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Thank you for responding to my advertisement to hire an Associate attorney for my firm. I am very busy and you probably are too. So, rather than waste each other's time, I have clearly set out in this document what this position is all about so that, even before you decide to send me a resume, you make the decision that this position is a good fit for you. This job will not be the right fit for everyone and that is ok. But, there is someone out there who is a perfect fit for this position and I will find them.

Background Information

You should know a little bit about me and the style in which I run my firm. I have been practicing law for almost 15 years. For the first 10 years, I strictly handled consumer bankruptcy cases. I started the firm with just my wife and myself. We soon experienced explosive growth and watched our staff grow to over 15 people. In 2002, I decided that I wanted to take the steps necessary to begin to build a personal injury practice that was every bit as successful as the bankruptcy firm I started with. I am continuing that quest today by focusing on handling only accidents involving children with serious injuries.

I am very blessed to be currently involved in the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys and I have been involved in different committees originating under the U.S. Bankruptcy Court to assist in the development of a model Chapter 13 Plan and revision of the local rules. I have been asked to participate in the presentation of continuing education seminars in the consumer bankruptcy area of practice.

I say this not because I am the type that is into keeping track of accomplishments or in seeking to build my own ego. In fact, I am a pretty quiet guy that would rather remain in the background and just provide good, quality legal representation without all of the notoriety. However, I believe it is very important to be actively involved in the profession and the community. I do not just work for work's sake and I do not expect that you would want that type of a life either.

I try to lead a balanced lifestyle. Unless I am helping others in the performance of their jobs, I try to leave the office every day by 4:00 pm. I have 3 children who all have a very active life and I intend on being there to experience it with them. I have been actively involved in coaching youth sports for the last 10 years and I still remain on the board of directors for their

youth hockey club, although they have outgrown the sport. I have been happily married for 24 years and my wife is both my best friend and our client and media relations director. I do not plan on interfering with any of those relationships by working too many hours, and anyone that suggests to you that a law career means sacrificing these ideals just doesn't get it.

I believe any associate, or staff member for that matter, that works for my firm should be able to have a balanced life as well if they so choose. On that note, I strive to have systems in place to keep stress to a minimum and I keep a close eye on keeping your work hours to 40 per week. In addition, I am very generous with your time off and I have no set limit, within reason of course. I think we have truly created a family relationship within our firm and it shows. If we both decide an interview is right for you, you are more than welcome to stop and discuss our firm atmosphere with the staff.

This is a pure "people's" practice. We represent only individuals and families in bankruptcy matters and personal injury cases. These individuals and families are either on the brink of possibly losing everything they own due to some unfortunate financial circumstances or they have already lost a quality of life they used to enjoy from an injury due to the negligence of another. I fully expect to continue to build this practice in a way that will maintain the quality of representation our clients expect, along with the indisputable results we have always achieved.

Why am I adding an associate?

Over the years, I have had a very low turnover rate with the majority of my staff. I think this is testament to the belief of balancing a quality of life over the quantity of hours worked. Fortunately, I have been blessed to have had a steady stream of cases come into the firm over the last 15 years. Most of these cases come from marketing efforts. We market everyday in one form or another. Marketing is all of the little things you do to make your business known. It is not necessarily the same as advertising. Within the last 12 months, our outside-the-box marketing approach has resulted in tremendous increases of new clients.

As we continue to maintain a steady increase in volume of bankruptcy cases, along with a sound marketing approach to funnel in those personal injury cases that meet our selection criteria, I will need to have someone that can come in and join the team to try to fill the needs we currently have available. The area of practice will be primarily in the consumer bankruptcy field. The new bankruptcy laws have made it increasingly difficult to successfully navigate clients to the finish line in order to get their discharge. However, the good news is that you do not need to understand what these laws are all about in order to apply for this position. I can teach it to you. In fact, one of my current associates said you will learn more here in six months than most bankruptcy attorneys will learn in a career.

What you do need to know is that there are fewer attorneys in this area and across the country that understand the new laws and who are aggressively pursuing these cases. I understand them and I aggressively pursue them. This is where I need your help the most.

Who is the right candidate for this position?

