

SMALL LAW FIRM CENTER NEWSLETTER

2009 | MAY

NEW YORK
CITY BAR

A Note From The SLFC Director

*"He who has a why to live
can bear almost any how."
-Friedrich Nietzsche*

Dear Solo and Small Firm Practitioners,

Whenever we think about solo practice we often focus on either the "what" or the "how" of it. What area of law should I focus on? How should I go about renting office space, opening an IOLA account or finding clients? We often spend years so preoccupied with the "whats" and the "hows" that we forget to ask ourselves the most important question of all - Why did I choose to start my own practice rather than work for someone else? If you are on the brink of deciding whether to go out on your own, the "why" of being in your own business should be at the forefront of your start-up process. If you have been "your own boss" for a while, it is the question that you should return to over and over again. Here is a quick look at some reasons to ponder:

1. Independence - you prefer to make your own decisions and are not afraid of the hard work or taking the responsibility for making your own mistakes. Beware of your inner resistance to delegating tasks. As your business grows it will be harder to do everything on your own.
2. Making More Money - you did not feel sufficiently rewarded for your efforts as a team player in a firm and feel that you can generate more income on your own.
3. Flexibility and Creativity - you seek flexible hours and wish to explore different areas of legal practice. Beware, flexible hours may actually mean that you work twice as hard and "creative" areas may have to wait as you take on more mundane matters to pay the

bills. Yet, as you grow your practice, you should keep returning to your initial reasons for starting it.

4. A Higher Purpose - while working in a large firm, you represented banks, but your dream has always been to represent artists or litigate civil rights cases. Perhaps as you first struggle to make money on your own you may put these ideals on hold, but if you don't return to them at some point, you may feel unfulfilled.
5. By Default - perhaps you lost your job, took a law practice over from a family member or helped a few friends with real estate closings as you waited for something else to turn up. If you have suddenly noticed that it is 5 years later and you are still a solo practitioner, does this mean that something is wrong? Not if you are happy, busy and fulfilled. However, if you feel that something is missing, you may consider revisiting the issue of "a why to live".

With Best Regards,

Alla Roytberg, Esq.

eResidentAgent

Save The Date!

Small Law Firm Luncheon -
Business Opportunities Through The
Association's Legal Referral Service
Thursday, June 18, 2009 12:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

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EVENTS | NYC BAR

**JIHAD, HONOR
KILLING AND
SLAVERY IN
ISLAMIC LAW**

**MAY 6, 2009
6:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**

**LAW WEEK
PUBLIC FORUM:
WHAT YOU CAN
DO IF YOU ARE
FACING
FORECLOSURE**

**MAY 7, 2009
6 P.M. - 8 P.M.**

**SPRING 2009 SMART
MARKETING:
COST-EFFECTIVE
MARKETING
STRATEGIES**

**MAY 7, 2009
8:30 A.M. - 10 A.M.**

**FIRST THURSDAYS -
MERENGUE DANCE
CLASS**

**MAY 7, 2009
6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.**

**REACHING OUT AN
INTRODUCTION TO
COLLABORATIVE
PRACTICE**

**MAY 8, 2009
8:30 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP SERIES:
THE ESSENTIALS
THE ART OF
NEGOTIATION**

**MAY 14, 2009
8:00 A.M.- 10:00 A.M.**

**Small Law Firm Luncheon -
Expanding and Taking Your Firm in a New
Direction.**

Thursday, May 21, 2009 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

At this must-attend, information-packed program our panel will address how to find clients, choose the correct area of practice and other issues you will face as you consider expanding or changing the direction of your practice.

Moderator:
ROBIN KRAVITZ, Law Office of Robin Kravitz

Speakers:
MARK A. JOSEPHSON, CPA, CFP, CFE, Murray & Josephson, CPAs, LLC
MICHAEL C. RAKOWER, Law Office of Michael C. Rakower, P.C.
DANIEL SEGAL, Managing Director Newmark Knight Frank

Sponsored by : 

Registration by May 18 is necessary. The fee, which includes lunch, is \$25 for members; \$35 for non-members.
Please register online www.nycbar.org

ABA BOOK SALE



Regular Price:
\$150.00 USD

Member Price:
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**50 Financial Tips to Help You
and Your Firm Survive and
Thrive in a Down Economy
(Audio CD Package)**



Regular Price:
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\$68.00 USD

Please note, that this price does not include shipping/handling and taxes, charged by ABA. To Order books please email aroytberg@nycbar.org

**SPRING 2009 SMART
MARKETING
PROGRAM SERIES
SMART MARKETING
IN A DOWN
ECONOMY: USE THE
INTERNET-IT'S FREE**

**MAY 21, 2009
8:30 A.M. - 10 A.M.**

**EXPANDING AND
TAKING YOUR FIRM
IN A NEW
DIRECTION.
SMALL LAW FIRM
LUNCHEON.**

**MAY 21, 2009
12:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

EVENTS | CLE

**STARTING YOUR
OWN FIRM: IS IT
SOMETHING YOU
SHOULD THINK
ABOUT &
PREPARE FOR?**

**May 19 2009
6 P.M. - 9 P.M.**

**TAKING &
DEFENDING
DEPOSITIONS:
FROM HOW
TO...TO EXPERT
TIPS**

**Wednesday, May 20
2009 6 P.M. -9P.M.**

RESOURCES | SOLO & SMALL FIRMS

- Westlaw and Lexis available in Library free to members;
- Remote and Library electronic access to law reviews and/or journals Via HeinOnline;
- Numerous print treatises and forms also in CD format;
- Library server-based access to Matthew Bender treatises/forms and McKinney's Forms;
- Remote access to limited Westlaw forms;
- Copy service fax and e-mail (PDF) requests;

