

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT

As the demand for qualified students has increased, to maintain a competitive edge it has become the practice for many firms to recruit law students from first year classes. So, while you are scrambling to wrap your head around the difference between *duty* of care and *standard* of care, your Placement Committee is barraging you with interview scheduling and tips on resume writing. At this stage you know just a little about the law, but firms will be asking you to commit to a favorite subject or practice area. Before you go home for the holidays, you'll likely have met with dozens of lawyers and sat through more than enough interviews. While you might think it's all a bit premature, the choice of your first law firm and your first job as a legal professional often happens before you take the plastic wrap off the recommended reading for Constitutional Law.

How are you supposed to decide where you want to work when you've only been law student for a couple of weeks?

We feel that the only way to make that decision is to learn about your prospective employers, and then follow your instincts. First, each law firm is engaged in certain areas of practice. Some firms limit their practice areas to cater to an established or identified target group of clientele. Others offer a wide range of legal services to the public at large. Often, it becomes a balance of the two that allows for a successful legal practice. The kind of work a firm does can often be a good indicator of whether you will find that requisite "fit" between yourself and your employer.

Second, a law firm is defined by its lawyers and staff. After all, a firm is simply a collection of individuals with a shared view of the practice of law. Beyond the identity of the firm by its practice areas, the lawyers within the firm often have become identified as practitioners of specific areas of practice. But beyond the work, the personal lives and backgrounds of the individuals within the firm come together to establish the firm culture. Looking to the individuals will give you a truer sense of whether that "fit" will be present.

We feel that there are many reasons why you should apply to summer at O'Dea Earle.

We hire excellent people. Priding ourselves on our standards for accepting new members of our firm, we value excellent academic performance, strong initiative and self motivation, and are looking for independent thinkers with a collective attitude towards setting and achieving goals.

We do excellent work. Our lawyers represent a varied clientele, from accident victims, to corporations and associations operating in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. What is important is that we represent the entire spectrum of clients with the same dedication to client service and satisfaction.

We reward hard work. Besides the rewards you will receive from being exposed to a diverse legal practice early in your career, we reward you with the ability to cultivate and develop a practice limited only by your own drive and industry. We maintain a competitive salary position within the local marketplace.

We believe in life outside of the office. The legal profession will place demands on your time that you may not experience in other occupations, and you will receive the benefits commensurate with those demands with hard work. But what you do for a living is not who you are, and our expectations are reflective of a belief in the value of family, friends, and a life beyond the walls of our offices.

Finally, it continues to be the philosophy of O'Dea Earle to grow from the ground up. That is, every student hired is a prospective associate. As a general rule we do not look to hire practicing members of the bar, but choose instead to exclusively recruit law students as firm members. The goal of that approach is to turn every summer student into an articled clerk, and every clerk into an associate. As a consequence, we are very selective in hiring students and, in fact, assess each candidate as a potential lawyer from day one.

### **Our First Year Program**

A first year summer at O'Dea Earle differs from the articling program in a number of ways. We generally assign a summer student to a particular lawyer, who then has the responsibility for scheduling your weekly activities in a more structured way. In the past, the lawyer - student relationship has turned into a Principal - Articled Clerk relationship following the return after second year of law school and the commencement of Articles. However, we make a concerted effort to give you practical experience of the lawyer as advocate by having you attend administrative tribunal hearings, discovery proceedings, criminal and civil trials, and appeals in the Court of Appeal as an assistant to counsel.

While you will be primarily responsible to an assigned senior lawyer, do not be surprised if you receive many and varied secondments during the summer on special projects of pressing urgency. As you will come to learn, that is often the nature of the practice of law, and we feel this early exposure to high demand - quick return projects can only serve to better you should you continue on with your Articles of Clerkship.

We invite you to consider our offices for the commencement of your legal career. If you are interested in learning more, please direct your inquiries to the Student and Articling Committee - Attention: Ian Patey ([ipatey@odeaearle.ca](mailto:ipatey@odeaearle.ca)).

### **Our Articling Program**

The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador requires that Students spend twelve months articulated to a practicing member of the Bar. To get the particulars of the requirements of the Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador for Articled Clerks, please visit the Law Society at [www.lawsociety.nf.ca](http://www.lawsociety.nf.ca).

Your Principal is ultimately responsible for turning you from a law school graduate into a lawyer licensed to practice law in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. At O'Dea Earle, the individual serving as Principal to incoming Articled Clerks is selected from the Partners on a rotational basis. However, we feel one of the strengths of our Articling Program is that all Partners and Associates take a role in the hands-on training of Articled Clerks, giving you exposure to the different practice areas of each lawyer.

While each Partner has recognized specialties or concentrations in addition to their general practice, we do not follow a formal rotation system among those areas. As interesting files come into our office, our program allows Articled Clerks to assist on the files on a moment's notice. You can be helping on a criminal contempt trial one week, and working on a Charter challenge the next. We feel one of the goals of the Articling experience is to expose you to interesting and challenging legal work right out of the starting gate, before your Call to the Bar.

At the same time, and as the need arises, you'll get exposure to the nitty gritty of daily legal practice, including preparation of opinions, drafting of statements of claim and defence, drawing wills and conducting research. Along the way you'll get to observe discoveries and sit in on client interviews. All in all, we're confident that our articling experience is among the best in the city.

We ensure that over your twelve months as an Articled Clerk you'll get exposure to all the required areas under the Law Society Act. On a regular basis you will have an informal meeting with your Principal, who will review the files you've been working on and identify any areas where you might need more exposure. Your principal will have a checklist of practice areas, and as the articling period progresses, he or she will confirm the areas have been adequately covered.

Coverage will take place and work will be assigned to you in two ways. First, partners and associates will come to you regularly (sometimes too regularly!), and see if you're available to work on files with them. Second, you will come to us. Do not be afraid to take the initiative and seek out work you think you'd be interested in covering and partners whose work you'd like to be exposed to.

All lawyers maintain an open door policy to assist Articled Clerks work through files and obtain the maximum benefit and exposure to the files they are working on.

At all times, members of the Articling Committee will be checking in on how you're doing. They are available as resource persons in different areas of practice and different point in their careers with different perspectives on the practice of law and the Articling experience. Their job is to answer any questions you have, help with any problems you might be experiencing, and to basically give you any assistance you need.

To identify your strengths and help develop your skills, we encourage feedback and constructive criticism from the lawyers you work with. In return, any comments and criticisms you have with respect to your work here and the Articling program are equally encouraged. Feel free to speak to us, and in particular the Articling Committee members, at any time.

Articling is a vital part of your education as a Lawyer in Training. Upon completion of Articles and the Bar Admission Course, you will be ready to be enrolled as a Barrister and Solicitor and begin your profession in earnest. At O'Dea Earle, we strive to give you the most comprehensive exposure to the law that our practice and the Articling period allows. With everyone working towards that goal, we are confident that your Articling experience will be instructive and enjoyable.

If you are interested in applying for articles of Clerkship, please direct your inquiries to the Student and Articling Committee – Attention: Ian Patey ([ipatey@odeaearle.ca](mailto:ipatey@odeaearle.ca)).