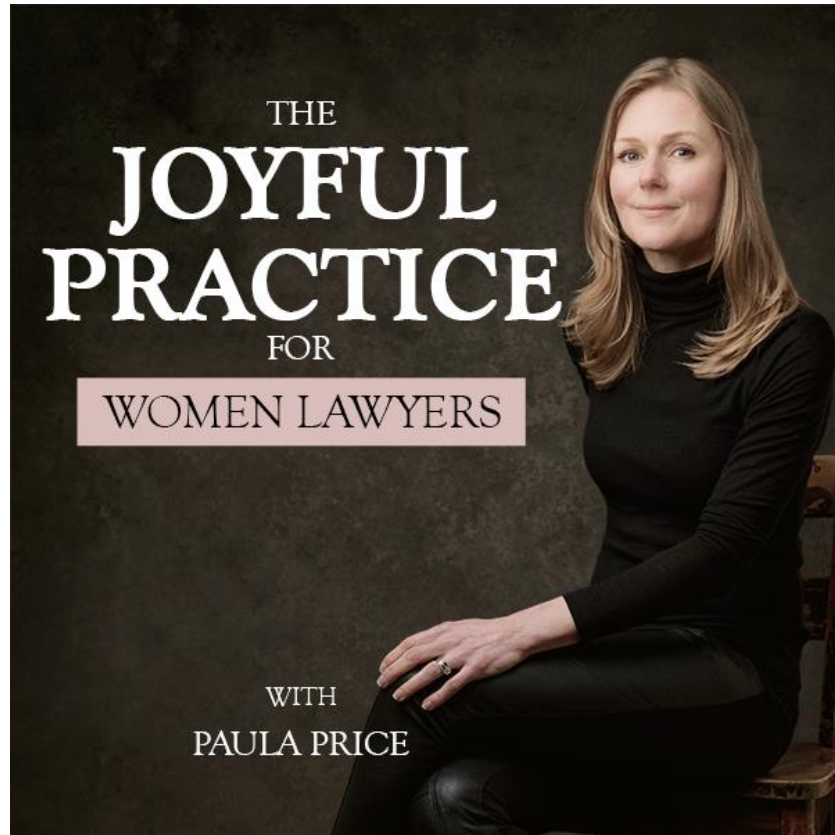


Ep #47: Life After Law with Randi Bean: Non-Traditional Careers for Lawyers



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Paula Price

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You're listening to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast episode number 47.

Welcome to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast. I'm your host Paula Price, lawyer turned certified executive coach. This podcast was created to empower women lawyers just like you to create a life and practice you love. Join me every week for a break from the hustle so we can focus on you, what you truly want, and how you can create it.

If you're over the overwhelm, done with putting out fires, and ready to create a life and practice that brings you more joy, you're in the right place. Ready for today's episode? Let's dive in.

Hello, my friends. Welcome back to the podcast. I'm so excited to be introducing today's guests to you. Her name is Randi Bean. She is the founder and CEO of Life After Law. I'll be dropping you into that interview in just a minute. It's an amazing interview. Randi shares all sorts of information that you are going to love about legal careers, about nontraditional uses for your law degree, and about the formula for success. Factors that she's seen that have made for successful law careers over the long run.

Before we do that, I just wanted to highlight a couple of offerings that I have coming up for students. This is the time of year when law students are starting out at law firms. Many of them will have summer positions at law firms or summer internships at different types of organizations.

What I'm offering are two trainings to help students prepare for that transition. So whether you are a student yourself or if you know of a student who is making that transition, I would invite you to sign up for the program or to share the information with those students that you know so that they can sign up themselves.

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So the first training is a free offering. It is on Friday April 22 at noon pacific time. It's a one hour training to help students make the transition from law school to law firm. Whether you are joining a law firm or an organization where you're training as a lawyer, I would encourage you to check it out because you're going to learn some skills that will help you get ready to make that transition.

The other offering that I would like to highlight is a training that I'm offering on Friday April 29 at 9:30 a.m. pacific time. This is a three hour course. It is going to go through six of the challenges that I see students facing when they make the transition from law school to law firm. In the training, we're going to go through each of those challenges. I'm going to identify them. I'm going to offer real life examples of how they show up in practice. I'm going to offer strategies and tools to help overcome those challenges.

So links to register for each of these offerings will be available on thejoyfulpractice.com website under episode number 47. You just have to go to the show notes, and you will find the links there. If you can't find them, send me a note on LinkedIn and I will direct you to them. So with that, I will not keep you waiting. Let's have our conversation with Randi. Thank you so much.

Paula: Hi, everybody. Welcome back to the podcast. I'm so excited to have everybody here today, and in particular to join me for a conversation with Randi Bean. Randi Bean is the CEO and founder of Life After Law. I had the pleasure of connecting with Randi just a few weeks ago. We connected on LinkedIn.

I was looking at her bio on her website and thinking oh, she would be such a great guest to have on the podcast. Then we had our phone call. Within

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about 30 seconds of speaking with Randi, I knew that she would be an amazing guest and that I had to invite her on today. So I did that. Randi graciously accepted the invitation.

So she's here, and you will be delighted to meet her. One of the reasons that I think that you will love hearing from her is that Randi is a lawyer who transitioned out of the practice of law. Now through her organization Life After Law helps lawyers with nontraditional law practices. That's a question that comes up often for me in my practice, and I just think you're going to love what Randi has to say. So, Randi, welcome to the podcast.

Randi: Thank you so much. I'm so happy to be here.

Paula: It's such a delight to have you. Now Randi for those of you who don't know you, can you tell us a little bit about yourself, a little bit about Life After Law. What do we need to know about Randi Bean? Tell us. No pressure.

Randi: Okay. Well, I started Life After Law 22 years ago, actually. It was something that came out from, you know, having my own experience as going to law school and being a lawyer for a short time. Then I was looking to do something different with my career. After floundering around a little bit, this ended up being the result of that.

So I've been keeping very busy for the past 22 years with the company which we've been expanding, and now we're across the country and working with all sorts of companies and law firms and talking to all sorts of candidates. Lawyers who are looking to do something different. So I do that. In the rest of my time, I am a mom to two teenagers. So it's pretty busy.

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Paula: It is so amazing Randi. I have to say it's surprising that you've been at this for 22 years. Those of you who are listening do not have the benefit of seeing Randi. We are on Zoom having a conversation. You get the recording. I'm in awe that you've been doing this for 22 years, that you've got teenagers. This is amazing. My kids are not quite at that stage yet. We've got a few years, but I think you've provided me with some very helpful parental guidance last time we spoke. I love that you have created this entity. So Life After Law, what is it? What is it that you do?

Randi: So at its core Life After Law is a recruitment firm. So we find roles and we place lawyers into a wide range of positions. So there's been an evolution. I called it a Life After Law evolution over time. So 22 years ago, things looked a little bit different at the company than they do right now.

When I first started it, really I was focusing on lawyers making that transition outside of practice. That was what I really could relate to because I realized after only wanting to be a lawyer and having, you know, everything I did, my whole plan, going to law school, and being a criminal lawyer and everything that I wanted to do.

After a short while, I realized it wasn't for me. So I needed something else. I needed to figure out what else to do. I knew that there was so much more that I had to offer other than just being, you know, "a lawyer" and a criminal lawyer. But there was a big challenge figuring out what to do with that.

So when I started Life After Law, it was really focused on helping individuals make that transition outside of traditional practice. Over the years what I can tell you is that it's transitioned quite a bit. So 22 years ago, outside of traditional practice actually included things like in house counsel roles, which now that's a dime a dozen. It's very common. A lot of people make that transition directly out of private practice. It's very common. It really wasn't that common over 20 years ago. There was, of course,

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companies that had in house counsels, but it wasn't sort of that given of a next step.

So we did a lot of that. We worked on a ton of roles that really are nonpracticing, whether they're quasi legal, completely alternative executive roles, whatever you want to call them. We've done a lot of those. We also actually work with law firms. We do work on private practice roles as well.

This has been one of the most interesting transitions that Life After Law has made. We kind of always did it. We just haven't been known for doing it. Part of the reasoning behind it is we realized pretty early on a lot of lawyers that were saying "I want to do something different", didn't necessarily need to be not practicing law. They didn't even need to be outside of a law firm environment. What we realized is that a lot of people just weren't at the right law firm environment for themselves. That they just weren't the right fit. The firm culture wasn't something that was working for them.

So over the years, we've kind of evolved to work on all of these different areas. So we placed lawyers in all of those different roles. We have clients from all top law firms across the country as well as all sorts of private companies as well as not for profits and all sorts of different types of organizations.

Paula: Yeah, thank you so much, Randi. There's so much there that I would love to circle back to. I'm going to start with what you spoke about earlier because this is something that really struck me when we first connected, which is your story of leaving law. Because as you describe it, and I'll let you describe it, you are one of those people. There's some people who I speak with who tell me I never really wanted to become a lawyer. It was kind of a default decision for me. But that wasn't really your story. Can you tell us a bit more about that?

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Randi: Absolutely. So I already knew in high school that I wanted to be a lawyer, and I wanted to be a criminal defense lawyer. So I had a goal. Everything that I was doing was I was I was taking law courses in high school, whatever they offered. Then I went to university knowing I'm getting my degree, my undergrad, so that I can go to law school. So I did a philosophy degree, again, with that goal in mind. Going to law school.

I went to law school. Already I was there, and I have to say I didn't love it. It wasn't kind of what I thought it was going to be. But, you know, I enjoyed certain parts of it. I went through the whole process. I got my law degree. I articulated at a criminal law firm and spent every day going to court. I went to the jails. I got to talk to all these clients. It was fun in some ways, and it was very interesting. I have some really great stories from those days as far as the characters that I met along the way.

But I also realized at that point that I didn't like doing it. I got to a point when I didn't want to go to court anymore. I was really, really dreading it every day. I didn't want to practice law, I thought. Or I didn't want at least be a criminal lawyer. So, you know, I finished articling. I got called to the Bar. I worked for about a year. I was absolutely certain that this was not what I wanted to do.

I found myself at a real crossroads because I had no idea what else there was to do. I had never wanted to do anything else. So, you know, I did what any responsible adult would do. I left my job and went traveling for six months around the world hoping to figure some things out. I had a great time. I figured nothing out while I was away. So I don't know. It was fun. I came back. Then I had to figure out what I was going to do with myself and get a job.

So you know, I made an interesting transition, almost unintentionally. I got a job working at a large manufacturing company as a contracts manager.

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So it was something that was using my legal background and not practicing law. So it was great because I had a job. I was sort of back again being the responsible adult I was supposed to be and working and using the background that I had, which was amazing.

But what it really did was opened my eyes to the fact that hey, I never knew that this was a thing. I never knew that people did jobs like this. I wasn't the only person there who was a lawyer who was doing it. So I started to realize, okay. There are jobs out there that lawyers do that don't mean going to court every day, don't mean practicing law. So I did that for a while.

I wanted to find out what else there was. It wasn't going to be my long term career being in that role. I think I always had a little bit of an entrepreneurial slant. So I kind of always thought I'd end up doing something on my own at one point. So I ended up leaving that. I was fortunate to be able to start working with some people in HR and recruitment. So I learned how to do that part of the business.

Everything just fell in place. Everything made sense all the sudden because now I was learning how to recruit. I was learning about human resources. I was learning about different things that lawyers could do. I mean at the end of the day, Life After Law was created from all of that. So I am the original Life After Law story because I made that transition myself. I learned a lot of it along the way as I went. So everything was sort of new. Everything I did, it was kind of a first step and new and exciting.

Paula: Such a great story. I just love this, Randi. What I love is I mean, number one, you had this very clear idea in high school. I mean how many of us can say that we know in high school what we want to do? You then follow through on your plan to get to where you thought you wanted to be, which was practicing criminal law.

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I can only imagine how much courage it must have taken you to make that decision after a year into your practice that you're going to leave your job, travel, think about it, and then make a bold move. To then have experiences first as a contract manager, then moving more into the HR, and really almost following the breadcrumbs to where you are now. Right? Picking up the pieces, figuring out what's working for you, and then creating this organization that now helps lawyers who are trying to find the right position for them.

So how did you get from that point where you were working in HR now and I don't know. I guess the seed of the idea of Life After Law must have come to you somehow. How did you then start up Life After Law?

Randi: You know, I was really fortunate in that I don't think I had a lot to lose at the time, or maybe I was just completely naive. It never occurred to me that it wouldn't work. So I just decided, okay this is what we need. There's nothing out there helping lawyers make the sort of transition that I made. So I'm going to be that something.

I went from literally coming up with a company name and with figuring out what I was going to be doing and deciding, okay these types of organizations would all make potentially good clients. I started reaching out to potential clients and started to do a little bit of advertising here and there. I was really fortunate. Within my first year, I got picked up by The Globe and Mail, and I did a big story. So it was a nice piece of exposure right off the bat, which is great.

Luckily, it went ahead and it gradually gained traction. I think it's great that it just—it never occurred to me that it would potentially fail. So that was never an option. It was just okay, this is harder this week, this month, but that's fine. I'm just gonna keep going. Luckily, that worked for me. I think that it was good that I was still fairly early on in my career. So when I say I

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really had very little to lose, I wasn't walking away from something else that I was hugely invested in.

I can tell you, for sure, I didn't feel like I was walking away from being a lawyer or from putting the time in at law school. Because it's kind of funny in a way, a little bit ironic. I mean for somebody who decided I don't want to be a lawyer, I don't think I've ever spoken or would have ever spoken to so many lawyers but for going this route. Like I'm completely surrounded and part of the legal community. So it's kind of worked out really nicely.

Paula: Yeah, it's so fabulous. I love what you say about that. When we spoke a few weeks ago, you mentioned that when you started out, it wasn't as though failure was even on the radar, right? It's not something you even thought about. What I love about that is how you've just pressed ahead, right? Like, I imagine you had a number of challenges in starting a business all on your own in the beginning. Now you've got a team. But that is such a story of, you know, having this vision, whatever that vision was for you, and putting one foot in front of the other.

So what are some of the challenges that you faced initially when you— Because, as you mentioned, like this was a different legal environment. The idea of in house being somewhat uncommon when you started out versus what it's like today. I mean, you've seen so many changes. What have some of the challenges been for you in creating Life After Law?

Randi: I think the biggest challenge, at least initially, was this concept was just so foreign to people. For the most part, people could not wrap their brain around the idea of a lawyer doing anything other than practicing law, being a lawyer.

So I would manage to get meetings, and I would talk to potential clients. I'd be pitching this idea about, you know, a lawyer going in, let's say as an

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example of a contract manager or something like that. I'd go through this whole pitch and explain all the benefits and why it's such a great person to have on your team. You're getting, you know, all the skills that you need with the extra added value that this person's got a law degree, you know, got letters after their name and all the rest of it.

It would seem like okay. I'm making progress. We're connecting. They're understanding what I'm saying. Then the last thing that they would say is, "Yeah, thanks, but we don't have a legal department or we're not hiring any lawyers."

Like it was not like people weren't understanding it, or they couldn't quite grasp it. It's like well, why would you want to do that? Why would anyone want to do that? You've gone to school for so long. You're a lawyer. Why would you want to be not a lawyer? That was a hugest hurdle. It went on for a lot of years.

I think, today I don't generally have to explain that to people. I think so many organizations now have recognized the value that somebody with legal training brings to the table. I think it's so much more common now for lawyers to get into roles in leadership, in management, in business, in so many different areas. I think a lot of people go to law school and go through the legal training with the intention of doing something else and bringing that to the table.

So I think the world at large has sort of come to accept it overtime, but it took a long time to get there. This was a constant, constant pitch, and having to go back and explain over and over again. It's like yeah, but they don't need to be practicing. Like, yeah, this person understands that they're not going to be called counsel if they're there. They understand that. It took a lot of perseverance. That I'll tell you.

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Paula: So amazing, Randi. I mean as you're describing this, I'm just seeing you as a pioneer. Initially out there pitching to organizations. Here are these individuals who are trained as lawyers who can come and create value for you at your organization. Not necessarily in the capacity as a lawyer, but in another type of capacity. I just love that.

As you're talking about that, I think it's so interesting because here you are talking to the organizations. I imagine there's a completely separate conversation going on with the individual lawyers who are thinking about transitioning out of their roles as traditional lawyers.

I know when I was making that transition that I felt very pigeonholed as a lawyer. I thought, you know, I'm trained as a lawyer. I am a lawyer. The options that are available to me are the ones that are lawyers, and even within the legal profession. If you are, like I was, a litigator, then the idea of going from litigator to some other type of lawyer just seemed like that just wasn't an option.

So for you, I imagine you're doing double duty, right? On the one hand, you're convincing organizations that they can hire lawyers in a non-lawyer capacity if that's what they're looking for. Also for the lawyers to be able to help them see that the qualifications that they have, the credentials they have, the skills that they've developed are not only suitable for the practice of law, but also for a number of other roles where they can contribute value. So I just think that such a neat story.

Randi: I have to say at the very beginning, there was never—As much as there was a challenge getting the client side, that the hiring companies or you know to be interested in getting lawyers on board. There was never any lack of lawyers who are interested in this idea.

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From day one, we were swamped with people wanting to talk. It really did resonate with lawyers looking to do something else and trying to figure out, you know, how do we do that? I did a lot of career coaching in the early days as well. Talking to people about what the options were because, you know, even to this day as a recruitment firm, we only really are able to provide jobs from the clients that give us jobs to fill.

So we still even do career consulting for individuals because they might have these fantastic, really highly qualified individuals out there, and there just doesn't happen to be any job on our opportunities at the moment that really suits their background or what they're looking for. So part of what we do is help them figure out how to do that on their own. So, you know, that's still a part of our business today.

But at the very beginning, it was a huge, huge part because so many people needed to know how to go through that process on their own because people weren't advertising a job for lawyer not practicing. It just wasn't really a thing so nobody was advertising it. You had to find those yourself. You had to create those opportunities for yourself. You had to market yourself. So we did a lot of that sort of coaching.

Paula: Absolutely. That idea of the nontraditional role. We've talked about this, but you mentioned in a discussion we had just a few moments ago that you've got resources on your website. It includes a list of some of the nontraditional roles that are available. What kind of roles are there? What kind of resources do you refer those people to that have questions about nontraditional roles?

Because I get that question too often from lawyers who are practicing who are wondering about, you know, nonprofit roles, or what about if I went outside of law? What if I wanted to start my own business? What if I wanted to go back to school and get a designation in HR? Like, there's all these

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different questions that come up. So I'd love to hear what you recommend for individuals who have questions about the nontraditional career path for lawyers.

