

I DON'T WANT TO BE A LAWYER ANYMORE!

An Attorney Career Change **SPECIAL** Report



JULIE HAN
Attorney Career Change Coach
www.JulieHanCoaching.com



I Don't Want to Be A Lawyer Anymore!

An Attorney Career Change Special Report

If you're unhappy in your career as a lawyer, the only person who can make a change for the better is you. But you don't have to figure it out all at once or rush a decision that warrants careful thought.

Deciding to leave the law is no easy decision. You've worked incredibly hard to get where you are today and the thought of making a career change at this stage in the game can feel overwhelming.

We created this **Attorney Career Change Special Report** for people just like you who are either considering a lawyer career change or who are ready to take the plunge. We are here to support and guide you through this time of transition.

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM LAWYER BURNOUT? YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

Practicing law can be grueling. It's not uncommon to work long hours, be overwhelmed by the 'always be billing' mentality, function on little sleep or constantly be at a partner or department head's beck and call. This can lead to burnout, which can create disillusionment with the legal field. Attorneys who experience burnout may care less about their jobs, become depressed, and even wonder why they chose to pursue law in the first place.

How do you know if you're burned out and possibly in need of a career change? Lawyer burnout can look different for every person. But, there are 4 core symptoms to keep an eye out for:

1. Overwhelming fatigue.

Even when you get enough sleep, you never feel well rested. This is typically a sign of a deep-seated exhaustion that runs deeper than simple sleep deprivation. Often, it's exhaustion from a job that a few days off can't adequately address.

2. Disengagement or cynicism.

People may struggle to remember the optimism and driving force behind their pursuit of the law. If you feel like your work doesn't really matter, or you struggle to feel excited about your major successes, you may be suffering from burnout.

3. Feeling ineffective and overwhelmed.

People who are burned out may feel like they are putting out a significant effort but getting nothing in return. They never feel like they are getting to the finish line, and the finish line seems to keep moving farther and farther away.

4. Negative self-talk.

The effects of burnout can lead you to beat up on yourself and engage in negative self-talk also known as the inner critic. If you're constantly thinking: I am not good at anything, I get everything wrong, I am not dedicated enough, I am not smart enough, then you're engaging in negative self-talk.

5. Struggle to concentrate.

One of the hallmarks of burnout is an inability to concentrate on the task at hand. Your mind wanders, you lose focus and time flies by with very little getting accomplished. Tasks that normally would take you little time become all day projects.

"My burnout story starts back in 2008. If you had met me then, you would have seen a successful lawyer, on top of her game, closing several multimillion-dollar commercial real estate deals each month. You may have even thought, "She has it all." But here's what you would have missed. First, I was exhausted, and it was a different kind of tired than I had ever experienced. Getting out of bed to go to work had become exceedingly difficult, if not emotionally painful."

Paula Davis-Laack, Forbes Contributor

[I Fought The Law And The Law Won: My Burnout Story](#)

DO YOU NEED TO MAKE AN ATTORNEY CAREER CHANGE?

Today, the average person will change their job approximately 10 to 15 times throughout their life.

But how do you know whether it's time to change careers or if you're simply feeling the effects of unresolved lawyer burnout? Consider the following signs of limited satisfaction in one's career. If any of them sound like you, it may be time to move on to a more rewarding and satisfying career outside the law.

1. Your job gives you a sense of dread.

It may be time to for an attorney career change if you notice a feeling of dread as you fall asleep Sunday night or wake up to head to the office in the morning. Dreading your job can have detrimental effects on your work ethic and on your company itself. To avoid developing an apathetic attitude to your legal work, consider switching to a different department in your firm or search for a new firm that might be a better fit. If the new position fails to keep you interested and engaged, the legal field itself may be the problem and a career change might be the only viable answer.

2. Thoughts of your career are limited to your work hours.

Your legal career should be driven by passion and satisfaction. But when you're beginning to feel burned out or you're no longer excited by ideas in your practice area, it may be time to find something else to ignite that passion and leverage the many skills and experiences you've gained from practicing law.

3. You don't find the perks of your job worth it.

To determine whether or not it's truly your legal career that's making you feel fatigued, consider whether you'd continue doing what you do for greater benefits. Would higher pay, a different law firm, or improved health benefits

excite you enough to keep working in law? If no perk makes the law 'worth it', it may be time to consider changing career directions.

4. You've broken the rule of 80/20.

The 80/20 rule is a rule that helps keep you satisfied in the workplace. As long as you're 80% happy with your boss, your job, and your career, there's no reason to leave. However, should your satisfaction drop below 80% it may be time to change careers. Aiming for perfection in the legal field will only cause you to become unhappier with your career. However, as long as you're 80% satisfied with your career, you should be all set for the time being.

