagement while on campus by identifying the most engaged student audience. As a result, you can schedule automated reminders and campaigns emails to send ahead of time without adding extra work.

3. Opportunities to boost participating employers' brand

What does your organization currently look like to prospects? Does your organization offer a variety of positions? Are your impact and values known to them?

Technology companies, such as The New York Times, are becoming more popular. Journalism majors and creative writing majors have been attracted to apply to them in the past, but engineers are not always on the radar.

Your organization can showcase its unique propositions through on-campus career fairs. Bring to light the employee resource groups (ERGs), corporate volunteering activities, and nonprofit partnerships you work with at your table to demonstrate the culture of diversity and inclusion that sets your company apart from your competitors.

Using career fairs as a way to demonstrate how your business practices are in action can also be beneficial. Take copies of your research reports to the table if you are involved in groundbreaking industry research or working towards sustainability goals. For your diverse populations, you might also consider providing tablets for your students to read or watch.

Be proactive by providing insight before you get there. Getting your current employees and interns to review their experiences at the company and during interviews is a perfect time. Be sure to tell real stories and showcase anything that makes your organization stand out from your competitors.

4. Bringing it all together and measuring on-campus ROI

Suppose you exhaust your budget on travel, lodging, swag, and entertainment, and now you are trying to quantify results to your VP and explain which methods worked.

In the past, assessing campus ROI was ineffective and incomplete. The strategies in this post will help you connect with a new student population this fall, nurture them proactively, and tell your employees' stories.

Put it all together and demonstrate how you saved time and hired more qualified candidates and employees as a result of these renewed efforts.

To begin, calculate the conversion rate on campus. Count how many people you contacted before you went on campus and compare that to how many students attended your event. Now, you can directly measure ROI based on the student applications and hirings generated by your efforts.

Consolidate multiple tools into one and ditch the paper trail.

Find out how you can improve your career fairs in the future. Following up with students that attend your event with a thank you and a short survey will help you to keep in touch. If you want to ensure that they apply, consider asking how their perception changed after stopping by. If they have any feedback, ask them as well.

By signing up for your newsletter, follow-up surveys can also allow you to invite students to remain in touch after graduation. By letting students know about your work and announcing potential jobs after campus events have ended, you can keep them engaged.

We hope you derived more insight from this post regarding how to proactively build your ideal talent pipeline, build relationships with candidates, and evaluate ROI before going on campus this fall. It is time for you to set yourself apart from the talent competition!

During the fall recruiting season, participating employers recruit students through regional job fairs and on-campus interviews.