

## Law Practice Management: Attracting and Keeping Top Performers

By Robert Half Legal

*[Robert Half Legal](#) is a premier legal staffing service specializing in the placement of attorneys, paralegals, legal administrators and other legal professionals with law firms and corporate legal departments. Based in Menlo Park, Calif., Robert Half Legal has offices in major North American and global markets and offers a [full suite of legal staffing and consulting solutions](#).*

So much of law practice management has to do with human resources: hiring legal staff to replace departing ones or to expand into a new area of specialization and retaining top talent. If you're having trouble with any of the above, it could be time to upgrade your legal recruitment and retention strategies.

We are in an environment where highly skilled legal professionals have a choice of employers. Here are some effective ways to keep staff members motivated and satisfied, and to entice choice candidates to accept your job offers:

**1. Make sure pay is competitive.** Although starting legal salaries may not be at pre-recession rates, highly skilled legal professionals still require top dollars. This is especially true when you're looking to retain tenured performers with in-demand backgrounds.

Effective law practice management requires keeping current with compensation trends, which you can do with the [2017 Robert Half Legal Salary Guide](#). When crafting your job offer, aim for above the median of the range. Be sure to adjust the salary data for your location and company size, which you can do with the [Salary Calculator](#).

Lessen your legal recruitment workload by making sure valuable employees don't have to look to other firms for market or above-market wages. If it's been a while since you've handed out raises, it's time to review your compensation plan for your city and make adjustments as needed.

**2. Go beyond base salary.** To land legal professionals who are interested in making a lateral move, more law firms and corporate legal departments are offering attractive signing bonuses. Consider merit-based bonuses; reimbursement for exam fees and professional association dues; offering free CLE, student loan repayment programs and additional time off. These and other incentives could sway the decision in your favor.

**3. Offer staff flexibility.** A competitive salary and benefits are important, of course, but professionals also prize what money cannot buy: personal time. A flexible schedule is very appealing to [Generation Z workers](#), who tend to have a work-from-anywhere-at-anytime mentality.

Staff members with a healthy work-life balance are likely to be productive and are at less risk of burning out and quitting. What's more, law practice management strategies based on flexibility cost less than boosts in salaries and bonuses — a boon when you're trying to increase margins.

**4. Foster and promote a positive office culture.** Motivated legal professionals appreciate challenging work, but too much of it leads to a high turnover rate — a sure sign of poor practice management. By [reducing workplace stress](#), you can increase retention. So encourage your staff to use all their vacation days and to take sick days when necessary. Managers and partners should also model a healthy lifestyle by not setting a bad example with work-life balance. When necessary, bring in temporary legal professionals to relieve full-time employees' loads.

On the legal recruitment side, be sure to market your organization's healthy workplace environment in job postings, on [social media](#), at recruitment fairs and during all stages of the [interview](#) process. Top legal talent want to be part of a culture that recognizes they have a full life outside the office.

#### **A winning strategy**

Legal managers have several legal recruitment and employee retention tools at their disposal. By incorporating these techniques into your management strategy, you can ensure your organization is able to attract and keep top legal talent for years to come.

For the latest career and management trends in the legal field,  
connect with Robert Half Legal:

