Unmet Expectations: The Problem with Lateral Hiring

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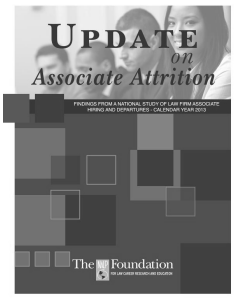
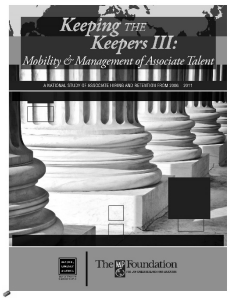
Agenda

- Data on attrition
- Finding the best lateral candidate
- Transition, orientation and integration
- Tips for lateral partner candidates
- Discussion/More best practices
- Resources

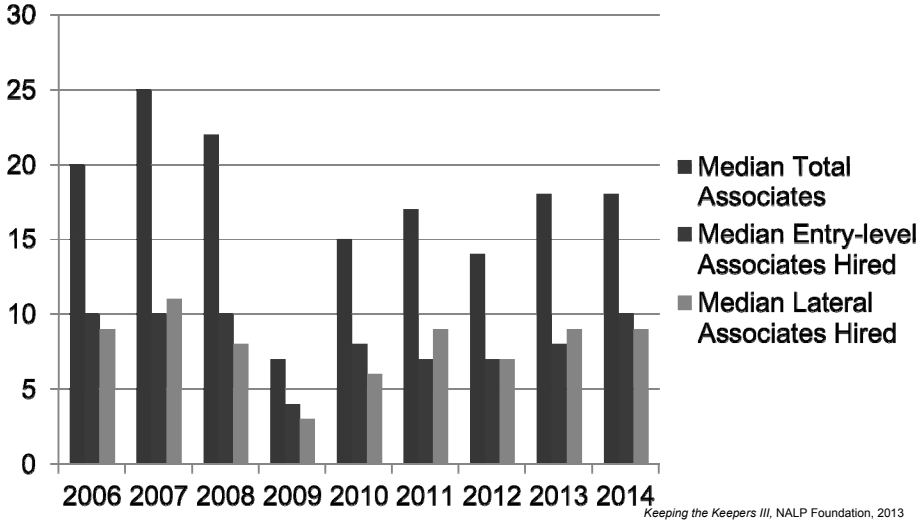
UPDATE ON ASSOCIATE ATTRITION



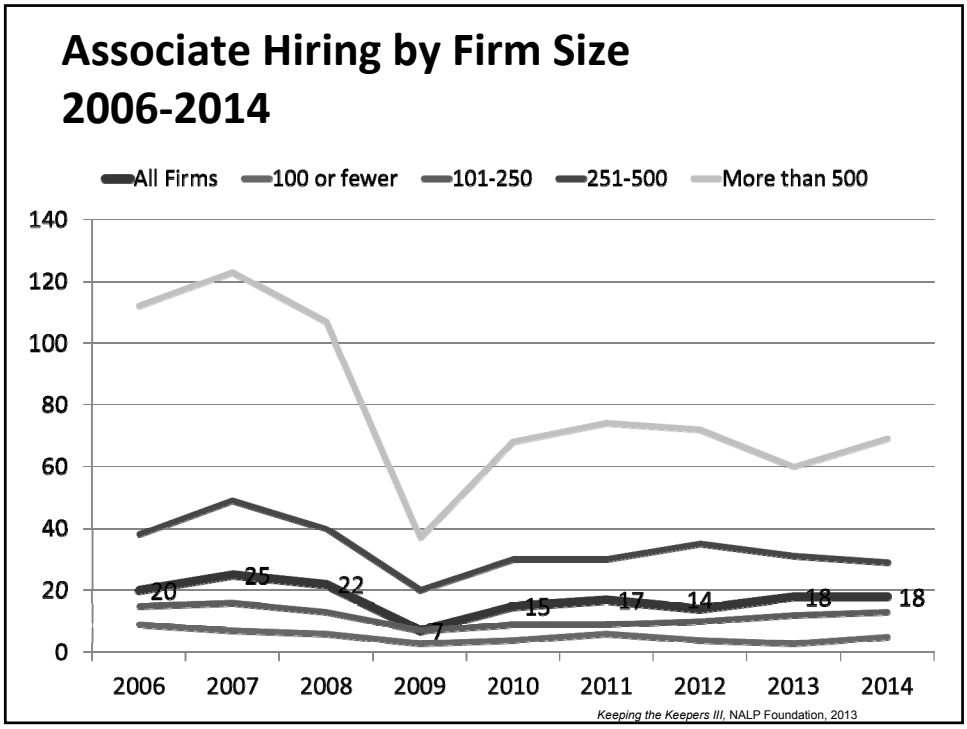
KEEPING THE KEEPERS

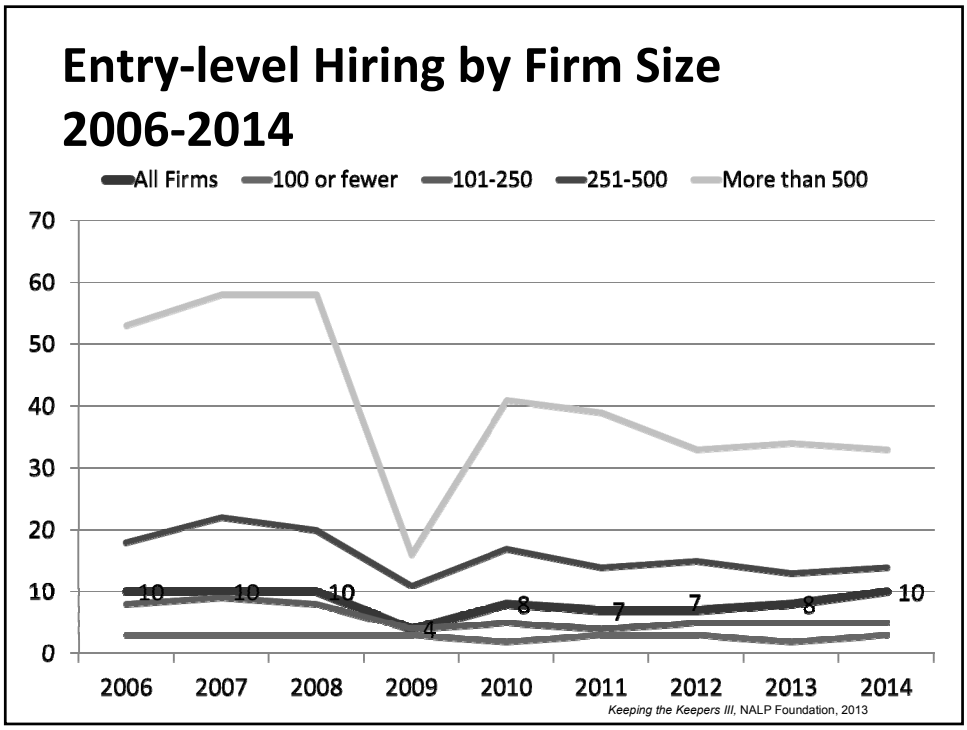


Associate Hiring 2006-2014



Keeping the Keepers III, NALP Foundation, 2013


