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## Not practicing law

Posted by Student Body - 2009/02/10 11:43

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I had a non-traditional background prior to applying for law school. My undergrad was in nutrition and development, and I wanted to build on this training and work and combine it with the law school training. I could have gone to a different type of graduate school, but I thought the J.D. would give me more versatility.

I encourage all law students to think outside the box!! There are many jobs where you do not practice law per se but need legal background. One example is managing trusts. You can work at any bank or college in the nation—which definitely constitutes a large list of employers. Banks need people who can manage trusts and know the legal implications of their decisions. Alumni and Development departments need people to draft trusts and estate documents when alumni want to donate to their schools. If you think outside the box, you will realize how many employers could benefit from your legal education. You now have an advantage over every other interested employee who does not have a JD.

Right now I am looking into jobs offered by the Federal Department of Agriculture, and Department of Commerce. I may even try to open up a fitness center. I think my law degree will help me become a better business person in the future.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Joshin8 - 2009/02/12 21:49

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On Monday February 2nd, I was laid off from my firm which has 59 attorneys. The reason was the sagging economy. I did banking, finance, and real estate law for the past 5 years. Now that I find myself looking for a job, I catch myself looking for an attorney job, just to come up empty handed. So, im trying to look outside the box and look for opportunities in government, non-profit, corporate America. So far I've had little success, but its early in the search process.

I'd love to hear from others that are searching for legal jobs or are retiring from the legal rat race.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Hughes JD - 2009/02/18 22:47

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I received my JD in 1984, practiced criminal law for 5 years, then one day I represented a client with a federal narcotics charge. The charge was the unlawful distribution of a controlled substance. My client was a pharmacist and did not use proper procedures when selling oxycoton. After I got the client probation, I decided to partner with him and for the last 17 years we have been operating a small chain of pharmacies in Indiana.

I dont regret making the career move. In fact, I love the work/life balance I have operating a pharmacy.

If it was not for practicing law, i would not have been presented with an opportunity to do what I am doing now.

So, while you dont have to practice law at all once you graduate law school, if you decide to practice law at all, you also dont have to practice forever.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Student body - 2009/02/19 11:53

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This question is for Hugh JD. You said you got into pharmacy because of the work life balance. Dont pharmacists work weekends and keep late hours?

Were there any other reasons for choosing pharmacy over the practice of law?

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Julie J - 2009/02/24 20:24

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I graduated law school 11 years ago with my JD. I went right into corporate legal rather than a law firm. For the past 11 years I did in-house insurance defense. I was recently laid off and now that I am trying to get into a law firm the firms are saying that I dont have "law firm" experience nor do I have any clients.

So, in response to the posts in this thread I warn you that if you leave the practice of law, its very hard to get back into it again. If you leave at all then you are out!

Good luck!

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by jano - 2009/03/16 10:03

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Check out this article from CNN today about laid off lawyers now practicing "non-traditional law"  
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/CRIME/03/16/lawyer.layoff.public/index.html>

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Pezollmm - 2009/03/18 21:57

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I loved the law school education i received. However, i'm not sure that practicing law is satisfying and i'm not sure if i can do it long term. Its nice to know that i can transfer my legal skills into other areas such as finance, corporate, self employment, etc. There is a lot more options and flexibility with the law degree.

I think that people think that the grass is always greener and everyone wants to make a career change. So, this thread talks about not practicing law, and i'm sure other threads on other sites have the same topic addressed toward their profession.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Georges K. - 2009/03/21 09:00

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I'm hearing that a lot these days, unhappy lawyers regretting a career in the law. They tell stories about their clients that are making 6 figure salaries plus with more free time and a lot less stress. With a legal career, it's hard to find that balance.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Jackie - 2009/03/21 09:01

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Unless you work for government :)

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Samantha - 2009/03/23 22:20

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I would like to add that many practicing attorneys establish "side businesses" as a way to build their law practice or to simply make more money. Being a slave to the billable hours can wear you out. I've seen attorneys with title companies, printing companies, attorneys as landlords, or even head hunters.

