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## IMPROVING THE LEGAL SYSTEM

# Niche and Nontraditional Legal Careers

### Themes:

- Considering niche practices and nontraditional legal career paths.

### Conversation Starters:

- Attorneys have a variety of practice areas that they can practice. Why did you choose the practice you chose and what steps can you take to find out if another practice area might be a better match for you?
- What are some emerging niche practice areas in the legal community? What are some steps you can take to learn more about those practice areas and whether one might be a good match for you?
- What are some nontraditional careers that might be a good fit for an applicant with a legal education and/or prior experience as an attorney? Who could you connect with to learn more about those opportunities?
- What are some potential advantages and disadvantages of taking a nontraditional legal career path?
- If an attorney wanted to test out a nontraditional legal career and later decided to be an attorney again, what steps can the attorney take to refresh his or her skills before returning to practice?

### Activities:

- Conduct a career audit by answering the following questions:
  - Reflect on your motives/values
    - What do you like/love to do?
    - What is important to you?
    - What do you need in your next job?
  - Identify skills and special knowledge
    - What can you do?
    - What do you know?
    - Can you provide an example?
    - What are you already doing to help people?

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#### Activities (continued):

- For what type of advice do people come to you?
- What do people compliment you on?
- Discuss your career audit with your mentor along with future career goals and different paths you could take, which could help you meet your goals.

#### Resources:

- Discuss what additional resources the mentor/mentee have found useful in their own practice.
- [ABA: Career Audit](#)
- [Lawcrossing.com: 60 Nontraditional Jobs You Can Do with a Law Degree \(and Should Strongly Consider Doing\)](#)
- [ABA: Alternative and Non-Legal Career Paths for Lawyers](#)
- [JD Careers Out There](#)
- [Georgetown Law – Alternative Careers](#)
- [Abovethelaw.com: The Third Step in Leaving Law Behind – Do What You Are Good At](#)
- [NW Sidebar: Trailblazing: How to Start a Niche Practice](#)

#### Books:

- Nonlegal Careers for Lawyers (Gary A. Munneke, William D. Henslee, Ellen S. Wayne)
- Beyond the Big Firm: Profiles of Lawyers Who Want Something More (Alan B. Morrison)
- The Official Guide to Legal Specialties (National Association of Law Placement)
- What Can you Do with a Law Degree?: A Lawyer's Guide to Career Alternatives Inside, Outside & Around the Law (Deborah Arron)
- The (Un)Happy Lawyer: A Roadmap to Finding Meaningful Work Outside the Law (Monica Parker)