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Let's face it. The entire legal industry is in a state of flux. If you're a new lawyer in today's economy, you're probably asking yourself one of the following questions:

How do I transition from law school to law practice?

How do I get a job?

How can I find like-minded mentors and colleagues?

How do I develop a book of business?

How do I become a good lawyer?

These questions weigh on you and keep you awake at night, along with thoughts like "Was going to law school really the right decision?" or "Should I be doing something else with my life?" If you aren't asking yourself these questions, you are ignoring the world to your detriment.

Written from the in-the-trenches perspective of a young lawyer, *The Marble and the Sculptor* provides a clear no-nonsense path from law school to lawyering. It presents a fundamental understanding of what is expected of new attorneys and a framework for becoming successful—both as a lawyer and in life. With advice on everything from choosing classes that matter in law school to the importance of writing well, attracting clients, and avoiding basic mistakes in your first job at a law firm, this book is destined to become the go-to guide for all young lawyers regardless of law school or area of practice. **Simply put, if you care at all about practicing law, you can't afford not to read it.**

Short Form

It's more difficult now than ever to find success as an attorney. Just over 50% of law school graduates find legal employment after graduation. To be successful in the "new normal" of the legal industry, young lawyers must dedicate themselves to systematic growth, abandoning things that might have once seemed important, and discard ineffective, entrenched patterns of behavior.

This is a significant transformation. One that many people do not successfully complete. Keith Lee, author of the acclaimed legal blog *Associate's Mind*, shows lawyers, step-by-step, how to make this transformation in his new book *The Marble and The Sculptor: From Law School To Law Practice*.

Keith Lee - bio

Keith Lee tried a little bit of everything before he decided what he wanted to do. He has had jobs cleaning dishes, mowing golf courses, washing cars, engraving brass, stocking library bookshelves, and making video games. When it seemed like it was time to do something more concrete, Keith got his undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham—but recalls that most of that time was actually spent not at college.

Keith then lived in a closet in the basement of a martial arts school because it seemed like a good idea at the time. He went on to teach martial arts across the United States, Canada, and an occasional seminar in Europe.

After that experience, law school didn't seem like it could be that bad. So Keith enrolled at Birmingham School of Law. Law school had its ups and downs but led to a great number of great friendships that seem just as important now as the law degree. While in law school, he founded Associate's Mind, which became one of the most popular legal blogs in the United States, despite whatever Keith seemed to be doing to it.

Keith practices law at Hamer Law Group in Birmingham, Alabama. At this point, it seems as though he is going to stick to being a lawyer—but no promises. He lives with his wife, Charlene, and their son, Aidan, who continue to be an inspiration.



sample interview questions

Why is the legal industry in the state it's in?

There's multiple factors really. Clients have gotten fed up with firms for one thing. They got tired of legal costs being a black hole and took steps to take control. Work has moved in house, technology and automation have been adopted. Efficient project management and methodologies were demanded of firms. Along with outsourcing a lot of work to "legal service providers," there has been a shrinking amount of business available to firms.

Combine that with the mis-management of law schools by the ABA and you have a recipe for disaster.

Isn't your book published by the ABA?

Sure, but that doesn't preclude me from highlighting where they have mis-stepped. They're cognizant of it as well, a Task Force has been charged with the goal of re-imagining legal education. The problem is that the ABA has been accrediting law schools left and right for decades, all without regard to changes in technology, the general business economy, or demand for lawyers. The result is a complete glut of new lawyers. The industry simply can't absorb them. Unfortunately, there is going to be a "lost generation" of lawyers that graduated early in the 21st century. Many of them are unlikely to find jobs and will probably walk away from the profession.

What should new lawyers who want to make it do?

Like Wayne Gretzky used to say, "skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been." So you graduated from law school, congratulations. So did 40,000 other people in any given year. New lawyers can't stay where they are, or be satisfied with what they've done. To make it in this economy, new lawyers have to adopt a mindset of relentless, systemic improvement. Combine that with integrity, high ethical standards, and a focus on building long-lasting relationships, and a new lawyer has a high chance of finding success.

Are law schools preparing their students for the current job market?

Not really. There has been some change, a slight shift to making students more "practice ready," but it's slow going. It's also tough to say that law schools are even qualified to make students practice ready considering that many professors have never actually practiced. They went from law school, perhaps to a clerkship, then straight to academia. The practice of law is more than just theory. It's just that - *practice*. You can't learn to ride a bike by reading about it or writing obtuse papers on what it might be like to ride a bike. *You've got to get on the bike*. Learning to be a lawyer is no different. If law schools want to get their students ready for practice, it's going to require a complete overhaul of the curriculum. Lopping a year off of law school (which many are suggesting), isn't the answer.



product specs and testimonials

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"In today's challenging and rapidly changing legal profession, young lawyers need guidance and advice more than ever. In *The Marble and the Sculptor*, a very wise and concise book, Keith Lee ranges across many fields, from management to martial arts, to gather insights and tips for his readers. If you've spent three years and a small fortune to obtain a law degree, buy this book so you can make the most of your expensive education."

--David Lat, Founder and Managing Editor, Above the Law

"Keith Lee has better ideas about what it takes to succeed as a lawyer than many lawyers with more years in practice. *The Marble and the Sculptor* is full of those ideas, which are exactly the kind of information and advice law students and new lawyers need as they begin their own law practices."

--Sam Glover, Founder and Managing Editor, Lawyerist

"This book is about nuts and bolts, from the perspective of a relatively new lawyer who may be only a step or two ahead of you, but who has figured out that it's better to light a candle than curse the darkness. Keith gives you a match.

But make no mistake, Keith's perspective is neither one of a new lawyer nor old lawyer, but one of a lawyer who refuses to let himself be beaten down by a troubled profession and instead chooses to succeed. It can be done. Don't worry about those other guys who can't be bothered reading this book and would rather complain about the misery of their lives.

By getting this book, you've already chosen to take the first step in seizing control of your professional life. When you're done with this book, you will realize that your success is up to you. While there is no guarantee anymore that becoming a lawyer will afford you even a moderately comfortable life, you can significantly improve your chances by doing the things that offer you the greatest opportunity for success."

--Scott Greenfield, Criminal Defense Lawyer and blogger at Simple Justice