



 MAJOR, LINDSEY & AFRICA

CAREER JOURNEYS

PATH TO PARTNERSHIP MEET JENNY!

Jenny is a law firm partner at an AmLaw 50 firm. She practices corporate law with a specialty in Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A) and has made one lateral move as a third year to her current firm. She has a large client base (book of business) in the healthcare space. Having made partner two years ago, she is currently a non-equity partner.



Graduated 10 years ago from a top-tier law school with her J.D.

Joined an AmLaw 10 firm through the summer program and joined the general corporate team.

Lateralled to a different AmLaw 50 firm at the end of her third year because she was frustrated with the lack of mentorship and business development training at her previous firm and was also attracted to her new firm's strong client base of hospitals because of her undergraduate degree in biosciences.

Built up early experience on M&A deals and specialized in her second year.

On track to receive equity in 2-3 years' time.

Things Jenny had to consider before she made that move:

- How long will it take me to make partner at my current firm?
- Will a lateral move help me get closer to my goal? Will staying take me further away?
- Are there any subject matter experts with whom I can consult to better manage my career?
- How is associate work distributed and evaluated at the new firm?
- Will I have opportunities for direct client contact at the new firm?
- What business development and mentorship programs does my current firm have to help me achieve my goals?

KEY TERMS

- Lateral move
- Non-equity partnership
- Equity partnership
- AmLaw
- Book of business

PATH TO NON-PARTNERSHIP IN A LAW FIRM

MEET PETER!

Peter is a counsel at an AmLaw 200 firm. His practice focuses on trademark work, and he has a four-day workweek. He lateralled as a fifth-year associate and is working with media and entertainment clients. His role is an off-Partner-track position as he has not prioritized making partner, but he enjoys substantive legal work and working with clients.



Graduated from top-tier law school with his J.D.

Joined a national law firm's Washington, D.C., office where he stayed for five years.

Lateralled to his current firm when an opportunity for an off-track role came up. He is not a natural business developer but has a strong eye for detail so prefers specialized legal work.

KEY TERMS

- Off-partner track
- Business development

Things Peter had to consider before he made that move:

- What other options exist for me outside of partnership?
- How will being off-partnership track impact my compensation, benefits, and work hours?
- How can I express my career goals to my managers?
- Is the only way to make it in a law firm either up or out?



PATH TO FOCUSED SPECIALIZATION MEET ERICA!

Erica was a second-year associate at a AmLaw 100 firm and has rotated throughout the general corporate transactions practice group. She wanted to move to a firm that has a strong client base in technology because she enjoys working with those clients best. Partnering with a recruiter, Erica interviewed at a few firms and found one with numerous technology clients.

Graduated from a top-tier law school and joined her firm after going through its summer program.

Focused largely on general corporate work through the firm's rotation program and has done M&A and capital markets deals in a wide range of sectors.

Interviewed at a few firms and considered a move to another city in the U.S.

Joined a firm with a strong tech client base and relocated to their San Francisco office. She has only been working with tech clients since she joined and is enjoying the more specific focus of her work.

Things Erica had to consider before she made that move:

- Is it too early to make a move in my career?
- How will my firm react if I go? That will be a difficult conversation.
- Who works the most with the top technology clients in my market? I'd love to work with them.
- How do I resign? Can I get a signing bonus?
- Will aligning myself with only one industry pay off or potentially harm me later?

KEY TERMS

- Client-base
- Sector focus
- Practice group

PATH TO IN-HOUSE MEET MAURICE!

Maurice is a legal counsel of a global gaming company. He has recently joined the company, having previously been a senior associate in the corporate team of a Magic Circle firm. He had worked there his entire career and got a taste for working in-house through a client secondment, but wanted to focus more on the business side of legal practice as he considered his future. When he learned of this opportunity, he decided to throw his hat into the ring. He has been in his current role for a year and has got closer to advising the business on key strategic issues. His future goal is to be a GC.

Took a new role at a gaming company that was growing.

Graduated with his LLB then went on to complete a Training Contract in London before becoming admitted as a solicitor.

Spent seven years working on commercial litigation work, including arbitration, but really enjoyed solving business issues.

Has been in his current role for a year and has got closer to advising the business on key strategic issues.

Wants to become a GC.

Things Maurice had to consider before he made that move:

- Is making the move in-house easy?
- What will be some of the challenges I should expect?
- What types of in-house opportunities will my skill set be most marketable to? What are the differences compared to private practice?
- What challenges should I be prepared for when I make the transition in-house?

KEY TERMS

- Business of law
- In-house legal teams
- Training contract
- Magic Circle
- General Counsel (GC)

PATH TO MOVING OVERSEAS

MEET MEI!

Mei is a mid-level associate in the Hong Kong office of an AmLaw 20 firm. Having grown up in China, she went to the U.S. for law school and joined a West Coast firm after graduating. She spent three years working on corporate deals before relocating back to Asia with her firm. She currently sits in Hong Kong and focuses on IPO work and has recently returned from secondment at a SaaS company that focuses on medical cloud data software. She is fluent in English, Mandarin and Cantonese.



