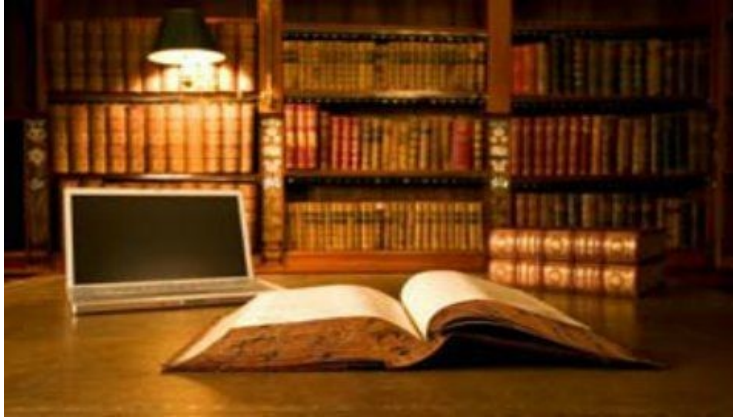


How Does Control and Energy Affect a Lawyer's Career and Personal Life?



Summary: Harrison Barnes of BCG Attorney Search examines how control and energy affects the success of a lawyer's life and career.

"When your life is over, what do you want your life to have been about?" That is the important question BCG Attorney Search CEO Harrison Barnes asks in his latest blog post, "[The Similarities between Human Trafficking and Practicing Law: Why Control and Energy Are So Important to Your Life and Career.](#)"

The post begins with a story of a woman Barnes met years ago. She was the tough daughter of immigrants who opened a restaurant to survive, and she spent her childhood working for that restaurant and all of her post-law school years working at the same firm. After years of sacrificing a personal life and giving the firm almost 3,000 billable hours annually, she was told she was up for partner. However, having seen the firm screw over other attorneys, she found Barnes and asked him to get her a partner offer at another firm just in case. He got her a great offer at a large Silicon Valley firm; but to his surprise, she hesitated on giving them a response, saying she wanted to entertain more offers. Then to her surprise, she was fired by the people who had been encouraging her to work so hard for so many years. Adding more obstacles to the story, the firm who had made her an offer, withdrew.

Throughout his long and distinguished career as a top legal recruiter, Barnes has observed attorney behavior, and he has concluded that, "One of the main reasons that people become attorneys is because they want to have control over their lives and to "improve their lot" in life. They go to law school and often accumulate hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt in search of this control. To pay back this debt, they take jobs where they often are forced to work inhumane hours and cede significant control over their futures. Control means many things to many people; however, in general it means the right to grow, to be self-determining and to be able to develop your life in the way you choose. Each year, tens of thousands of people enter the legal profession with these sorts of expectations, and the majority of these people end up disappointed. They never find the control they are after. This happens to associates and it happens to partners."

Barnes realized that the woman who reached out to him felt that lack of control in her life. As humans, we only have so much energy, and she had given her energy to a firm that controlled her by making false promises and then put her out of control when they fired her abruptly. The system did not take care of this attorney, and she had no true control while in the system either.

However, that does not mean all attorneys must lose themselves and their control. In fact, they can free themselves from mental drudgery if they can determine what gives them energy and what takes it away. Additionally, Barnes notes that money isn't what gives energy; it's often people or places that do. "When your energy is channeled into something that makes you feel good and where you have control you are having a career and life of meaning," Barnes writes.

For the woman in Barnes' story, she ultimately found a happy ending by re-evaluating her life and doing exactly what Barnes' philosophy for success said—She refocused her energy and thus took control.

For the full story: <http://www.bcgsearch.com/article/900046486/The-Similarities-between-Human-Trafficking-and-Practicing-Law-Why-Control-and-Energy-Are-So-Important-to-Your-Life-and-Career>