

# Career Audit/Review for Lawyers

[2017 Edition]

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*The year has come to an end  
The road is yet not at an end  
Let's take a while to look behind  
To gain insight and not be blind*

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December, 2016.**



It is only through detailed reviews you can know your career's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). What better time of the year for that than end of the year?

I call it a Career Audit as this is not one of those box-ticking reviews firms give their employees once a year (usually after dishing out the Christmas bonus). Although it is titled Annual, you can carry out this audit quarterly, monthly or even weekly, it all depends on what suits you.

Before you draw the curtain on 2017, take some time to do a career audit. Praise yourself where you did well, note where you didn't do well and leverage on both to position your career on a path to greatness.

This review could be the difference between an awesome 2018 and a gloomy 2018. So, do yourself the favour of spending quality time to adequately address each question.



What career milestone or accomplishments did you achieve this year? Write down everything, no matter how little you think it is.

What career goals did you set for the year 2017? Don't forget to include those goals you had no idea you would want to achieve when 2017 began. It's possible you achieved a goal you never planned on at the beginning of the year, that's perfectly okay.

What are the weak areas of your career? What are your plans on improving these weak points? What are the challenges you face in your career? What are your plans on overcoming these challenges?

**Note:** Challenge is different from weakness. Lack of an online presence or certification in a specialization could be a weakness while lack of mobility (transportation) or a computer could be a challenge.



Total income (career related only) {salaries, commissions, etc.}. Total expenses (career related only). What would you say was your career profit this year, in monetary terms? Were there other career profits this year, in non-monetary terms? Say you were gifted a house for your devotion to the success of a case? 😊

According to Marx Ikongbeh, Managing Partner at [Everlaw Associates](#), Law is also a business, just that we are bound by the RPC. So, you deserve to know whether you're making profit or not.



How would you rate your client relation skill on a scale of 1/10? What are your career best selling points? (A good writer, negotiator, eloquent orator, etc.). This will help you find out the reason your clients keep coming back or do not keep coming back.

How would you rate your online presence? Visible or Obscure? Have a Blog? Facebook? Twitter? LinkedIn? Google+? Online is the new frontline. In the digital cyberspace, are you a spectator or an active and visible participant?

What was the worst thing about your career this year? What was the best thing about your career this year? In what ways have you learnt from them? Life is never smooth, obstacles must needs arise. [Let the obstacles keep coming, break them down and rebuild them into ladders that will take you to your dream!](#)

How did you market your career to get to your current position (job)? For firm owners, what marketing techniques did you employ this year that brought you new clients? A candle is lighted and put on a bushel not under a bushel. Unfortunately, that's how many lawyers and law firms are, under a bushel, how then do you expect prospective clients to see you? **RPC simply regulates but does not prohibit marketing.** Just ensure you do not use terms like "hire me/hire us."

Who were your mentors this year? Who were active? Who were dormant? Who would you wish to continue with? Why? Who would you wish not to continue with? Why? When a child stands on the shoulder of an elder, the child will see farther than the elder. You need to interact with people who have been there, done that and thus reduce the number of career pitfalls you may encounter.

Create a bar chart based on how you spent your time this year. Does it reflect how you wished you had spent your time? Effective time management is crucial to productivity. Take special notice of all those time black holes and device a plan to prevent such time wasting practices in the New Year.

How many times did you call in sick at work this year? Your health is the Number 1 priority, please never joke with it. In this New Year, allocate short periods for breaks, maintain a healthy diet and remember to exercise.

What new steps did you take towards your career this year? What old steps did you stop taking? Do not be afraid to try the novel. Dispense with those obsolete practices.

*As we prepare for 2018,  
We have to ditch the old routine.  
It's time to leave our comfort zone,  
And have courage to enter the unknown.*

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What programs, courses or training did you start or finish this year? It should be something that adds value. It could be an on-site or online course.

What career development books did you read this year? (Does not have to be law based). Lawyers are avid readers, so if you read no book this year, then you might be closer to retirement than you thought. 😊

What were the complaints from your boss? Employees? Co-workers? Clients? It's not for you to get defensive, but to become responsive.

What part of law practice are you good at? What part is challenging for you?

What career projects did you start or complete this year? (Writing/ publishing a book, starting a law firm or a blog, expanding your practice, etc.).

How did you manage your career stress this year? Me? I slept it off! 😊

How many hours a day do you spend 'working'? Wanna know if we should give you The Workaholic Award 😊 You might be spending excess hours working because you are working too hard instead of working smart. Worse, you could be spending hours being 'busy' without actually being productive.

How many pro bono cases did you do this year? Most landmark, history making cases were pro bono, did you know that?

Are you a mentor? If no, why not? If yes, who is your mentee, and how would you say you have impacted in the career of your mentee? Lighting another's candle does not diminish the brightness of your own light. Mentorship is a two ways street, the mentor learns, the mentee also learns.

I hope you've taken special time to carry out this career audit/ review. Put your career in perspective to help you answer the question: WHAT NEXT?

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