Graduated with a J.D. from Northwestern and relocated to San Francisco having been recruited through her firm's OCI program.

Relocated to the firm's Shanghai office as a third year; the firm helped with her moving expenses.

Built up strong corporate experience and her firm recognized her language skills were useful in their other offices.

Often works in two languages and as part of a global team working on IPO deals as her key client base are Chinese Mainland companies.

Gets excellent hands-on experience and client interaction so her future at the firm looks bright.

Things Mei had to consider before she made that move:

- What global opportunities can my law firm offer me?
- What practice areas are in-demand overseas?

KEY TERMS

- Relocation
- Secondment
- Language fluency
- COLA
- OCI



PATH TO IN-HOUSE CAREER USING CONTRACT WORK

MEET GIA!

Gia is an interim counsel within the corporate legal department of a Fortune 500 company. She reports directly to the general counsel and is focused on supporting a large merger. She took this role after practicing in a boutique firm for several years and trying to transition in-house. After several rounds of interviews, Gia decided to pursue a long-term consulting opportunity to gain valuable in-house experience that she can hopefully leverage to transition into a permanent role in-house.

Graduated from a top-tier law school with her J.D. and joined the general corporate team of a mid-size firm.

Moved to a boutique firm with the short-term goal of gaining more direct experience with clients and a long-term plan to move in-house.

Built up early experience on M&A deals.

Interviewed for several in-house opportunities but with minimal luck. In speaking with a recruiter, she was presented with a several months-long consulting engagement to join the in-house legal team of a Fortune 500.

Works closely with the general counsel and is gaining valuable experience just six months into her engagement. They have extended her engagement allowing Gia the opportunity to gain more experience and plan for her next career step.

Things Gia had to consider before she made that move:

- What are my long-term career goals?
- How can I gain the relevant experience needed for the roles I want?
- How might an interim role serve as a stepping stone for my career?
- Are there any benefits or compensation requirements that I currently have that an interim role might not be able to meet?

KEY TERMS

- Interim counsel
- Consulting
- In-house legal team
- Boutique firm



PATH TO CONTRACT WORK MEET ANDREW!

Andrew is an Interim Commercial Counsel for several organizations throughout the U.S. Andrew spent several years as a corporate associate in the San Francisco office of an AmLaw 100 firm before deciding to step away from practicing full time due to the needs of his family. Since stepping away, Andrew has spent the past five years consulting for various organizations where he has been engaged in several long-term and substantive roles that allow him to work remotely around 25–30 hours a week. Andrew has been able to choose challenging roles that allow him to build his resume and legal expertise while balancing the needs of his personal life.

Graduated with his J.D. from a nationally recognized law school and immediately joined the corporate practice of an AmLaw 100 firm in San Francisco, where he spent the next several years.

Made the move into a part-time interim commercial counsel role with a Fortune 500 technology company that was seeking an experienced attorney for nine months.

Realized he needed a career that would allow him to balance the needs of his family while still engaging in legal work that leveraged his skills and provided him with additional challenges.

Leveraged that experience into his next consulting role and has been working in this capacity since.

Things Andrew had to consider before he made that move:

- What is most important for me in a job? Can my current role provide it?
- How am I able to have control of the type of work I do AND when/where I do it?
- Are there any benefits or compensation requirements that I currently require that an interim role might not be able to meet?

KEY TERMS

- Interim counsel
- Consulting work
- Part-time work

PATH TO BOUTIQUE LAW FIRM MEET TANNER!

Tanner is an intellectual property associate at a highly respected boutique firm. He had been on the partner track at an AmLaw 10 firm but felt that firm's culture did not fit his personality. He met with the partners and associates of a smaller specialty firm with a great client list in the entertainment industry, which is a sector he had a keen interest in. After comparing the perks and benefits, Tanner took a minor cut in pay in exchange for work more aligned with the sector he was interested in, better mentoring and more predictable hours as the client base of the firm was more localized.

Graduated from a first-tier law school with his J.D. 4 years ago.

Spent 3 years as an IP associate before realizing he was not very interested in becoming an equity partner there.

Decided to continue his practice but wanted a change in culture and size.

Joined the intellectual property team of an AmLaw 10 firm through the summer program.

Met with several high-end boutiques, none of which quite matched his BigLaw salary, but some came close. Chose the firm with the best client list and a focus on entertainment, where he felt he could build relationships and succeed without having to bill quite so many hours. He is enjoying work and hoping to start his own firm one day.

Things Tanner had to consider before he made that move:

- Am I enjoying the work I am doing?
- Do all law firms have this kind of hours expectation?
- How do I find out what it's like at other firms?

KEY TERMS

- Boutique firm
- Cultural fit
- Billable hours
- Summer program