Randi: So as far as on our website, we do have resource on the candidate section. There's just kind of a list. There's actually two separate lists. One of them are just sort of a sampling of nontraditional career options for lawyers out there. The other one is a list of transferable skills, which are really, really helpful for somebody who's looking to make that transition.

There's so many options out there. I don't know. I can give you some examples of things just even now that we're just currently working on which are amazing. So we're working on a role right now. It's called Sport Integrity Commissioner. It's at a nonprofit organization. The most similar type of a role that I would compare it to is, I guess, an ombudsman type of a role. So it's really, really interesting. We're also working in the same organizations looking for a chief investigator.

Again, you know, these are things that theoretically, somebody doesn't need to have a law degree or legal background to do. But having that experience lends itself very well to these sorts of roles. So the organization partly expecting and hoping to get a lawyer in both of these sorts of roles.

A lot of the nontraditional or quasi legal roles that I think people would potentially move into could be related to certain degree what area of practice they were in if it was something that they enjoyed. So, you know, somebody who is practicing labor and employment. You know, it's a good example for somebody.

If they enjoy doing but they don't want to practice, then it's sort of a fairly straightforward transition to move into something to do with either HR or labor industrial relations, or, you know, recruitment is always a great career

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often. Happy to talk to anybody who's interested in doing that because we're always looking to grow our team. But it's a great background. It's a great way, sorry, to use the background as well without practicing. Then still staying very, very much tied into the legal community.

I think I would tell people also that the best way to find out what's out there is to talk to people. Like, it sounds so simple and straightforward, but the more people you talk to and ask the basic question like what do you do? How did you get into that role? The better chances you'll have a finding something that you've never seen before or heard of before.

I can tell you that to this day, I always love finding that new type of role or that new practice area that didn't exist before. That I never heard of. It still happens. Like I still find out about areas of practice that I've never heard of before. They're constantly developing as society is constantly developing. Years ago you wouldn't have had lawyers working in anything to do with cryptocurrency and fin tech and stuff like that. It wasn't really an area. You know, now it is.

So I think there's so many new practices. I love learning about that. I always hear about a lot of lawyers who have made the transition. I'm always interested to hear their stories. They also make for really interesting clients, potentially, because they get it. So any lawyer that's moved outside of traditional practice into some sort of another role, at least they're a very good listener, and they're receptive to hearing about how a lawyer can do something a little bit different.

Paula: Totally. I love it. Randi, it sounds like what I'm noticing about you in our conversation is you seem to really be on that edge of what's next. Right? You talked about how at the beginning of Life After Law, you were pitching to companies who'd never heard of this before. Even still 22 years into it, which is, again, amazing that there continues to be new

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opportunities for lawyers in areas that simply didn't exist a few years ago. So I really see you as being on that edge of what's possible, and what's next for lawyers who are interested in doing something that isn't necessarily the traditional path.

Randi: Especially now in light of the past lovely COVID two years, a lot of other possibilities have come up. It's not even so much a matter of moving into a different area of practice per se. But I think another thing that is really relevant here to this conversation is another way of practice.

So I think that for a lot of people, a lot of lawyers, and, you know, I'll go so far as to say, for women in particular. The lifestyle that is associated with the traditional big law firm, for example, it's challenging to sort of get that whole balance in your life. I think that, you know, the pandemic has caused a lot of change due to necessity, but we've been able to now see lawyers who have been working remotely 100% of the time. Granted they had to because of the pandemic, but it worked. People continue to work.

We've seen people moving to more alternative structures as far as going forward. Whether it's remote part of the time and calling it flexible or hybrid or whatever that the buzzword is of the day. But that's not something that we would have probably seen even three years ago. Some companies were letting it happen. Some firms have special arrangements where people working four days a week instead of five and that sort of stuff, but it was the exception, not the rule.

I think now people are able to carve out a work style that actually works for them. So, you know, that could have been something that was limiting somebody's ability to practice law. Someone might love doing it and it just wasn't working with whatever they needed to do, you know other things in their life with regards to their families with children and so forth. Or just

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choosing that, you know, I want to do this, but I don't want to do it 80 hours a week.

It's a reality of practice if you sort of go through the traditional stream, at the beginning especially. You pay your dues. But you put in a lot of hours doing that. Not everybody wants that. It's another big change, I think, that we've seen recently, and, you know, a lot of it's come from the pandemic I'm sure as people started to really give some serious thought to their lives and what's important and what they want to spend their time doing. I think that there's so many more opportunities now for lawyers, even within practice, to make it work for them better.

Paula: Yeah. There's so many things you're saying that I want to pick up on. You mentioned at the beginning that some lawyers come to you thinking that what they want is to leave law. What they realize after maybe some career counseling, some discussions, looking at what the options are, looking what else is available within the practice of law, that what they realize is that it wasn't the law. It was where they were. So they may go from one law firm to another law firm and be really happy there. So there's that process.

