


A Day in the Life of an Immigration Lawyer



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Juggling Your Three Roles as Lawyer, Manager, Entrepreneur

- How to be the best Immigration Lawyer that you can be
- How to manage your immigration law practice
- How to consistently bring in business and grow your practice

It's an exciting time to be an Immigration Lawyer

“If I had to do it all over again, I would be an immigration lawyer.”

~ Hon. Clyde W. Waite
Yale Law School '71



Challenges in this New Era of Immigration

- Anti-immigrant policies (that are not committed to writing)
- Change in the USCIS' mission statement: America is no longer a "nation of immigrants"
- Re-writing the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) and other government guidance without actual regulatory changes
- Poor adjudications due to budget cuts and staffing shortages
- Delayed processing times
- Age of unpredictability

What kind of Immigration Lawyer?

- What aspect of immigration law?
- Who is my ideal client?
- In what setting do I want to practice immigration law?

Being an Immigration Lawyer is Unique

- Practice in Immigration Court, and before federal agencies (USCIS, DHS, DOL, DOS)
- Immigration bar is very collegial
- You can find your niche in immigration, e.g. “cimmigration”
- Con: can be isolated from other lawyers in the local bar since no state court practice

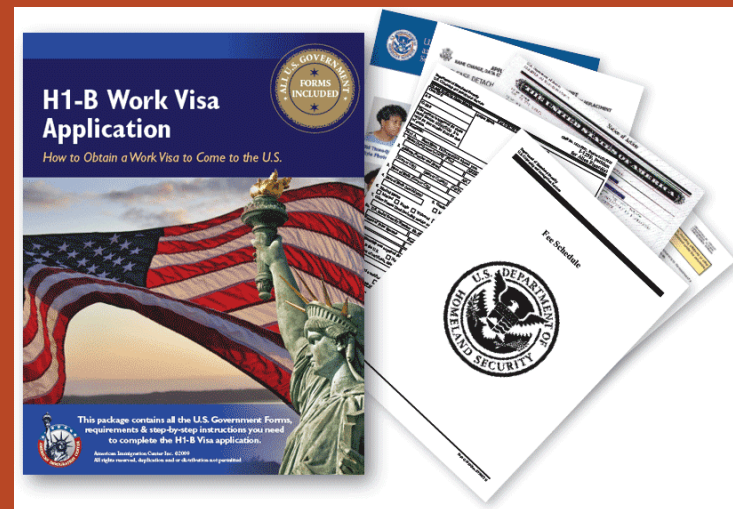
Family-based Immigration



Humanitarian work: Asylum, SIJS, VAWA, U, T

Employment-based Immigration

Represent US employers and help them get the skilled workers they need to grow their businesses.



E3

H-1B

L1A/L1B

H2A, H2B

Removal Defense



Work with undocumented clients to help keep them from being removed (deported).

EOIR: The Immigration Courts

- DC Residents and Virginia residents: Arlington Immigration Court
- Maryland residents: Baltimore Immigration Court
- Immigration Court Practice Manual
- Remember to file EOIR-28



Avoid Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Attorney competence

Don't dabble in immigration: What you don't know will hurt your clients. (e.g. Remember to file Form G-28, noting your appearance as attorney)

Ethical dilemmas

Cross-cultural issues

Client communication

Be a Competent Immigration Lawyer

- Know the Law
 - INA, 8 CFR, 20 CFR, Case Law, FAM, AFM, Agency Policy Memos
- Immigration lawyer's "bible": ***Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook***
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
 - Daily updates in the law
 - Conferences, seminars and webinars
 - Mentorship
 - Networking

How Do I Manage an Immigration Law Practice ?

Questions to Consider:

1. How will I keep up on all the changes in law?
2. What is a good case management system?
3. How will I communicate with my clients?
4. Would I be better off working with or for someone else?

Case Management System

- Adapt a Case Management System used by other lawyers (e.g. MyCase or Clio)
- You also need a system that is specific to immigration law, e.g.
 - INSZoom
 - LawLogix
 - Cerenade eImmigrationAir
 - Immigration Tracker
- Other technology, e.g. translation programs

Marketing & Business Development

- Who is your target client base?
- How will your ideal client know you or find you?
- Who is your competition?
 - Other immigration lawyers
 - Self-filers / pro se applicants
 - Notarios / “immigration consultants” / UPL
 - Online legal services
- What is the solution? Distinguish yourself!
- You must know more and be more than just a “forms preparer”

Opportunities for Pro Bono Service

Catholic Charities

ProBono Resource Center

Kids in Need of Defense
(KIND)

AYUDA

Questions?

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