

Law Office Management Chapter 2

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The Legal Team

OBJECTIVES

After completion of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe the titles, functions, and duties of each member of a legal team.
- Describe the functions and differences of the different categories of attorneys in a law firm.
- Describe the history, present position, and responsibilities of a law office administrator and a law office manager.
- Explain the difference between an office administrator and an office manager.
- Identify the various types of managers in a large firm.
- Describe tiered paralegal programs.
- Explain how different law office staff contribute to a

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 - Identify the various types of managers in a large firm.
 - Describe tiered paralegal programs.
 - Explain how different law office staff contribute to a legal team.
 - Describe the types of outside services and consultants contracted by a law office and how they contribute to the delivery of legal services.
 - List the many employment opportunities for a person with a paralegal education.
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Key Terms



The screenshot shows a software interface with a sidebar on the left containing six buttons: 'Key Terms', 'Internet Projects', 'Answers to Chapter Review Questions', 'Examples for Discussion', 'Possible Answers to Assignments', and 'Quiz'. The 'Key Terms' button is selected. The main content area is titled 'Key Terms' and contains a list of seven items:

1. **CPA:** Certified public accountant.
2. **E-mail:** Electronic mail. A system that allows employees to communicate with one another on computer terminals.
3. **Equity:** A right of ownership in a firm, entitling the holder to a portion of the profits.
4. **Equity Partner:** A partner who is entitled to a portion of the firm's profits and is responsible for a portion of the firm's losses.
5. **Expert witness:** A person who testifies at trial on the basis of professional expertise.
6. **Legal database:** An organized collection of statutes, case law, administrative rulings, and legal memorandums.
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7. **Leverage:** The ability to make money from the work of others.

8. **Leverage ratio:** A formula used to identify the number of income-producing employees per owner.

9. **Liaison:** A person responsible for communication between groups; spokesperson.

10. **MBA:** Master's of business administration degree.

11. **Nonequity partner:** A partner who is not entitled to a portion of the profits and is not responsible for a portion of the losses of a firm.

12. **Nonlegal database:** An organized collection of nonlegal information such as medical information, business statistics, and the like.

13. **Of-counsel:** Attorney affiliated with a firm on a part-time basis.

14. **Outsourcing:** A firm's use of outside services for support functions.

15. **Permanent associate:** An employed attorney who is not eligible for a partnership in, or ownership of, a firm.

16. **Rainmaker:** An attorney responsible for client development for a firm.

17. **Service of process:** The personal delivery of summonses, complaints, or other legal documents to a defendant or respondent.

18. **Staff attorney:** An employee of a law firm who has no advancement opportunities.

19. **Voice mail:** An electronic recording device that delivers a message to the recipient of a call if that person is unable to answer the telephone.

Internet Projects

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The Cybersites sidebar found on pages 59 and 60 lists Web sites of paralegal associations and contains a wealth of information for the paralegal student. The salary and benefits for paralegals described in this chapter may be outdated. In addition, the different paralegal associations conduct their own surveys that may be different from the information found in the text. Try to access the Web sites to find current information about salary and benefits.

Answers to Chapter Review Questions

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Following are answers to the Chapter Review Questions found in the text.

1. The factors that contributed to the use of non-lawyer assistants are:
 - A. Promotion by bar associations;
 - B. Growth of paralegal education;
 - C. Organization of paralegals and managers; and
 - D. Restructuring of other professions (p. 42).

 2. The differences between an office manager and an administrator are:
 - A. Administrator attends partnership and committee meetings but has no right to vote;
 - B. Administrator has authority to hire and fire staff and administer salaries;
 - C. Administrator has authority to make major purchases for the firm (p. 45).

 3. The difference between the responsibilities of an administrator in a large firm and an administrator in a small firm is that an administrator in a large firm has the same status and salary as an attorney. In a small firm, the responsibilities are the same but on a smaller scale. An administrator in a small firm may have other duties (p. 46).

 4. The two factors that dictate an administrator's responsibilities are size of firm and the amount of authority given by the owners of the firm (p. 48).