Then what you've described, right, this pandemic effect, whatever we want to call it. The transition from a very traditional way of working in a law firm, which is typically you show up in the office. You're physically present for a certain number of hours, and then you go home whenever it is versus what we do now, right. This hybrid thing. Which has now shifted the way in which lawyers can practice.

So I guess where I'm going with this is we have lawyers, you know, we're looking really at how to craft for each of us the ideal role for ourselves. It sounds like that. I think that's part of what you're doing, right, in terms of

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your recruiting, you're placing. Is you're really looking at the individual and trying to find a fit for them that works.

I would love to know, from your perspective, what you have seen among the candidates that you've worked with. Like what have you noticed about lawyers and their career paths? How do they find the roles that make them happy? Like, what do you observe from the position that you're in?

Randi: I think that a lot of lawyers are recognizing that they now have a little bit more, I don't know, call it power to ask for what they want and to get what they want now as part of the career. I think that it's made people realize that they can pick and choose what sort of a role that would make them happy, and what would work for their lives.

So I see a lot of people who, you know, they're looking for a new job, but they'll give me their laundry list of, "Okay, it needs to be... I can only work this many hours a week. I can only go into the office once every two weeks. I need this much money." They can give us these lists. They'll find the job, and they'll still be in demand.

This is one of the crazy things that's been going on lately is some—There might be a little bit of a swing back with the pendulum at some point in time, because right now it's very, very much, we're calling it a candidates market. So the candidates are going to be pretty demanding in some cases, or just realistic and saying, "Hey, this is what's important to me." They really get to choose what they want to do to make sure that they're somewhere that works for them.

I mean, at the end of the day, it works out well for both sides because we're in the business of placing lawyers at organizations and keeping them there. We want that to be a long term relationship for them, and for us with the client and the candidate and so forth. Nobody wants someone who's just

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going to be in and out and have to do it all over again. So it's in the organization's best interest to have people there that are happy. Everyone wants everyone to be happy. So it has to work on all sides.

So I think that, you know, the other thing that we've seen that's been going on is because of this candidate's market, some of the compensation salaries have gone a little bit wonky. They've put salary increases across the board. We've seen a lot of signing bonuses for people to join organizations.

I think also there's always been a draw for people to go south of the border, you know. Work in the States, get that U.S. big, firm experience and get the U.S. big, firm paycheck. I think the pandemic and the ability to work remotely has allowed a lot more people to do that, at least as a get started.

I think people who have joined U.S. firms, they may eventually have to actually move there, but initially they didn't have to. So you get to try it out without really uprooting your life. So a lot of people have gone that route. It's only further strengthened how much other people here are having to pay to keep these lawyers at the Canadian law firms and in house and so forth. There's been a lot of change just over the past couple of years.

Paula: That's amazing. I imagine it's hard to keep up with the changes. I'd love to know, and I'm sure our listeners would love to know, what are some of the—You mentioned the laundry list, right? That people are asking for certain things, whether it's maybe work schedules or I don't even know. I'd love to know what people are asking for that they are finding help them to enjoy their work more. Also that when those pieces are in place, we talked about that that relationship, right? Where firms and lawyers benefit from happy lawyers, right. Happy employees who are enjoying their work. What are some of the things that you might ask for as a candidate?

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Randi: I think that what I'm seeing is that the biggest number one ask is flexibility. I think that is so key. I think that it also means so many different things. It doesn't necessarily mean that the person wants to work remotely all the time, or even half the time. It just means that they know, "Okay, if I have to pick up my kid this day, or go to a dentist's appointment, I can shift things around so I can just work at home. I don't have to do the trek into the office and back. It will work for me." Part of it, I think, is actually just knowing that that flexibility is there.

My hunch is that a lot of people aren't gonna even take advantage of a lot of the things that are available to them, but it's just really important that they have that flexibility. They're no longer willing to consider, you know, an opportunity that there is no flexibility. It's a challenge that we have had with some of our clients that are, you know, really in-office culture type of an organization.

A good example would be a manufacturing company. So obviously, the physical manufacturing side of things, they have to be in the plant doing the manufacturing. Often those are the type of environments where they also want the business staff to be in office. I've had some clients tell me, "Listen, right now we're remote because we don't have a choice. We're going back as soon as possible. We're expecting that people are going to come back, and it's going to be full time in the office."

It's been a challenge. That has been the one biggest challenge I've had. It's not that our candidates say I don't want to go back to work in the office. A lot of them want to go back to work in the office, but they want to know that if they need to take the one day a week to not do that that they're able to. So clients like that are having a harder time finding people. So I would say, without a doubt the flexibility is really the key.

