

LAWYER ALERT

Stopping Medical Injustice

The Future Isn't What It Used to Be

I have a confession: our firm's top paralegal has not worked a single day in our office. Our amazing paralegal, Kelly Gonnely, works from home in Tennessee. But that's not all: many of our firm's team members work from home and we rarely, if ever, see them in our office.

Law firms look very different today compared to just a few years ago. Remote work has fast become the norm and law firms are embracing a remote work force. Embrace change or die. It's that simple.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg. Many law firms are working with remote workers (a/k/a team members) throughout the world. Lawyers from Mexico, Central and South America and Asia are working for your competitors and the workplace is virtually unchanged.

The Path to Becoming a Global Law Firm

Candidates for your law firm used to be limited to the geographic region where your law office is located. If a candidate lived more than 30 miles away, they usually are not interested in traveling to your office and hence, they are disqualified. That is no longer a problem.

With a remote workforce, the pool of talent for your law firm has no boundaries. You can hire a world-class litigation paralegal who lives halfway across the country or the world. But how do you know that the remote team member will do the work? Trust, but verify by monitoring

their work remotely through ActivTrak.com (thank you, Seth Price, Esq., for this tip!).

Once you've expanded your remote team within other parts of the U.S., it's time to off-load administrative tasks to a foreign team member.

4 Benefits of a Foreign Team Member

Foreign remote team members offer advantages for your law firm that are not available in your local market.

Benefit #1: Cheap Labor

You can hire a foreign remote worker for \$12/\$15 per hour. You can't beat the price and your remote worker will be grateful for the work. Your pay rate is often more than what the foreign remote worker would earn in their country.

Benefit #2: Easy to Hire and Fire

You can hire a foreign remote worker and if they don't work out, terminating their employment is quick and easy.

Benefit #3: No Administrative Costs or Benefits

When you hire a foreign employee as an independent contractor, you will not be responsible for the foreign remote worker's benefits, such as health insurance, paid time off, etc. You will save on having to pay insurance and taxes.

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However, some countries may require that you withhold taxes from a foreign employee's paycheck.

Benefit #4: Higher Education & Proficient in English

Remote workers in foreign countries can be well educated lawyers who are proficient speaking English with no accent. How much it would cost to hire a new team member with these credentials in the U.S.?

6 Tips for Working Seamlessly with a Foreign Team Member

The interaction with a foreign team member is almost identical to those working in-house at your law firm. Just like any team member, you need to follow a documented hiring process and monitor their work. You need to share your expectations with the foreign team member (our firm uses a "Position Contract" to lay out the duties of the position and our expectations).

Tip #1:

Set the Criteria for Hiring

The remote worker must be fluent in English with no obvious accent. You might want to hire a remote foreign team member who is a licensed lawyer in their country and has experience in personal injury. With Upwork.com, you can see the candidate's reviews and the type of work that they've done for other law firms.

Be specific about what you want and weave your firm's core values into the hiring decision. For example, the "candidate must be a licensed attorney in their native country with 3-5 years of experience in personal injury law and proficient in English. The candidate must be fluent in English and speak with a limited trace of an accent. The candidate must be passionate about the rights of the disabled and be grateful for the opportunity to serve the disabled."

Tip #2: Put the Candidates through a Shadow Day

Before you hire the candidate, you need to confirm that they have the skills for the position. Have the candidate do a shadow day, where you can test their skills. You might quickly find out that the candidate has poor typing skills or does not like working with your case management software. As with any job candidate, check their references and do a background check.



Try hiring 2-3 remote team members. One might work out, while the others don't. Don't give up just if one fails. Just like the secretaries and paralegals working in-house at your firm, you will have some home runs and a few trainwrecks.

Tip #3: Monitor their Work

ActivTrak.com can be used to monitor the keystrokes of your remote team members and ensure that they are in fact productive. Ship a laptop to new team members and monitor their working using ActivTrak. You should create a clear policy document for team members to sign when they onboard or when you start monitoring.

Have a manager monitor the virtual lawyer's work via ActivTrak. The manager can monitor their email usage, website usage, working hours and productivity and workload levels. You will receive daily insights into your team's productivity and see how your remote lawyer is spending their time. Employee monitoring dashboards provide weekly and monthly trends of your team member's productivity.

Tip #4: Communicate Via Slack or Microsoft Teams

Your foreign remote team member will communicate with your team during working hours through Slack or Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams is a great tool for communication, document sharing and collaboration.

Using ActivTrak, you will receive daily updates on the number of hours that the remote team member worked and when they began and ended work. If there are significant gaps in the time of their work, you will know with the data from ActivTrak.

Your foreign team member may have

bandwidth and connection speed issues with their internet connection. Have the candidate do a speed test for their internet connection, so you can determine whether they will need a faster internet connection. Research the country's local internet access before making a remote hire.

Tip #5: Identify Specific Tasks for the Remote Worker

Identify specific tasks and job description for virtual team member. You want to off-load as many administrative tasks as possible, such as:

- Travel and meeting coordinator.
- Scheduling depositions.
- Following up with new prospective clients about the status of the case evaluation.
- Managing your calendar.
- Retrieving medical records.
- After-hours intake.

