Researching Private Employers (Law Firms)

There are many resources available - on-line and in print - to help you research private employers. At the application stage, two resources to begin with are the Martindale-Hubbell® Law Directory and the NALP Directory of Legal Employers. Note: Martindale-Hubbell is good for private employers of all sizes, while the NALP directory is limited to larger firms that tend to interview and hire at specific times of the year (after December 1 for 1Ls and in late August through October for 2Ls and 3Ls).

1. Martindale-Hubbell® Law Directory:

   A. Who is Listed?
      - Hard copy resource is available in the Washington University Law Library and most other law libraries. Firms are listed alphabetically within a geographic area.
      - Martindale-Hubbell is a resource for identifying mid-sized and smaller law firms. Not all employers are in Martindale-Hubbell (you have to pay to be listed); however, the vast majority of firms with more than 10 attorneys are listed.
      - In the hard copy version, limited information may be available on individual attorneys in the index section even if their firms do not have a listing. The “blue” pages contain the free listings while the “white” pages contain the paid listings.
      - Some federal government agencies and in-house attorneys are listed too.

   B. What Information is Provided?
      - On firms: major practice areas, size of firm, location of other offices; representative clients.
      - On individuals: biographical information, academic information (law school and undergraduate), practice area and research interests, significant cases or publications, and language skills.
      - For government: generally limited to contact information.
      - Some firms only list partners in Martindale-Hubbell.

      - Search for firms by geographic location, size, and practice area using the Martindale.com “Advanced Search” function. You can search for individual attorneys by law school, language skills, practice area, firm or agency, or geographic area. Note: If you use the law school attended search field on Martindale.com, you will obtain both Washington University and George Washington University graduates.
      - Martindale.com can provide a glimpse of the types of federal litigation or volume of transactions handled by some firms. Note that Martindale relies on third party statistics for the litigation experience and the mergers and acquisitions information listed. You can also do a “side by side” comparison of firms that includes categories like number of offices, number of practice areas, firm size, awards and rankings and other information.
      - Helpful Tip #1: To search for Washington University Law alumni or alumni from your undergraduate school, use LEXISNEXIS (www.lexis.com) to access the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory.
         - For example, to find WU Law alumni who practice in Chicago, from “Legal>Research,” select “Martindale-Hubbell Listings, All.” Type: LAW-SCHOOL (Washington pre/1 University and not George) and CITY (Chicago).
         - To search for your undergraduate alumni, type: COLLEGE (Vanderbilt) and CITY (Kansas City).
      - Helpful Tip #2: Using Lexis.com to access Martindale-Hubbell allows flexibility in identifying firms and attorneys through combining practice area searches with your other searches or using a “Focus” term to further define your initial search.
2. **NALP Directory of Legal Employers** (also on-line at [www.nalpdirectory.com](http://www.nalpdirectory.com))

- Print version of the NALP Directory is available in CSO, or you can purchase your own copy in hard-copy ([www.nalp.org](http://www.nalp.org)).
- NALP members are generally larger employers, federal government agencies, and a very limited number of public interest organizations.
- The print version is organized geographically with employers listed alphabetically within the state and city entries. Non-profit organizations and government agencies are also listed by geographic area in a later section of the publication.
- On-Line ([www.nalpdirectory.com](http://www.nalpdirectory.com)): Search by various criteria including geographic area, practice area, whether they hire 1Ls, etc. The online version may provide additional information not found in the print version.

**Deciphering the NALP Form** – see annotated example on following page

1. Recruiting Contact: Address cover letters to this person.
2. Practice Area Breakdown
   - Does this firm practice in/focus on an area I’m interested in?
   - In my cover letter, do I want to say I only want International when only 2 out of their 200 attorneys practice in that area?
3. Compensation and Employment Data:
   - Provides compensation for entry-level associates and summer associates
   - Provides # of attorneys/summer associates hired in the last couple of years
   - Note: the salaries stated are as of February 1 of that year and may no longer be accurate. The online salary information may be more accurate than the print version as employers can (and often do) update the online information throughout the year.
4. What percentage of the 2L summer associates received offers?
5. Does the employer hire 1Ls and, if so, when should they apply?
6. Firm Hiring Criteria:
   - What does the firm look for in potential hires?
7. Work/Life Balance Information:
   - Does the firm have part-time opportunities available for associates?
   - Does the firm have a parental leave policy?
8. Training and Professional Development:
   - Is there a mentor program in place?
   - How often does the firm evaluate associates?
   - Does training time count toward billable hours requirements?
9. Attorney Demographic Breakdown and Diversity Recruitment/Retention Efforts:
   - Breakdown by race or gender
   - Look at the breakdown of partners vs. associates
10. How many schools/job fairs does the firm visit each year for On Campus Interviews?
    - The online version of the form will list all the schools visited
11. Billable Hours Requirements
    - Some firms provide both average billables and minimum billables.
12. Pro Bono/Public Interest Opportunities
    - Do attorneys receive billable hour credit for pro bono work?
13. Firm Narrative:
    - Like the firm brochure, this is what the firm wants to emphasize.

A. Sampling of Other Available Resources to Find Private Employers On-Line.

- Vault Guides to Top Legal Employers - see CSO website to obtain password for access to the Vault website – provides employers rankings obtained through anonymous surveys.

- Chambers Guides - http://www.chambersandpartners.com - Published by Chambers & Partners and based upon client research, these guides provide an analysis / rankings of both firms and attorneys worldwide.

- LawPeriscope - www.lawperiscope.com - Searches the web pages of the largest firms in the country. It will search for key words or practice areas and provides direct links to that portion of a firm’s site.

- Legal 500 - www.legal500.com - This site is useful for large international firms and offices abroad.

- West Legal Directory – online access via Westlaw.com or www.findlaw.com – can be useful for identifying mid-sized and smaller firms.

- The local Yellow Pages of the community in which you are interested. Look under “attorneys” for a full listing of law firms in that area.

- See also the Web-Based Career Resources on the CSO website in the "For Students" section.

B. Employer Web Page.

- To locate: use the link from Martindale-Hubbell listing, Findlaw (www.findlaw.com), or a commercial search engine, such as Google or Yahoo.

- Look at other parts of the firm website in addition to the Recruiting Section. Many firms will have a News or Press Release section with recent stories that will help you learn more about the firm and prepare for potential interviews.