You must be licensed to practice in Missouri. It would be a plus if you were also licensed in Illinois. I am looking for someone who is intelligent, a good writer and can manage their time well. I can teach you everything you need to know about bankruptcy, but you need to

be the kind of person that can “get it” fairly quickly. Just about every document you would ever need to produce in the bankruptcy field has already been saved for your use, so you will have a great head start.

You must have a great command of the English language, as the ability to clearly communicate in writing and speaking is of great importance. If you only write or speak in legalese, this job is not for you. Many of our clients have a very basic education level and you must be able to communicate on their level. I have found that the majority of the problems I see with clients are the result of a lack of communication on their education level.

You must be technologically literate. Several years ago, the bankruptcy courts became paperless. My firm has begun the process of following suit. We use a number of very interesting programs, none of which you need to actually know how to use before applying for this position. What I need to know, however, is that you are very comfortable with the computer. If you do not know the difference between a right and left mouse click, then I really don't have the time to teach you and this job is not for you. On the other hand, if you are someone who just “gets it” with computers, you will fit right in.

We try to keep up with technological advances as we all know happen just about every day! Our system is not perfect, but I believe it is very efficient for getting the volume of cases we do through the system with as little disruption as possible. The great thing about being in this firm is I have no committees to answer to for making changes that will benefit our quality of life and improvements to our practice. If I see new software or hardware that I like and believe I can use to effectively leverage my time, then I will purchase it. I do “get it” and I want to work with others who also do.

Your primary responsibility will be to manage bankruptcy cases at different stages with the ultimate goal to get our clients the discharge of debts they came in seeking to obtain. This position will involve meeting with clients, preparing and checking bankruptcy schedules and other documents, preparing and filing documents with the court, appearing and representing clients in the federal bankruptcy court, resolving conflict between creditors, trustees and our clients and, ultimately, protecting our client's assets from loss to creditors or a trustee. It's not that hard, but you have to like learning new things and be unafraid to venture into areas you know nothing about.

In addition, you must not be afraid to take a stand and argue with everything you're worth to protect your client's property and rights. After all, as a lawyer, that is what we do! If these primary responsibilities aren't for you, I understand and I wish you luck with your career.

Your secondary responsibility may include assisting with personal injury work. You see, I would like to do less and less of the hands on work and concentrate my time on building the practice and developing a better lifestyle for all of my staff. We have embarked upon an aggressive and unique marketing campaign that is proving to drive more and more good, quality cases to us. There is an amazing opportunity for growth in our practice and it has already started.

What's the pay?

Your initial starting salary will be \$40,000.00. I have worked out a system of bonuses and additional compensation that could get you in the area of \$45,000 - \$50,000 somewhere by

the end of your first 12 months. Moreover, since I am looking for someone who is also willing to get involved in community and the profession, I significantly compensate you for personal injury cases that you originate and bring into the office. The numbers will not be spelled out here, but, if after reading this letter, you are still interested, then we can talk

What are the benefits?

Small firm atmosphere

A terrific teacher

Direct client relationship

Immediate courtroom experience

\$2,400 reimbursement of your annual cost for health insurance

Generous paid time off

Flexible hours

No set amount of “billable” hours required

Business casual work environment

Parking incentives

Relaxed, fun, team oriented staff

Profit Sharing Program

401K Plan

Leadership Opportunities

Teamwork Incentive Awards

In addition, because I highly value your education and participation in Bar activities, I pay the first \$1,000 per year in Bar dues and seminar fees. Based on recent history, this has been more than enough to cover all Bar dues and seminar fees for my associates each year. I highly encourage you to attend as many seminars as you can that are sponsored by the Missouri Bar, the Bankruptcy Practice Memorial Fund or the local bankruptcy attorney associations and trustees.

Contact Us

You can read more information about my firm on this website. You can also contact the Bankruptcy Court, the U.S. Trustee’s office and the Chapter 13 Trustee’s office to get a feel for the quality of work we maintain. If you are interested in this position, please forward a resume, via e-mail, to questions@castlelaw.net. Please do not fax or send it by mail.

Thank you,

James R. Brown