There is no limit to the administrative tasks that you can off-load from your in-house team.

Tip #6: How to Comply with Requiring Tax Filings for a Foreign Employee

The Certificate of Foreign Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding, known as the W-8BEN Form, is the only compulsory document an employer requires when hiring foreign team members. This form has two purposes: (1) ensures that the foreign worker pays the correct taxes in their home country; (2) exempts the employer from withholding U.S. taxes on any payments made to the foreign worker.

If you partner with a remote hiring agency,

they will take care of any mandatory filings for you. If concerned about compliance with benefits in native country, there are companies, such as Deel.com, that take care of the employment requirements in the team member's native country.

Various services make it easy to pay foreign team members remotely. Platforms, such as Deel, Multiplier and Provider, allow you to quickly and securely pay your international staff without requiring expensive or complicated wire transfers. With these services, you can set up payment methods for your remote employees in multiple currencies, including U.S. dollars and euros.

Nearshore versus Offshore

“Nearshore” refers to countries close in geographic proximity to the U.S., such as Mexico and Central America.

Remote team members in Mexico or Central America will be more proficient in English and American culture and labor customs. Mexico and Central America offer time zones similar to the U.S. and this makes it easier to interact and collaborate with your foreign team member.

Delegating Your Way to Freedom

“Get Staffed Up” (GetStaffedUp.com) has foreign lawyers, paralegals and secretaries who speak fluent English. All legal staff have at least 2-5 years of legal experience and some are law school graduates. Get Staffed Up will send resumes to you and a pre-recorded video of each candidate. If you like a candidate, you can schedule an interview.

The remote workers work on a month-to-month basis and there are no long-term contracts. If a remote team member does not work out, Get Staffed Up will replace them.

Changing the Future of Your Law Firm

The future isn't what is used to be. Personal injury law firms are going global for their workforce. With foreign team members, you will have lower costs, a wider pool of specialized talent and a seamless hiring process.

So, what do you think? Your law firm's future might depend on what you do next.

The Secret to Success: Streaking



I wrote my new book, *Win Today*, to make one point: the small things you do everyday matter more than anything. Do one little thing, every day, that will move you forward in the direction of your goals and dreams and over time, miracles will happen. Consistency in small daily activities leads to amazing results.

Want to shed a few pounds? Start a streak of documenting your food consumption and exercise and weigh yourself weekly. That's all. You might not lose weight at first, but over time, you will become more conscious of food choices and the body weight will inevitably drop. Over the course of 3-6 months, you will be shocked at the results. Turns out, streaking is an almost guaranteed way to lose weight.

Streaks can be daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly or even yearly. Once you start a streak, you will do anything to make sure the streak does not die. When should you start your first streak? TODAY is always the best time. Start your streak today and watch the results build over time.

These are some of my current streaks:

#1: Jogging Streak: Jog at least 1 mile a day. Day #1,159 of the Jogging Streak (3.17 years). Total Distance Jogged during Streak: 2,587 miles (the equivalent of 98.7 marathons).

#2: Core Exercise Streak: 8 core exercises every day. Day #848 of the Core Exercise Streak.

#3: Upper Body Streak: At least 3 upper body exercises a day. Day #782 of the Upper Body Streak.

#4: German Streak: Learn a new word or phrase in German every day. Day #98 of the German Streak.

#5: Google Review Streak: Request at least 1 Google review for our law firm every day. Day #293 of the Google Review Streak. Total number of Google reviews for law firm: 991. During this streak, our firm's Google reviews increased from 124 to 991. It is amazing what you can accomplish when you streak.

#6: Video Streak: Record at least 1 video for our firm's YouTube channel every week. Week #95 of the Video Streak.

#7: Lawyer Alert/Newsletter Streak: Mail our print newsletter to referral partners every month. Monthly streak has been active since December, 2010 (13 ½ years!)

Quick Tip: Don't Streak alone.

It is far more effective to streak in a group of like-minded streakers. And if you'd like to join our private Facebook group for Streakers, just send a request with the subject line, “I want to join the Streakers Group”.

If you'd like a complimentary signed copy of *Win Today*, send an email to jfisherlawyer@gmail.com with the subject line, “I want my copy of *Win Today*”.