"I spent 14+ hours a day at a desk never coming up for air. Within a few years into the practice of law, I knew it was not the end-all-be-all for me. I dreaded the billable hours. I resented having to divide everything I did into .10 increments like my life depended on it. I would find myself pondering at 2 a.m. new creative ways to be better at billing my hours to adequately capture my time. I jumped from firm to firm trying to find a better work environment, a better salary, and a better quality of life. Those three things together didn't exist for me."

Wendi Weiner, HuffPost Contributor

[How I Used My Law Degree To Get Out Of Law](#)

TRANSITIONING FROM A LEGAL CAREER

Change is a necessary part of life, but it can sometimes seem overwhelming. If you're a practicing attorney and you're ready for a career change, you're likely feeling more than a little trepidation. But you've the hard way that there's no point in sticking with a profession that makes you feel unhappy and unfulfilled.

Changing your career from being an attorney to something else might not always be easy, but it's absolutely possible (and healthy). Here's how to go about it:

1. Find the right time.

First, decide on your timing. This is a fuzzy concept, and there's no "one size fits all" answer. Some attorneys may consider a career change the minute their student loans are paid off, while others like to wait until they achieve financial security.

Finding your "right time" will require a lot of introspection on your part. Don't get stuck in the trap of waiting for your "right time" forever – change is difficult, and, at some point, you have to jump in the deep end if dipping your toes in isn't getting you anywhere.

2. Do your research.

Before making an attorney career change, consider what you might do next. As a candidate with a professional degree, there are several different career paths you might take. Whatever you chose, take into consideration your passions, strengths, skills and don't lose focus on your long-term career goals.

Once you have a list of potential new careers, remember that you can't expect to enter a new field without understanding the basics. There may be an educational gap barring you from entry. Other times your skillset is almost – but not quite – a match, in which case you're going to need to do some learning. Make sure you understand what the field expects and requires and be prepared to learn some new tricks before you find a job.

3. Let go of unrealistic expectations.

A real killer for career changers is when they've landed the job, done all the right steps, and aren't satisfied with the results. The truth is that it took your entire career to get to the position you were at before. You won't find a comparable position in a new field right away – that just won't happen. But that's no reason to give up!

If you find yourself enjoying the challenge, what you do, and feeling better in a new role, you may have stumbled on something special. Even if it's not immediate

bliss, stick it out. Only if you're in it for the long-haul will you know if you've made the right choice.

4. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

Making a career change as an attorney can be daunting, but you don't have to do it alone. Hiring a career coach is one of the best things you can do to assess your current goals and get your transition underway. With the help of a transition coach, you can determine your strengths and weaknesses, as well as which alternate career path makes the most sense for your personal and professional goals. Don't shy away from change because it's not the "right time" or because you're unsure of what to do next. Talk to a career coach and get onto living the life that makes you happy and fulfilled.

"They say change is hard. I'm not sure I agree. Leaving one thing for another is hard. The process and decision of leaving something and somewhere are gut-wrenching. It's difficult. It takes time and patience. Changing at the end of that process when you see the better path is easy. For me, this process meant deciding to leave my law firm, Frost Brown Todd, where I have been for most of my career. and the full-time legal practice."

Stephen Embry, LawSites Contributor

[Change Is Easy, Leaving Is Hard: My Journey from Big Law](#)

CHOOSING A NEW CAREER FOR LAWYERS

Although there were 37,124 students in 2016 alone who graduated from law school in the United States, it can be inferred that not every one of them ended up as a lawyer, and even if they did, they might not be happy. Often times, people who need a career change feel stuck in their current position, but that is not the case. It is important to spend time thinking in depth about what you might want to pursue, even if it is a less-conventional job.

If you're an attorney looking to choose a new career, consider the following to help guide you:

1. What excites you?

First, think about what excites you. Focus on your daily life; you should be able to point out something that makes you feel energized. It could be working on your car, reading a book, or any activity that you enjoy. If you can match your career to something that excites you, there is a higher chance you'll be happy with your job.

However, a part of you must also be keeping in mind what you do well. Most of the time, passion is not enough to sustain a career. This may mean that one of your passions becomes a hobby, because you want to set yourself up for success as well as excitement.

2. What is your ideal work environment?

It is also important to consider your work environment. Certain career environments like law firms or in-house legal departments don't match well with certain personalities. Think about what types of environment would align well with your character and life goals and take that into account. This may also include where you may want to live and what kind of lifestyle you want to achieve.

