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Career Corner

Career Tips

Seeking Feedback

By: *Pamela Hyland, Assoc. Director for Career Development*

As you progress toward true professionalism, one of the most important things you will need is candid feedback. Asking for other people's opinion of your work product and your working style can help you to develop faster and become competent in a shorter period of time. Feedback, *especially* negative feedback, is fertilizer to your career growth.

It's up to you to seek input. Whenever you turn in a paper for a class or write a memo for your employer, ask for comments. If they say, "Oh, it's fine," persist and ask how it could be better. People are often shy of offending so they hesitate to give negative feedback – make sure they understand that you consider it *helping* you to receive their opinions.

This is particularly important if you sense they are afraid to offend you because you are a woman, or a member of a minority group, or any such social reason. If you *don't* get this feedback, it will hurt you far more in the long run than a sting to your ego will hurt now. Assure them that you will not take it personally, that you really need to know how to improve your work.

Another aspect of work life that can always use improvement is working style. Perhaps you aren't clear or timely in your instructions. Maybe you are antisocial at work, or interrupt too much. Whatever the

problem, you need to know if you have one and the only way to know is to ask others to let you know. It's a good idea to ask those below you in the hierarchy as well as those above you.

When you ask for feedback, it's important to be clear about what you want and to ask for time set aside to review your work. Tell the person from whom you are seeking input what you need and ask if s/he has time to work with you. Setting a specific appointment is a good idea, if possible, when you won't be interrupted and can focus on listening carefully.

When feedback is being given, just absorb it; don't argue. It's okay to ask clarifying questions to make sure you understand but, because you have asked for this feedback, you must take it in the honest spirit in which it is given. It may sting to hear that your work is not perfect or that you should alter your working style, but the person is truly giving you a gift - take it to heart without taking it personally.

One of the biggest mistakes new professionals make is not putting the improvement suggestions into action. Improving your weak points is how you show employers or coworkers that you are honoring their suggestions by incorporating them into your daily work.

Thank your reviewers for their time, interest and fertilizing suggestions for your future growth!



Want to make an appointment with a career counselor?

Call the CSO Front Desk at **(415) 565-4619**.

Everyday, the Career Services Office receives new listings. Log onto HastingsCareers.com and check often for new postings. Just a few highlights:

FALL POSITIONS

Allan Lerch and Associates: Small [Plaintiff's side] medical malpractice firm (two attorneys and a secretary) looking for a part-time Discovery Clerk. Position Begins on or about December 7, 2007. Work Hours: 2-3 days per week (20 - 25 hours). Pay: \$20/hour. A commitment of at least 1 year preferred. Please see posting on HastingsCareers.com for more information. **Years Required:** 2L, 1L, 3L. **Materials Requested:** Resume. **Contact:** Oktober Miller 456 Montgomery Street, Ste. 1300, San Francisco, CA 94104 Email: lerchdiscovery@gmail.com **Deadline:** 11/10/07

Law Office of Lena Ayoub: Law clerk(s) needed for immigration and law office in Berkeley, CA. Law clerk will assist in overall preparation of cases. Law clerk will be responsible for taking client declarations, and preparing immigration applications and country conditions research. Law clerks will also perform legal research on immigration law topics and assist attorneys in writing and editing briefs. Law clerk will have

direct contact with clients. Ideally, the applicant will speak Spanish and have the ability to work closely with clients in Spanish as well as translate for attorneys when necessary. However, interested non-Spanish speaking applicants should also apply. See www.lenalaw.net for more information. **Years Required:** 1L, 2L, 3L. **Materials Requested:** Resume and cover letter **Contact:** Lena Ayoub at lena@lenalaw.net. **Deadline:** 11/10/07

FELLOWSHIPS

The Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Fellowship. Candidates will be evaluated on the following criteria: demonstrated commitment to the mission and ideals of the Lawyers' Committee; knowledge of and demonstrated interest in civil rights law; excellent oral and written communication skills. For more information, visit www.lccr.com. **Years Required:** 3L. **Materials Requested:** Cover letter, a resume with three references, and a writing sample. **Contact:** Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area, care of the Thurgood Marshall Fellowship Committee 131 Steuart Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94105. No phone calls please. **Deadline:** 11/01/07

SUMMER POSITIONS

Davis Graham & Stubbs (Denver, Colorado) is one of the most well-respected and highly ranked law firms in the Rocky Mountain region. We are actively seeking superior 2Ls for our 2008 Summer Associate

program. We highly value strong academic performance, excellent research and writing skills, personal initiative, strong interpersonal skills, diversity, maturity, judgment, and relevant extracurricular activities. For more information, please visit our website at www.dgslaw.com. **Years Required:** 2L. **Materials Requested:** a resume, writing sample, law school transcript **Contact:** Apply online at HastingsCareers.com. **Deadline:** 11/10/07

This Week's Events

1L Orientations ALL WEEK!

Career Services Open House Trick or Treating!
Wed., 10/31; 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Room 230, 200 McAllister

Special 1L "Jump Starter Workshops"
Fri., 11/2; 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Workshops/Room K
(See CSO Calendar for details.)

Alumni Mentor Program Orientation

Tue., 10/30; 3:40 – 4:30 pm
Room 314, 198 Bldg.

Advanced Sign Up Required!

Sign up on HastingsCareers.com. (AMP orientations are scheduled every week)