

The FAQ about the U-LPQ

By Mitch Satalof

What in the name of all that is holy were we thinking? Revolutionize the way the legal search community approaches partner placement? Dare to suggest to multimillion and even some multibillion-dollar law firms that there might be a better way? It feels like trying to build a pyramid – pushing boulders up a hill.

Why did we think the U-LPQ had any chance of making serious inroads? Well doubters, the U-LPQ is taking hold. We now can claim almost 40 AmLaw 200 firms that have endorsed the concept of being willing to accept the U-LPQ during the normal course of partner placements. While search firm and law firm utilization of the U-LPQ will remain a work in progress, we continue our outreach towards building consensus for acceptance of the U-LPQ both as a practical and educational tool in partner placement. We've also found that our conflicts form is becoming a standard for many law firms as they revamp their own processes to take advantage of a better route to determining fit.

Law firm concerns

It seems the most serious challenge to our premise is impression that we're expecting law firms to migrate to our LPQ in full. This simply is not the case. It's true that some law firms are modeling their LPQ to match ours – but there are many that have their individual processes in place. There also are law firms that are taking elements of our U-LPQ and incorporating them into their own version. Some law firms are pushing search firms towards utilizing the U-LPQ and directing search firms to the NALSC website to download the forms (at <https://www.nalsc.org/u-lpq-forms/>).

What we're asking our law firm clients is this: If XYZ search firm introduced a partner candidate to you and you, the law firm, would like to proceed further with exploring the possibilities with this candidate, would it not serve your interests to accept a finished LPQ that provides extensive details covering 80% of what you need to know about this particular candidate? Why on earth would you not want to read the book since it's already written and ready for your review?

It's likely the law firm will have supplemental questions that require answers not covered in the U-LPQ due to state or federal laws and regulations. I can't imagine a search firm on the planet that wouldn't want to help you gather that necessary information as well.

Search firm concerns

And now a word to our search firm members: I know how hard it is – as does everyone in the legal community – to convince a partner candidate to sit down and fill out an LPQ. But why not start by preparing that partner for the inevitable? Why not point out that the one-time investment now possibly will eliminate having to repeat this process multiple times? Takes courage to force the issue but we need to stop fearing the

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prospect of losing that candidate and assure them it doesn't get any easier with any other search firm. LPQ-itis afflicts everyone. Just deal with it.

Bottom line

So let's get down to the message one more time. Search firms need to begin introducing the U-LPQ early in their discussions with partner candidates. Law firms should be willing to accept U-LPQ forms when the time is right for this step in the process.

For the FAQ about the U-LPQ, see our website at <https://www.nalsc.org/u-lpq-faq/>.



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