3. What is your S+P+V formula?

A steadfast way to help you clearly lay out what you want to do next is to use what is called the Strengths, Passions, Values (S+P+V) formula. This combines your strengths, passion, and values. Chart all of these out and see if you can find a career that aligns with them. Once you have decided on a career or a few careers, map out a possible career plan. This will outline various goals that you want to reach to be able to, ideally, achieve that dream job.

“What we lawyers who want to leave the law need is a realistic assessment of certain jobs that are non-legal, can utilize some or most of a lawyer’s general skill set (issue spotting, public speaking, analytical skills, client management, risk management, informative and engaging writing, and distilling complicated ideas into an easy-to-understand summary) and exist in roughly the same geographical and personal network that we lawyers have now.”

Casey Berman, Above the Law Contributor

[Nine Non-Legal Jobs You Can \(Really, Truly\) Do With a Law Degree](#)

WHAT NEW CAREER OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR LAWYERS?

Thankfully, there are a lot of options for people who have a law degree but are no longer interested in practicing law. For instance, here are 6 excellent alternatives for burned out lawyers looking for a career change.

1. Consulting

Lawyers typically have a particular set of skills that they believe are specific to their legal job, but they are actually life skills that can be applied in other settings as well. For example, lawyers have to become very familiar with their clients, and that's exactly what consultants do. Law firms are essentially legal consultants, so the role is very similar.

2. Real Estate

For those lawyers looking to change careers, real estate just might be the perfect option. Property values are currently on the rise, so it is a great time to be involved in real estate. Brokers and agents with law degrees are considered valuable in the real estate world, according to real estate attorney Blair Parson. They are able to understand contracts and other property-related legal issues better than other real estate professionals in the field.

3. Marketing

Marketing is one of the best jobs for burned out lawyers because it also reflects on skills they already have. Often times, law school teaches one to listen first, and this is a major skill to have in marketing. To be a good marketer, you have to listen and understand your client. Persuasion and negotiation are also skills that lawyers are equipped with that are helpful in the marketing realm.

4. HR Director or Manager

Certain sub-specialties of the law, like employment and labor law, require in-depth knowledge of legislation pertaining to civil rights as well as the numerous federal regulations that surround fair employment practices. Since an HR

manager plans, implements, and evaluates human resource policies in accordance with these laws, it seems like a natural fit.

Being an HR director requires being able to meet strict deadlines, attention to details, and immense organizational skill – natural to most of those practicing law. HR professionals also ensure a company’s legal compliance and implement regulations at the state and federal level. It’s an ideal lawyer career change for those with a background in employment law.

5. Project Manager

A project manager is in charge of keeping projects on track by planning, evaluating, and organizing a series of activities that guide it to completion. The project manager is accountable for the end result, from start to finish. That means you’re in charge of staffing, developing and adhering to a timeline, budgeting, and handling the unexpected. Essentially, you’re the middleman between the stakeholders and the members of your team.

Project managers exist in a variety of industries, from technology to consumer goods, research, professional services, and more. This may be a good fit for a practicing attorney who enjoys mentoring and likes the pressure of working under a deadline. It effectively allows you to pursue other interests (like technology and R&D) while still using the essential aspects of your law degree.

6. Journalist or Content Writer

If you love to write, your background in law provides a great skill set to enter the journalism field. Much of the news focuses on legal issues, from criminal trials to civil rights issues. Consider being a correspondent for a local news channel and lending your expertise to the legal issues of the day. It can be an ideal fit for a younger attorney who loves to write and engage with others and is tired of writing an endless cycle of legal briefs and memos.

Content writing can be another flexible option for those who struggle to find a new career right away after law. Both positions require attention to detail and the ability to appeal to a broader audience.



Are you an attorney who often thinks: What can I do? I don't want to be a lawyer anymore!

If you are considering a career transition but are confused by what direction to take, my attorney career coaching can help you. Before I became an attorney career coach, I was a successful attorney, practicing for over 20 years in Manhattan, Philadelphia and Newark.

During my extensive legal career, I worked in various fields and in different roles. I held management and executive positions over the course of my corporate, regulatory, and prosecutorial career. I loved working in each of these jobs and I genuinely enjoyed the practice of law.

I have walked in your shoes and I am here to support your transition out of the legal field. Together, we can build your road-map to a new career: define your priorities and clarify where you want to go professionally; determine how you can best use your strengths and resources; and develop and implement a plan to accomplish your objectives.

JulieHanCoaching.com | 917.748.9545

juliehancoaching@icloud.com