

**CAREER HANDBOOK FOR LAW STUDENTS**

By Peter F. Hoffmann (Toronto: Carswell, 1988) 236 p., \$12.95

This publication attempts to meet a long standing demand for quality information for law students engaging in career searches after law school. There are presently a wealth of texts and publications available on career options and job search techniques for students graduating from American schools or students seeking careers in other disciplines. However, to date, there have been few materials produced which are directed at the Canadian law students. This book is a welcome edition.

The author has divided the book into five chapters, each representing a specific topic of reference. These topics are career options, resumes, interviews, bar admission and articling in Canada and bar admission in the United States. Each chapter includes a list of suggested reading material. The Appendix provides profiles for a number of Canadian law firms.

Mr. Hoffmann begins the book by discussing career options available to law graduates. The author is to be commended for attempting to promote career planning by law students which is not restricted to the traditional private practice of law in a law firm. As the reader progresses further through the chapter and the rest of the book, it becomes apparent that these options are primarily provided to the reader as options after the student has articulated and passed the Bar. The chapter deals extensively with careers as corporate counsel and hints at other non-legal career options. There is a comprehensive article about how to select a non-legal career.

Chapter two is devoted to preparation of the resume and correspondence. It provides the basic information required by any person applying for a job. The checklists are concise and cover the items of concern to an applicant. The example resumes and letters are useful guides for students not familiar with preparing resumes or correspondence. However, the chapter does little to provide law students applying for articling positions or post-articling positions with specific information about the preferences of law firms. Students are encouraged to read the segments on "self evaluation" and "what employers look for" contained in chapter three prior to completing their resumes.

The author devotes chapter three to the interview. He very briefly identifies the types of interviews and provides a good list of questions frequently asked by interviewers. This chapter is generally very informative and comprehensive. It includes segments on self evaluation, researching the employer and what employers look for in legal candidates. The author omits information on the impact of individual rights protection legislation and about dealing with difficult or improper questions, two areas where students often have questions. The segments on evaluating the employer after the interview and making the final decision are the high points of this chapter. They are particularly useful and are not often covered in materials of this nature. The small segment on changing employers while practical, would be more beneficial if it included information about resources available to the student who finds that he or she is required to change employers, especially during the articling year.

Chapters four and five represent the real value of this publication. These chapters contain information about the articling requirements in Canada as well as Bar admission requirements in the United States. They provide valuable sources to investigate when searching for summer or articling positions as well as addresses

and telephone numbers. The general description of the matching programs in Toronto and Vancouver will be interesting to students considering applications in either of those jurisdictions. Any information regarding specific application dates, however, is already out of date. Students are cautioned to inquire further before relying on any of the dates suggested in this chapter.

The Appendix contains profiles of a number of Canadian law firms. These profiles detail contact persons, application deadlines, areas of practise and hire back ratios. Some profiles contain a commentary which outlines the firm's history, articling policy, philosophy and additional benefits. The profiles presented represent only a small percentage of those firms in Canada which recruit students annually.

This publication provides basic information for law students seeking positions immediately after graduation. It will not be particularly useful for anyone considering a change in careers or employers after the articling year unless the person is changing jurisdictions. Much of the specific material provided in the book is already dated and should not be relied on by students seeking information about firms or deciding when they should submit applications. The book could have included more information on the specific concerns that law firms address when reviewing resumes, correspondence and interviewing students. More information about contacts and resources available to students researching employers and career options could also have been included.

The chapter on interviewing is the most practical of the chapters on techniques. Chapters four and five represent one of the most comprehensive sources of information about bar admission requirements in Canada and the United States available today. Mr. Hoffmann's book is recommended in these areas.

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