Associate Hiring by Firm Size
2006-2014
All Firms
100 or fewer
101-250
251-500
More than 500
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
20
25
22
7
15
17
14
18
18
Keeping the Keepers III, NALP Foundation, 2013


Entry-level Hiring by Firm Size
2006-2014
All Firms
100 or fewer
101-250
251-500
More than 500
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
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2013
2014
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4
8
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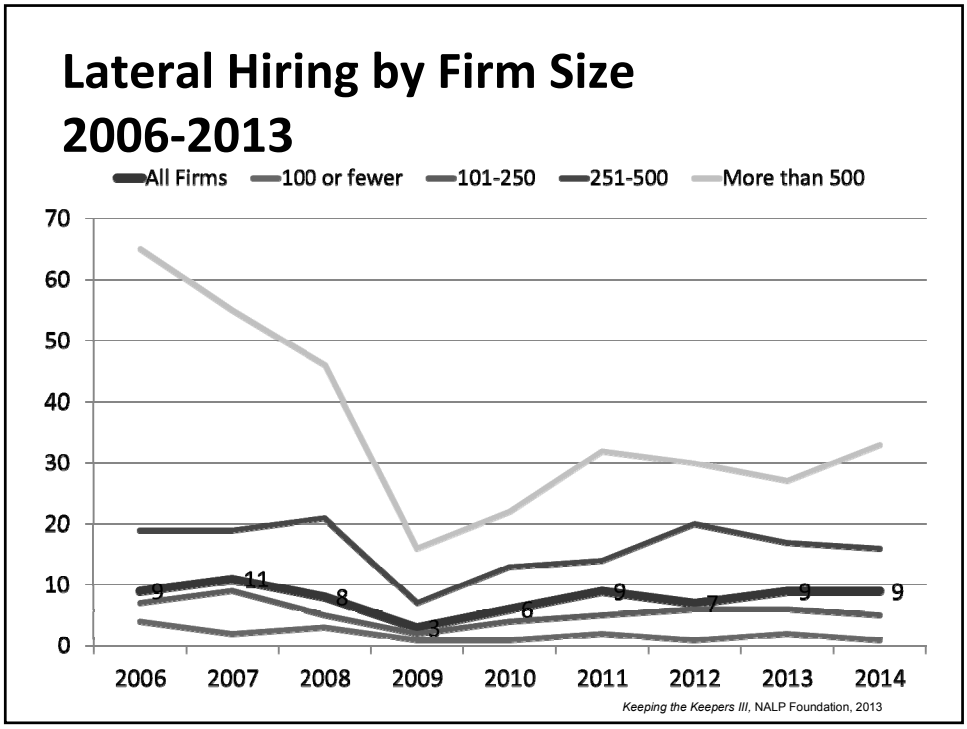
Keeping the Keepers III, NALP Foundation, 2013