For Further Information - [Click here](#)

AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTEER AT THE CITY BAR JUSTICE CENTER'S LEGAL HOTLINE

The City Bar Justice Center's Legal Hotline is seeking attorney/law student volunteers to share their knowledge of the law and help others learn about their rights. The Legal Hotline, created in 1996, offers legal information, advice and referrals to low-income New Yorkers who can not afford a private attorney or have access to legal representation. The Hotline assists nearly 1,000 callers a month on a range of civil legal issues, including matrimonial and family law, landlord/tenant law, bankruptcy, debt collection, wills/estates and public benefits.

Each day the Legal hotline receives calls from indigent New Yorkers looking for guidance on a legal matter. Help callers by answering the caller's questions, referring to an appropriate legal services agency and/or providing brief help through pro se assistance. The Hotline also screens calls for the City Bar's Consumer Bankruptcy Project and Matrimonial clinics.

Training will be provided to volunteers on the basics in landlord/tenant, employment, bankruptcy, consumer rights, family and matrimonial law; these being the topics most commonly raised on the Hotline. Ongoing supervision by director and hotline staff will be available.

Volunteers can expect to hone in on their issue spotting skills as well as interviewing/counseling and research skills.

Hours: Flexible hours are available during the day, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Tuesday/Thursday 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.. A twelve week commitment is preferred.

If you are interested contact Libby Vazquez lvazquez@nycbar.org.

STARTING OUT ON A SHOE-STRING BUDGET - A VIRTUAL OFFICE OPTION.

Contributed by Gabriel Luber
Your Wall Street Office, Inc.

Thousands of attorneys have been given the pink slip due to the recent economic downturn. The fact of the matter is that some jobs are gone, and many of those left unemployed will have to transition into entrepreneurship. Virtual Office Business Centers are providing these reluctant entrepreneurs with the venue, tools and support to successfully transition into their own business. An ideal virtual office would provide use of a prestigious address for marketing/mail receiving, personalized telephone services, and other support, so that lawyers can focus on the substance of practicing law, while minimizing start-up costs. A business incubator provides a mixture of programs and services designed to accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support platforms. Such programs may include networking events, in-house business coaching services or access to an online community.

Ideally, when your clients call or visit they should not know that they are entering an office business center or an executive suite. Though many business centers are less than sensitive to this critical issue, the staff of a virtual office should do everything in its power to preserve your image and make your clients feel as if they have entered or telephoned your office. Make sure that your answering service has learned your "script" and utilize the option of having your messages emailed to you immediately. Some services can patch an important call to you right away as well. When you are first starting out it is helpful to use virtual assistants for small administrative and technical needs. The cost of many basic answering service and mail packages is often so low (a mere \$125 per month) that it is a "no lose" proposition to utilize this option if you need to start your practice on a shoe-string budget.

FREE WORK SPACE | NYC BAR MEMBERS ONLY

Attorney Work Space

Mon-Thur 9:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Fri 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Conference Room

Mon-Thur 9:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Fri 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

NOTE: Attorney Work Space is available on a walk-in basis, except during the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. Between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. it must be reserved as a conference room. The Conference room can be reserved for 2 hour intervals daily except during the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. If you wish to reserve a conference room between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. the Attorney Work Space currently serves as a secondary conference room during those times. To make a reservation contact the reference desk of the Library at (212) 382-6666 or email rnrvis@nycbar.org.

Due to the increase in demand for the Small Law Firm Center members will be limited to making no more than 2 reservations per week.

MANAGING STRESS EFFECTIVELY DURING THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Contributed By Kay Gimmetstad, LCSW

The mortgage crisis, economic downturn and job losses are causing many individuals a significant amount of stress. More of us are irritable, angry, unable to sleep and lack focus. This can lead to loss of productivity, absenteeism and mental health and/or substance abuse problems. Close to half of Americans are worried about providing for themselves and their families. This has taken a tremendous toll on work performance and relationships. It is important to recognize one's own stress points, in particular around overeating, drinking and overspending. Stress is a physical and psychological response to a perceived threat or challenge. The Center for Disease Control reports that 83% of deaths that occur with adults between the ages of 21 and 65 are related to poor stress management, poor lifestyle and lack of effective coping mechanisms.

To decrease the stress level in your life, the experts recommend the following tips:

- "Exercise a minimum of 3-4 times a week, 30 minutes per session.
- "Improve communication and focus by taking a meditation or yoga class.
- "Break down tasks into small steps to prevent feeling overwhelmed.
- "One behavior change at a time; don't try to quit smoking and start a diet at the same time.
- "If work/family responsibilities are feeling hectic, take time for yourself
- "Take a class to upgrade your skills or just for pleasure; and spend time networking with others.
- "Consider doing your job search at a library or job center to avoid spending so much time at home alone.
- "Limit news coverage of the economic crisis, the war and job losses.
- "Give yourself permission to ask for support from family, friends, colleagues and trusted advisors.
- "Re-evaluate your spending plan to control overall debt and limit credit card spending.
- "Maintain a sense of humor, as research shows that those who do, lower their incidence of medical and health issues.