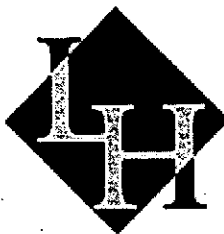


L A W O F F I C E S O F



L I T W A K & H A V K I N

HOME

"STAR STRUCK"
by Glenn T. Litwak

L & H
PROFILE

(This article was published in the "Dicta" section of the "Los Angeles Daily Journal" on November 11, 1999)

L & H
PARTNERS

Lawyers often try to break into the entertainment law field to no avail. Although those jobs can be difficult to obtain, the following strategies can help lawyers attain that dream entertainment job.

NEWS &
UPCOMING
EVENTS

* **Become knowledgeable.** If you want to practice entertainment law, you need to understand the applicable legal principles, entertainment terminology and industry workings. Potential entertainment clients expect entertainment lawyers to know what is going on in the industry and to understand its unique language. Entertainment industry trade publications such as "Variety" are a good source of this information, and local bookstores have entire sections devoted to the film industry.

PUBLICATIONS

CONTACT
US

In addition, you can attend seminars to acquire knowledge about entertainment law. Some universities offer annual entertainment law institutes or extension courses on music, film, television and multimedia. Seminars are an opportunity to network with aspiring or established entertainment lawyers.

* **Join organizations.** Becoming active in organizations allows you to socialize with people and attorneys in the entertainment industry. Look for bar associations that have intellectual property or entertainment law sections and committees. Or join an organization such as Independent Feature Project/West, a group of independent filmmakers.

* **Transfer skills.** Practicing in an area that shares similarities with entertainment law helps. Going from being a plaintiff's personal injury lawyer on Monday to being a practicing entertainment lawyer on Tuesday would be difficult. However, gradually changing from being a business litigator to an entertainment litigator to an entertainment transactional lawyer is easier.

* **Sacrifice.** If you really want to break into entertainment law, you must be willing to take lower fees at first to obtain entertainment-related work. You should also be prepared to do some pro bono work to gain experience and contacts and some work on a contingency basis.

* **Start networking.** Very often, landing that entertainment job is a matter of knowing the right people. Although many large entertainment companies seek top graduates from the elite law

schools, many lawyers get there because of who they know. I recently spoke to a young insurance defense lawyer who had no entertainment law experience. A major entertainment merchandising company hired him through an interview arranged by his sister, who knew someone at the company.

Networking is critical. Los Angeles is a "company" town. You must either know people in the entertainment business or know people who know people in the entertainment industry. Get the word out that you are interested in doing entertainment law. Once you get your first entertainment law clients, they may refer other people in the industry to you.

Some of your best resources may be other attorneys. I met an entertainment attorney at a party hosted by a producer, and we became friends and worked on some entertainment litigation together. Find entertainment attorneys who refer overflow work or need someone to associate on a case.

Networking is not restricted to formal events such as seminars. Networking may occur at your child's soccer game. Perhaps the parents of one of the other children are in the entertainment business. If you go to a party or social engagement, chances are good that someone at the party is involved in the entertainment business. Strike up a conversation. Let people know what you do and what you want to do.

Try to attend entertainment events as part of your networking. For instance, if you are interested in representing people in the independent film business, attend film festivals (like the Sundance Film Festival), go to independent film screenings and attend parties and events where entertainment industry types congregate. Publicize whatever success you have by press release, newsletter or some other method.

But perhaps the best advice for building any kind of practice is to do good work and provide sound advice.

Litwak

© GLENN T. LITWAK, 1999 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Law Offices of Litwak & Havkin
468 North Camden Drive, Suite 200
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Phone: 310-858-5574 Fax: 310-207-4180

COPYRIGHT © 1999-20012, LITWAK & HAVKIN
LEGAL DISCLAIMER