Top Reasons for Departure - Entry Level Associates 2006-2014

YEAR	TOP REASON FOR DEPARTURE
2006	Desire for more regular work schedule – 18%
2007	Pursuit of practice interests – 19%
2008	Unmet work quality standards – 17%
2009	**Firm downsizing – 32%**
2010	Career change to other legal job type – 19%
2011	Unmet work quality standards – 17% Desire for new geographic locale – 17%
2012	Unmet work quality standards – 15% Pursuit of specific practice interest – 15% Career change to other type of legal job – 15% Desire for new geographic locale – 15%
2013	Unmet work quality standards – 17% Pursuit of specific practice interest – 17%

Top Reasons for Departure - Lateral Associates 2006-2014

YEAR	TOP REASON FOR DEPARTURE
2006	Unmet work quality standards – 20%
2007	Unmet work quality standards – 18%
2008	Unmet work quality standards – 22%
2009	**Firm downsizing – 31%**
2010	Unmet work quality standards – 22%
2011	Unmet work quality standards – 21%
2012	Unmet work quality standards – 20%
2013	Unmet work quality standards – 23%
2014	**Career change to other type of legal job – 20%**

Departure Destinations
2006-2014

- Law firm associate position – top departure destination for entry-level and lateral associates in all years except for 2009
- "Unknown destination" – top response in 2009 for entry-level and lateral associates
- Corporate in-house counsel – 2nd most reported destination

Keeping the Keepers III, NALP Foundation, 2013

Status at Time of Departure Entry-level Associates

YEAR	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS UNWANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS WANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS NEUTRAL
2006	56%	17%	28%
2009	31%	42%	26%
2011	57%	22%	21%
2013	51%	24%	25%
2014	56%	24%	20%

Status at Time of Departure Lateral Associates

YEAR	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS UNWANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS WANTED	ASSOCIATE'S DEPARTURE WAS NEUTRAL
2006	46%	26%	28%
2009	25%	49%	26%
2011	45%	30%	25%
2013	41%	31%	28%
2014	50%	25%	25%

Finding the Best Lateral Candidate

- Determine why you are looking to fill the position
- How urgent is the need
- Determine who will lead the search
- Provide talking points
- Identify top traits

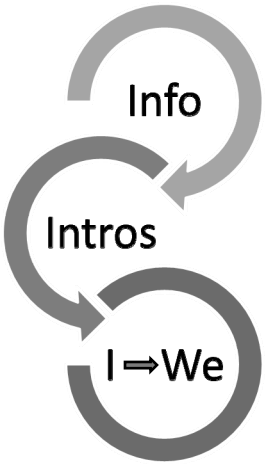
What are you looking for?

- Experience level
- Specific work experience
- Pedigree
- Resume Red Flags
- Personality Fit

Entry level programs v. lateral hiring

- Interview/Onboarding Process
- Different Expectations
- Integration challenges
- Importance of mentor/sponsor
- Loyalty Levels differ

Lateral Associates: Integration



Keys to Successful Transitions

- Don't waste their time
- Don't overwhelm them with minutiae
- Streamline as much information as possible
- Keep it relevant
- Coordinate an appropriate flow
- Make them feel welcome -- and have some fun!

Orientation vs. Integration

Orientation	Integration
• Employee onboarding • Introduction to firm history & culture • Processes & procedures • Introductions • Technology training • Compliance training	• Mentor programs • Committees • Department/Practice training • Practice group and office meetings • Retreats

Integration: Getting Started

- Know (really know) your firm
- Develop relationship of respect and trust so you can relate
- Communicate by multiple levels of outreach
- Help assimilate into firm culture
- Follow up – Don't forget about them after the first few days

Integration: Make it Personal

Tips for Partners

- Pre-arrival preparations are key and more urgent
- Marketing/business development is their focus
- Make important introductions to people and processes
- Don't expect them to stick to your schedule
- Package information in a concise way
- Work with secretaries
- Follow up frequently

Discussion/Best Practices

Resources

- NALP/NALP Foundation Publications
  - *Loyalty By Design*
  - Updates on associate attrition
  - Newsletters
  - Lawyer PD and Newer Professionals Section
  - PDI and annual conferences
- City Groups
- NALP PD Section
- Professional Development Consortium

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