

# The Worst Things About Being a Lawyer

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If you want to become a lawyer, Don't forget the 10 Worst Things About A Career as a Lawyer! A career as lawyer is one of the most highly sought-after professions on the globe. Indeed, there are many rewards to working as a lawyer. However, attorney work has its drawbacks as well. Below are the ten worst things about a career as a lawyer.

## 1. High Stress

Deadlines, billing pressures, client demands, long hours, changing laws and other demands all combine to make the practice of law one of the most stressful jobs on the planet. Throw in rising business pressures, evolving legal technologies and climbing law school debt, and it's no wonder that lawyers are stressed.

## 2. Long Hours

Rising workloads and shrinking staff translate into more work hours for lawyers. In addition, the demands of global law practice mean many lawyers must be available to clients around the clock. Today's lawyers work longer and harder than ever and 50+ hour work weeks are not uncommon. In addition to billing hours, today's competitive environment has forced lawyers to spend more time on client development and business management activities. As a result, many lawyers complain of a lack of work-life balance.

## 3. Job Dissatisfaction

The stress and demands of law practice have fueled high levels of career dissatisfaction among members of the bar. Depression and suicide are common among lawyers and forty-four percent of lawyers recently surveyed by the American Bar Association said they would not recommend the profession to a young person.

### **4. Soaring Law School Debt**

The cost of a law school education has outpaced inflation in recent years. Tuition at even mediocre law schools can cost up to \$43,000 a year and six-figure law school debt is not uncommon. In today's cut-throat job market, new grads often do not earn enough to repay law school debt and a law degree is no longer a ticket to financial security.

### **5. Competitive Job Market**

Job openings for lawyers have plunged, but law schools are not dialing back enrollment. Increased competitive pressures have forced many lawyers to settle for less-than-ideal employment or change careers altogether. Today's lawyers face one of the bleakest job markets in history; record numbers of jobs have been cut and salaries have plummeted. A steady supply of lawyers coupled with declining demand has caused many legal professionals to rethink the value of a law degree.

### **6. Client Pressures**

In this time of grave economic uncertainty, clients are more conscious of their legal spending. After years of billing hikes that well-exceeded inflation, clients are demanding more value for their dollar and are forcing lawyers to keep billing rates reasonable. The market will no longer tolerate expensive lawyers to perform tasks that can be accomplished more cheaply, quickly and efficiently by technology or by other professionals, such as paralegals.

### **7. Changing Legal Paradigms**

The practice of law is changing dramatically and lawyers no longer have a monopoly on the law. From legal document technicians to virtual law offices to legal self-help websites, today's lawyers face competition from a variety of non-lawyer sources.

### **8. Technology**

Technology has transformed law practice and, like or not, lawyers must become proficient in a wide range of technology platforms from document review and management tools to spreadsheet, presentation and billing software. Even as lawyers become more tech-savvy, the market trend toward commoditization threatens to swallow jobs as lawyers are replaced by technology in effort to deliver legal services more cheaply and efficiently.

### **9. Legal Process Outsourcing**

It's not a trend; the outsourcing of legal work to foreign lands is an economic reality. As more legal work is sent to low-wage workforces overseas or regional delivery centers onshore, many traditional lawyer jobs are being

eroded or displaced altogether.

### 10. Poor Public Image

Q: “What do you call 10,000 lawyers at the bottom of the sea?” A: “A good start.” This popular lawyer joke underscores the low public perception of lawyers that is prevalent in today’s society. Although widespread distrust of lawyers has existed since ancient times, rising billing rates, frivolous lawsuits and sensational news stories of lawyers behaving poorly do little to raise the public image of attorneys.

Law practice today is not what it was even a decade ago. If you are thinking about law school, these 10 factors to consider before choosing to become a lawyer can help you decide if a career as a lawyer is right for you.