

# Essential Recruiting Tips for Law Firms

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There are perks and drawbacks to whichever kind of law firm you're running, whether it's a solo law practice or a larger firm. Yet solo and small firms can be unarguably more overwhelming to manage without the luxury of administrative staff to carry out day-to-day duties. Lawyers in smaller firms often find themselves knee-deep in administrative work, which is a far cry from the romanticized day in the life of a lawyer perpetuated by Hollywood. It's no surprise that [40% of lawyers](#) take an average of three days to respond to a prospective client.

The truth is that smaller firms have their work cut out for them, juggling the responsibilities of an entire staff. But at some point, it can get too much for busy lawyers to handle since they have to step away from their paying clients to carry out non-revenue generating tasks, answer the phone, execute on a marketing strategy, or conduct client intake.

For this reason, many lawyers inundated with pending to-do's find themselves scrambling to find a solution quickly by hiring more staff. In this article, we'll go over some of the best tips for recruiting the right legal industry team to help expand your law practice and run it more efficiently. Let's dive in.

## When is it Time to Hire?

Don't make the mistake of waiting too long to hire employees. The worse you let things get, the harder it is to catch your new law office employees up to speed. Not only does it make it extra difficult for the new person you're hiring, but you're going to sacrifice the quality of your case work.

Rushing to get everything done in crisis mode results in you not having ample time to properly train your onboarding staff members. Expanding your small law firm is something that should be done methodically and selectively, not as a knee-jerk reaction. That said, the best time to hire more employees is right *before* you anticipate an influx of new clients.

## Where to Start?

The most important thing to remember when hiring staff for your legal practice is that the employee alone won't carry your firm. It's rather how they carry out their duties that make a difference. It's up to you to put the right infrastructure in place that sets them up for success.

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To start, make a list of all of the things that you *don't* want to do as a lawyer, and develop an effective system to pass this responsibility on to whoever you hire. The more specific you are about what you're looking for someone to do, the less likely they are to find themselves in over their head. If your goal is to truly step away from the day-to-day administrative tasks that it takes to run a law firm so you can focus on practicing law, then you'll need to provide your employees with the right guidance, training, and tools.

The kind of tasks you hope to pass off to someone else will determine the kind of person you're looking to hire. Whether it's to help with your billing, answer phone calls from current clients, or carry out paralegal duties, not everyone is going to be qualified for every job you need them to do, so the more specific you can be about what you need help with, the more likely you are to find the right fit.

## **How to Hire the Right Team?**

Beyond finding people who are capable of the tasks you're looking to carry out, you want to make sure that they share the same vision for your business. You want a team behind you who is just as invested in the success of your law firm as you are. A great place to start is asking yourself what kind of an image you want to portray. Chances are you probably want someone with strong people skills who can make a positive first impression when dealing with legal clients.

Having staff who aren't just reliable, but clearly invested in making a positive impression on your legal clients will make all the difference in your firm's overall success.

## **How to Onboard and Train New Staff?**

Smaller firms often don't have the time to be able to effectively train and onboard their new employees. Yet, the onboarding and training process is a critical part of setting your team up for success. To help your employees hit the ground running, you need to make sure that your onboarding involves the following:

### **Clearly Outlined Job**

Take time to itemize all of the content, tasks, and duties that you expect them to carry out. Review what their current skill set is and whether they require additional training. Having an idea of what their current knowledge and skill set are will help you better pinpoint which areas of the training process you should focus the most on.

### **Train**

Once you've clearly outlined what the job entails, it's time to tackle training. To get the most out of your employees, a training syllabus is ideal. Far too many businesses rely on an all too laid back training style which can result in missing important steps that ultimately become an unfair advantage to a new staff member. So, make sure that you make a list of all of their expected duties so they can refer to it for information.

### **Communicate Effectively**

Effective communication is essential in any industry. Yet it's especially important in a law firm with so many different moving parts between matters. As such, it's critical that you clearly explain how each

element of their job works and how it affects the overall client journey. Go over any important legal terminologies and revise as needed. The more resources you can give your staff to help them succeed, the easier it will be to step away and let them take the wheel on their job eventually.

Demonstrate whenever possible and take the time to answer any questions as they come up. Even though it might seem time consuming to answer so many questions and go over your expectations of them repetitively in the beginning you'll save yourself more time in the long run than you would have spent retraining.

## How to Effectively Manage New Staff?

When it comes to [effectively managing your staff](#), delegation is key. Although it can initially be a challenge for smaller law firms and solo lawyers to hand off important tasks to someone new, it's key for your overall productivity. Ultimately, your goal should be to hand off all of your non-billable work to someone, so you never have to pull focus from casework again.

Since time is key, you should boost your productivity even more by equipping your team with the right law firm technology. A legal CRM and [law firm client intake software](#) can streamline your law firm's processes even more and improve communication among staff. By having everything stored in one single cloud location, you can ensure everyone stays on the same page, and automation helps speed up the time-consuming elements of client intake like lengthy documents, follow-up emails, and billing.

## The right legal software will help you:

- Automate your team with time-consuming tasks like client intake
- Integrate directly with other legal tools so that they don't have to enter the same information in multiple locations.
- Access your practice from anywhere with an internet connection
- Offer self-scheduling to clients to confirm appointments automatically
- Follow up and nurture leads on auto-pilot

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National Law Review, Volumess XII, Number 218

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/essential-recruiting-tips-law-firms>