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Paula: It's amazing, especially when you think of it in relation to the pandemic, and that this is a complete shift, right, in the way that we work. I mean, for some of us, personally I was working remotely before the pandemic. So it wasn't such a big shift. But for so many, it has really just altered the expectations of what the work relationship looks like, how much time you are in an office versus not in an office.

I mean, especially... Well, I should I shouldn't just say for parents, right? It's other people also. Non-parents need flexibility as well. But you know, I'm a parent. So I relate to that, and the flexibility of what you've described, right? If I need to go home and get my kids, or they're sick and I need to work from home that day makes such a big difference on the quality of life of the person who's now working.

Randi, I'd love to ask you, because you've now seen different lawyers taking different roles. I'd love to know what your observations are, right? After having seen this, you've got two decades of experience. You've seen lawyers succeed, I imagine, and others who may not have quite found that success. I believe success really is a subjective thing. So we all measure that differently based on our own values.

When you look at the lawyers that you've helped, the lawyers that you've engaged with, what would you consider are some of the characteristics that make for the lawyers who are successful versus those that maybe don't find that same level of success?

Randi: That's a great question. You know, I think that—It's funny. It comes back to the same word. Again, I think flexibility is really, really key. I think no matter what you're doing as a lawyer, as an employee, being able to roll with the punches, and pivot, as we learned to say in the pandemic, I think makes a huge difference. I think that'll really, really help somebody in their career.

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I think listening is a very, very often overlooked skill. I think a lot of people are so quick to be answering and talking without really listening. I think those that do well take in what's around them. You know, they really think about what they're hearing and are able to use it.

I think perseverance. I think that with anything, whether it's law or in any sort of a career, it takes a while to get to the level that you want to get to. No matter how great—No matter how much you like what you're doing, I think until you get to the point that you know that you get to do most of the things that you love and less of the parts of the job that you don't like, I think it just takes time. You have to put in that time and persevere.

I also think that really having a passion for what you're doing, loving what you do, the success will then follow for sure. Because at this point, you know, work doesn't necessarily feel as much like work. It just feels like something that you like to do with your time. I think the people that like what they're doing, that have that passion for it tend to be very successful.

Paula: I love that, Randi. As you're saying, just to recap, you talked about that ability to pivot, the ability to listen, observe what is going on around you, being persistent, not giving up, and this idea of passion. As you were going through that list, I was thinking of you. I mean I'm looking at you, and I'm thinking you've absolutely done the things right. You pivoted initially from your traditional legal practice to where you are now through a number of different pivots.

I really get the sense that you're paying such close attention to what's going on around you, right? Like what is happening in the marketplace? Where is the opportunity? Then going out and pursuing it and not giving up right? Being persistent in creating something that didn't exist before. Life After Law didn't exist before Randi Bean created it. It's just so interesting.

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That last piece passion, right? It really is. Okay, what is it that is going to compel you to get up in the morning and keep doing this? I'd love to know from you in your work, what is it that you're passionate about? What is it that lights you up about Life After Law and the work you're doing?

Randi: I love being able to see that light come on. To see when something I'm saying is resonating with someone else, to have that shared experience. I love being able to help people get that ah-ha moment. When it's like okay, I can do this. I can do that. You know, that's always amazing for me.

The other thing is that, as I mentioned earlier, that we've sort of had this evolution of Life After Law and the various types of roles that we work on here. If you ask anybody at the organization, they'll tell you. I am still tried and true, nontraditional, quasi legal all the way. So when ever somebody calls us up and says, "Hey, we're looking for someone to fill this sort of a role. Oh, I love the name of the company. That totally makes sense." It just makes it all worth it.

Paula: I love it. So great. Another question for you, Randi, which is okay if you were to go back to have a conversation with Randi who was graduating from law school, right?

Randi: Oh god.

Paula: You've just finished up. You had your high school dream. You've managed to get through law school. You're about to embark on your journey. What would you say to her?

Randi: Oh god. I would say some other things to her before law school. It actually it still applies. I think that get exposure to as much as possible. At that stage, I would say go broad. Don't hone in on one thing only. I was

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fortunate. I had, you know, a legal practice that was very, very much an area that I'd say I would be pigeonhole. It's harder to transition then from those other areas. So I would definitely say, just go broad and take note. Get exposure to areas that you might not have ever thought about.

One of the things that I have. You know, I mentioned a little bit earlier that I find out about new areas of practice. I'm always excited to learn about new types of jobs. After talking to lawyers in various practice areas over the years, there were certain things that, you know, the more that I started to talk to them and listen to what they were saying, I thought, well you know what? If I was to actually go back into practice now, I think I might actually like doing that.

At one point in time, one of those practice areas was tax law. Which if you think about the lawyer I started being in criminal defense could not be more completely different than practicing in tax law. At the time, I never in a million years would have thought, "Hey, that would be interesting to me."

