

Top Legal Practice Areas for 2016

Demand for specialized expertise among top trends influencing hiring in legal field.

Toronto, ON -- As law firms and companies strategically supplement their legal teams to pursue new business opportunities, competition is increasing for job seekers with in-demand skills and niche backgrounds. Applicants with expertise in high-growth practice areas and industry sectors, such as corporate law and financial services, are seeing greater than average starting salaries. These and other findings are featured in the [2016 Salary Guide](#) from Robert Half Legal, a [legal staffing and consulting solutions firm](#) specializing in lawyers, law-clerks and other highly skilled legal professionals.

"Employers are placing a premium on associates and law-clerks who can assume full caseloads and deliver quality results to clients," said Charles Volkert, executive director of Robert Half Legal. "The most sought after legal professionals possess three to five-plus years of experience in a hot practice area, technological proficiency and strong interpersonal skills."

Here are five hiring trends in the legal field, according to Robert Half Legal research:

- **Recruiting and retention strategies are more essential.** As baby boomers begin to exit the workforce and vacate leadership roles, employers are re-evaluating succession plans and focusing on how to become more attractive to Gen Z workers.
- **Employers are enhancing benefits.** Law firms and companies are emphasizing career advancement opportunities, training programs and other perks valued by job seekers, such as telecommuting and additional vacation time.
- **Multifaceted law clerks are sought by law firms and companies alike.** Aside from practice area experience, the most marketable legal support professionals have strong technology and interpersonal skills, and are able to perform multiple job functions.
- **Bilingual abilities are in demand.** In certain markets, job seekers with fluency in both English and French have a hiring advantage at government agencies and law firms.
- **Law firms seek experienced lawyers to enhance service offerings.** To fortify lucrative practice areas, law firms are hiring mid- and senior-level lawyers with a book of business and solid client management skills.

Volkert added that employers are more willing to negotiate compensation and benefits to attract and retain top talent. "Offering competitive pay, interesting work and advancement opportunities are highly effective strategies for improving employee engagement and reducing turnover," he said.

The Robert Half Legal 2016 Salary Guide is based on an analysis of the thousands of job orders and placements managed by Robert Half Legal account executives in North America. The guide includes an overview of current hiring and management trends as well as national average starting salary ranges for more than 100 positions in the legal field. Because compensation can vary significantly by geographic area, the guide also includes an analysis of hiring trends and compensation variances for 150 markets in the United States and Canada. The Robert Half Legal 2016 Salary Guide is available to download at roberthalflegal.ca/salary-centre.

About Robert Half Legal

Robert Half Legal is the premier provider of legal staffing and consulting solutions for law firms and corporate legal departments. With North American and global locations, Robert Half Legal provides a customized approach, including managed review, legal project management and eDiscovery services, to help organizations handle constantly changing workloads. The company offers in-demand expertise across practice areas as well as highly skilled legal professionals on a temporary, project and full-time basis. More information, including online job search services, can be found at roberthalflegal.ca. Follow us at blog.roberthalf.ca and [@RobertHalf_CAN](https://twitter.com/RobertHalf_CAN) on Twitter for workplace news, trends and advice.

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