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My best recommendation is to keep an open mind because even in this wavering economy, new opportunities will be created and available to those that have the right preparation.

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by William - 2009/03/26 22:12

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check this out. <http://cbs3.com/local/Wolfblock.LLP.Arch.2.966095.html>  
WolfBlock LLP, a real estate law firm with more than 300 lawyers is shutting down. The horrible real estate market and recession has hurt them.

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Chris - 2009/03/30 19:50

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I agree with Samantha, in an economy like this, everyone has to get creative, and lawyers are no exception. Doctors don't make their millions simply raping the insurance companies. They have real estate investments, stocks, side businesses. Traditionally, lawyers haven't necessarily been very business savy. Well that's all changing with times.

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by 542542 - 2009/04/07 20:57

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Hey, most people are not cut out to work for others and most of the complainer;s hate working for others. How many in this thread are self employed and enjoy working for your self? I think the problem is having an employer, not the practice of law.

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by RedInk - 2009/04/13 13:07

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Lets face facts, the majority of this country's workforce is employed by a company. And with a regular paycheck comes health benefits, retirement plans, and other frings benefits. But that shouldn't stop people from taking on their own private side ventures (just make sure your contract doesn't prohibit outside employment). There was a time when couples would discuss a single income household. Nowadays, households with dual incomes are considering a third job.

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by GenieMan - 2009/04/21 21:45

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check out this article:

paying attorneys \$80k not to work

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/13/nyregion/13bigcity.html?\\_r=2&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/13/nyregion/13bigcity.html?_r=2&hp)

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### Re:Not practicing law

Posted by EILiB - 2009/04/23 21:59

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That articles states that she got \$80k and can come back to work. Must be nice to be at the top of the food chain.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by JoeJoe - 2009/04/27 21:03

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Pennsylvania law firms have laid off nearly 1,300 attorneys and staff since March 2008. That doesnt include the 250 attorneys that Wolf Block voted to dissolve in late March 2008.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by scarymary - 2009/05/01 21:32

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there are a lot of attorney layoffs because there are too many attorneys. But, there are still a lot of attorneys banking serious coin! Jeffrey Fieger ring a bell?

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Tomas - 2009/05/04 22:47

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if i had it to do over again i would have gone into pharmacy. Light hours, simply fill lin scrips, no malpractice, can work part-time.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Jackie - 2009/05/10 18:22

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Honigman Miller Schwartz in Michigan laid off 15 partners and 30 staff. Just to add to the list.

<http://www.jdjournal.com/2009/04/03/tipster-honigman-miller-lays-off-45/>

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by snoopie - 2009/05/12 19:04

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A check of the State of Illinois Bar Association website shows no bar license for "Michelle Robinson" or "Michelle Obama". It has been reported that Michelle Obama "voluntarily" gave up her law license in 1993, just five years after she got the license.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Gold Medal - 2009/10/19 20:11

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Reading this thread struck a cord with me. I am a third year law student at a 4th tier law school and i am not graduating with honors. I wonder what kind of jobs will be out their for me as the job market in Toldeo and Akron Ohio is bleak with large law firms laying off people. Then i come across this thread and it looks as if there is a large population of attorneys unhappy with the practice of law.

I'm not sure what i will do if i cant get a job. The truth is that i enjoyed law school and i love to research and write, but the billables scare me as i am slow at research and writing.

I'm no further closer to a decision and i cant see the light at the end of the tunnel, but i wanted to vent anyway.

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## Re:Not practicing law

Posted by Tim Donttle - 2009/10/20 21:31

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I practiced law for over 14 years and then started my own professional placement agency. In under 5 years i started making more money with less stress and less exposure to malpractice than i had in my law practice. I encourage people to get a law degree because if i didnt get the law degree i would not be where i am today. So, the key thing to consider is now whether you want to practice all for the rest of your life, but will a law degree help you to do other things outside the practice of law. If the answer is yes then you have your answer.

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