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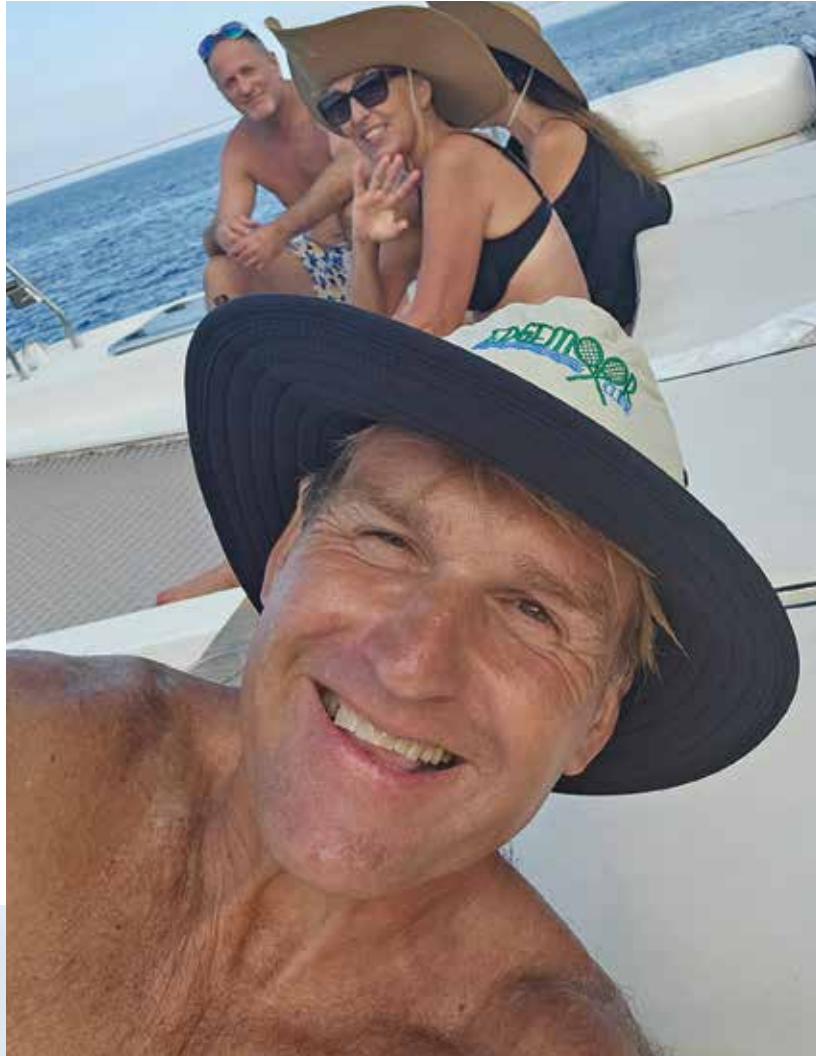
278 Wall Street • Kingston, New York 12401
Phone 845-303-1000 • Cell Phone 518-265-9131
Fax 845-802-0052

email address: jfisher@fishermalpracticelaw.com



(left) Grateful to be surrounded by friends at the Sicily Mastermind!

(right) Post Mastermind catamaran cruise in Sicily with my wife, Lisa, and good friends.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

The Business of Law Master Class Joins Forces with the Mastermind Experience

On October 24th, 2024, the **Mastermind Experience** will celebrate its 10th anniversary with a unique workshop, “**The Business of Law Master Class**” in Washington, D.C.

On Thursday, October 24, 2024 (the day before the Washington, D.C. **Mastermind** on Friday, October 25, 2024), “**The Business of Law Master Class**” will be hosted by Seth Price, Esq., co-founder of the powerhouse DC/VA/MD law firm, Price Benowitz, LLP.

The Business of Law Master Class will feature experts in client acquisition, bullet proofing your intake process, managing your law firm based upon metrics and score boarding and building a culture of accountability and excellence.

Your Exclusive Access to the Best Experts in the Business of Law

At **The Business of Law Master Class** in Washington, D.C. on **Thursday, October 24, 2024**, you will have complete access to the biggest and brightest minds in law firm marketing and management. As the workshop draws closer, we will announce new special presenters for the workshop. You won't want to miss this.

Bill Biggs, the guru of law firm culture, will be on hand to kick off the **Business of Law Master Class**. If you don't know who Bill Biggs, you shouldn't come. Bill Biggs is the foremost expert in organizational leadership for law firms and one of the most innovative thought leaders in law firm culture.

Bill's unique perspective on culture and law firm leadership has inspired and multiplied leaders in law firms across the country. Bill's clients include Heisman Trophy winners, NBA champions and Olympians. Bill's message, if implemented, will change the way that you run your law firm.

Wait, It Gets Better...a Lot Better

And it gets even better. If your application is accepted for the **Mastermind Experience** on Friday, October 25th, 2024, you will enjoy complimentary admission to **The Business of Law Master Class** on Thursday, October 24th, 2024. There are no extra fees. That's right, it's free.

Your one-time fee for **The Business of Law Master Class** and the **Mastermind Experience** will include dinner at the famous Joe's Crab in a private dining room as well as complimentary breakfast and lunch on Friday, October, 25th and a special cocktail hour overlooking the Potomac River on Thursday, October 24th. Hey, it's our **Mastermind's** 10th anniversary, we will give you everything we've got.

Apply at MastermindExperience.com

You must apply to join this workshop. We are limiting **The Business of Law Master Class** to a small, limited number of law firm owners.

You can apply to join **The Business of Law Master Class** on Thursday, October 24th, 2024 and the **Mastermind Experience** on Friday, October 25th, 2024 at www.MastermindExperience.com. Your one-time fee covers both events. So, what are you waiting for?

Practice Limited to the Representation of Seriously or Catastrophically Injured Persons

www.MastermindExperience.com