 5. The following are a paralegal manager's responsibilities:
 - A. Direct paralegal personnel matters and act as a liaison between paralegals and firm management;
 - B. Supervise paralegals;
 - C. Coordinate paralegal work load and assign responsibilities;
 - D. Train paralegals;
 - E. Verify that paralegal duties are performed in accordance with the attorney's instructions and act as a liaison between the paralegals and attorneys;
 - F. Evaluate paralegals' performance;
 - G. Oversee firm's paralegal program;
 - H. Establish policies and guidelines relating to the effective utilization of paralegal services;
 - I. Recruit and interview new paralegals;
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- J. Conduct orientation and training sessions for new paralegals;
 - K. Maintain personnel records for paralegals (pp. 50-51)
 - 6. The majority of paralegals work in private law firms. (pp. 56-57).
 - 7. A tiered paralegal program provides upward mobility for paralegals by establishing categories of paralegal positions (p. 57).
 - 8. The differences between a law clerk and paralegal are:
 - A. Law clerks are temporary employees of the firm;
 - B. Although law clerks are educated in the law, they receive very little practical procedural education. Though a law clerk may draft a motion, chances are the clerk does not know the format, requirements, and method for getting the document filed with the court;
 - C. A law clerk has little practical knowledge of forms required for an action.
 - D. A clerk's time may or may not be billed to the client.
 - E. Law clerks will not make a career out of clerking (pp. 60-61).
 - 9. Outsourcing is the use of outside services for support staff functions instead of hiring employees (p. 66).
 - 10. A nontraditional attorney is neither partner nor associate, but is hired as an employee with no possibility for advancement in the firm (p. 45).
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Examples for Discussion

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1. I Want Out

This example illustrates that practicing law is at times very frustrating. It also illustrates the adversarial nature of the practice of law. While the exact circumstances surrounding this attorney's comments are not known, it would be fun to create scenarios that could be the reason for this attorney's comments.

2. Definitions

In addition to the definitions listed in the text, some state bar associations and local paralegal associations may also have a definition of a paralegal.

3. The New Paralegal

This scenario illustrates the importance of a strong legal team that works together to serve the client. Tension develops when there are personality conflicts among members of the legal team. This tension affects the firm's work product, and the client ultimately pays the consequences. Obviously, Brenda feels threatened by the paralegal. Perhaps she feels that the paralegal is replacing her and that her importance to the firm is diminished. Ask the class to suggest some possible reasons and list them on the board. It is obvious that Shuran did not discuss his decision to hire a paralegal with Starr. If he communicated to Starr that he was concerned with the amount of work she had to do, she could have participated in the decision. This communication would have eliminated much of the resentment Starr felt. Lack of communication is the reason for the problem. Communication is the answer to its resolution.

Possible Answers to Assignments

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Following are possible answers to Assignments provided in the text. The responses below are a guide to what an instructor would look for within the student's response. Some assignments are based solely on individual experience and/or opinion, and a general response for such questions is not provided.

1. This assignment is the first part of a two-part assignment. Part 2 is Question Number 2. This assignment will focus on skills and abilities that have been learned in employment, home, church, or community organization.

2. This assignment, Part 2 of the first assignment, applies the students' skills and abilities to the paralegal profession. Since there are so many areas where a paralegal education can be applied, students are asked to direct their skills and abilities to a paralegal position.

3. Members of the legal team of Black, White & Greene are:

Robert Black Managing Partner-
Responsible for managing the
firm. Also does intellectual
property work.

Dennis White Senior Partner-Business
litigation, criminal and family
law.

Grant Greene Junior Partner, now full
Partner. Does tax work for the
firm.

Patrizia Boen Associate-Litigation.

Tricia Bunnell Secretary to Robert-Promoted
to Office Manager.

Audra Everett Secretary to Dennis White and

Grant Greene-Experienced in litigation and intellectual property cases.

Milton Nollkamper Paralegal to Dennis White and Robert Black-Experienced in litigation, intellectual property, and trademarks.

Melvin Goldberg Paralegal/Secretary to Patrizia Boen and Grant Greene.

The firm outsourced the following services:

Litigation Services Freelance paralegal service to help with the firm's complex litigation.

George Templeton Contract Attorney-Assists Robert and Dennis with their cases.

Speedy Attorney Service Picks up documents and files them with the court.

All in One Process Service Provides service of process services to the firm.

Compex Corporation Handles the firm's large copy projects.

4. Individual response.

5. Individual response.

6. Individual response.

7. Individual response.

8. Smith, Jones & Brown's leverage ratio is as follows:

$$6 + (6 \times .5) = 9 \quad 9 \div 3 \text{ partners} = 3 \text{ Leverage} = 1:3$$

9. Individual response.

10. Individual response.



Quiz

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[Click here to take the Chapter Quiz.](#)