Then I started to listen. I thought wow, that actually looks really cool. That's really interesting. I never would have been open to the idea when I was looking for a job. When I was in law school, when I was looking for an articling job, or even in practice. I never would have considered doing something like that.

So I would say, you know, just keep your options open. Explore things that you never would have thought that you would do and recognize that people have more than one career in their lifetime. They have more than one phase, even within a career. So it's never too late to try something different. The opportunities are always still out there.

So if you reach a point where you're like, I don't love what I'm doing. Maybe there's something more. Explore that. Because the chances are that you'll

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find something else that's really great out there, and you need to be open to it. But it's never too late to make that change.

I talked to people all the time who had a full entire other careers before becoming lawyers, and people who've had full careers of lawyers and then decided to go do something else. So I think that that's something to keep in mind and realize that it's actually the norm these days. I think people tend to go through more than one career. So you should always be open to that.

Paula: Yeah, those are such great words of advice. So much of that resonates, Randi. I think what you're saying about really exploring your options, looking around and seeing what else is out there. You mentioned earlier talking to people, right?

One of the best ways, I think, to know what is out there—Yes, there are job boards, and it's wonderful to see a job posting. But then going beyond that and speaking to people in areas that you think might be interesting and learning about them, learning about what it is they do, and why they love what they do. Kind of like you're talking about with the tax lawyers, right? You speak with the lawyers and you realize, okay this type of work that you're doing would actually be quite interesting.

So I think allowing yourself to consider what else is out there, where you might get that information. I love this idea of it never being too late, right? We think that we're at a certain stage. That there is no room for change. I think that's important. Also this idea that we change over time, right? Who you were graduating from law school, who I was graduating from law school, is quite different from 20 years down the road. Your values, shift your lifestyle, your life circumstances, all of it changes. We change over time, too.

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I think that ability to reevaluate as we go and recalibrate as we go is part of what makes the journey so much more fun, so much more exciting, right? It's the challenges and the opportunities that kind of punctuate the trajectories of our careers. So I love that.

Randi, I'm going to mention for everybody who has joined us, we will be putting links in the notes that accompany the recording of this podcast. We're going to be putting links to some of the resources that Randi has mentioned. So you'll be able to find that. I think a lot of questions come my way about transferable skills, about what options are available for lawyers looking to do something nontraditional. So this is wonderful. Thank you, Randi, for these resources.

For anybody out there who has listened to the podcast and is thinking they'd love to know more about Life After Law, they'd love to connect more with Randi, how can they find you? How can they reach you? How do they work with you? How does that all work?

Randi: There are so many ways to reach me. You can go to our website, which is www.lifeafterlaw.com. So that's sort of a great surefire way to get to me. My email is rbean@lifeafterlaw.com. By phone, I guess, depending on where you would be calling from. I'm in Toronto, and I've got a Toronto number here. So it's 416-789-1444. Everywhere else in the country, we have another number, it's 1-866-227-1444. So anybody can call us from anywhere to reach any of us in any of the offices. Plus, we're also on LinkedIn and Twitter and Instagram, Facebook. All those good places.

Paula: All the places. That's amazing. So if somebody was looking to work with you, then you would chat with them. I imagine it's sort of like working with a recruiter. They would tell you what they're looking for. They would provide you with their materials. Is that how it works?

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Randi: Yeah. I normally tell people sort of the best first step is send me a message, send me a resume if you have just so I have a reference point. Then it makes it much more meaningful when we have a conversation. So that's usually when someone calls in. I'm happy to talk to somebody who's calling in and have a quick chat.

Then I'll say send us your resume. I think it's important to know for everybody that anything that goes on here is confidential. So if you send a resume, it doesn't go anywhere without your express consent. I don't tell anybody that I've spoken to you. I don't tell anybody. Nobody knows that you've emailed. So it's completely, completely confidential. It's really obviously important to have people know that.

But yeah, send us your materials, and we can let you know when opportunities come up that look like they could be a good fit. If you're looking for something else, if you need some career coaching, we would connect you with our career coach. Then we go from there and see how we can help.

Paula: Beautiful. Thank you so much, Randi. Just to recap, you're in Toronto. You mentioned earlier that your team is Canada wide. So lawyers from across Canada can reach out to you. Thank you so much for all the information. Again, we'll link that up so that it's easy to find on the website.

So, Randi, thank you. It's such a pleasure. Thank you everybody who's tuned in today. It's been such a wonderful conversation. I know all of you have really benefited from Randi's wisdom and the stories that she has shared with us. I know I can relate to a lot of them, and I imagine a lot of our listeners can too so. Thank you again, Randi. It's been such a pleasure having you on today.

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Randi: Thank you so much. I really appreciate you inviting me, and I had a great time.

Paula: Super. Me too. Wonderful. Bye for now somebody. We'll sign off and to be continued.

Randi: Thanks. Bye, bye.

Paula: Bye for now.

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