

THE EDUCAFE TIMES



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Hello Readers!

We bring to you another edition of The Educafé Times where we talk about one of the most sought out career opportunities - Law. Here we discuss the scope of the career, the challenges and the skills sets required.

Have some new ideas for our newsletter? Share them at educafestudentsolutions@gmail.com and get a shoutout.

Happy Reading!!

Advocates for Change: The Power of Lawyers in Fighting for Rights and Justice

“The best way to get a bad law repealed is to enforce it strictly” - Abraham Lincoln.

Are you someone who is captivated by the idea of dressing up smart in a black suit with a white shirt, polished shoes, and combed hair? Do you have a passion for fighting for people's rights and seeking justice for them? Do you follow rules and regulations and believe that truth will always prevail? If so, a career in Law may be the perfect fit for you.

Lawyers are professionals who offer advice and representation to individuals, companies, and organizations facing legal challenges and disputes. They may perform various tasks, including providing legal counsel, creating legal documents, researching legal options, representing clients in court, and communicating with other legal experts.

CAREER PATH

To pursue a career in Law [The professional 5 year course]

- Take up any of the three streams- Arts or Science or Commerce as your specialization, in your 11th /12th or +2 levels
- After your 11th /12th or +2 levels, you would need to appear for the National Law Universities entrance exam – CLAT (Common Law Admission Test) which will allow you to apply for any of the National schools of Law
- CLAT scores are also used by some private/autonomous universities and colleges
- There are also some autonomous colleges/universities who conduct their own entrance exams. You could take them as well
- These exams generally assess you on English ability including comprehension, logical reasoning, general knowledge and current affairs, numerical ability and legal aptitude. Your +2 exam scores and your entrance exam scores play a vital role in determining the college options available to you
- After completing your LLB., you can specialize in the specific area that interests you or pursue a post graduation in Law anywhere in the world.



Various Specialization

- Corporate Law
- Criminal Law
- Family Law
- Environmental Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Labor and Employment Law
- Immigration Law
- International Law
- Real Estate Law
- Tax Law

As a lawyer, you can work at law firms, corporations, public and private companies government agencies, non-profit organizations, judiciary, academics, public interest organizations, and the military.

While a career in Law offers the opportunity to improve people's lives and provides numerous career pathways, it requires extensive education and training, tuition fees, stress, extended hours, and a heavy workload that can cause burnout and problems with work-life balance. There may also be ethical and moral dilemmas, especially if the attorney does not share the clients' beliefs or behavior.

The legal profession is vast and offers numerous paths, including becoming a judge or a Certified Expert in Legal Ethics. Seeking professional advice can help you decide whether a career in law is the best fit for you and what actions to take next.

Prescribing Success

In conversation with Senior Advocate Vikram Huilgol

Vikram Huilgol is one of the youngest Senior Advocates in the Karnataka High Court. Vikram graduated from ILS Law College, Pune and then did his LLM from Harvard Law College, Boston, USA. He worked for some time with King & Partridge, before serving as a Government Advocate, Government of Karnataka from May 2017-April 2021.

He has served as Senior Standing Counsel, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, GOI, from October 2017- December 2021.

Vikram's areas of expertise are in taxation and commercial law. He had also been appointed amicus curae by the High Court to assist in different capacities.



Snippets of an interview conducted with Mr Vikram who specializes in litigation :

While most students choose Engineering and Medicine, what prompted you to select Law?

To be honest, I think I chose law more by a process of elimination. I was very clear I did not want to do engineering because I never was comfortable with Math and numbers, and never took to it intuitively. So, I was clear that I did not want to do something that I was uncomfortable with for the rest of my life. Engineering was, therefore, easy to eliminate. Medicine was definitely a choice, particularly since my parents are both doctors, and it was almost a given that I should tread the same path. However, for some reason that I don't remember now, I thought I might be more suited to the law than medicine, and I'm glad in hindsight I made that decision.

Any suggestions for students as to the soft skills they need, to succeed as Lawyers?

In addition to being well prepared for each case, it is equally important to be able to read the mind of the court and be able to stay calm and not get ruffled during arguments. Far too many lawyers are extremely well prepared with their cases but lose out because they lack these soft skills.

What are some of the challenges and rewards of becoming a Lawyer?

The main challenge, particularly in litigation, is that the teething period is very long. One has to be very patient during the early years, sometimes even a decade or more, before one gets to do any meaningful work at all. Much of the early years is spent just reading files and assisting your senior with research and some basic drafting. It is this period that can often be very frustrating, and I've noticed a number of people switching to the corporate side or joining firms. Another major challenge, which thankfully is improving of late, is that litigating lawyers earn very little in the early years, while their peers in other fields will be earning a whole lot more. This, too, can be a major source of frustration.

If one can tide over these early years and maintain one's focus and passion for the law, then the rewards are limitless. A successful lawyer can join the judiciary, argue cases that have a wide-ranging social and economic impact on the citizens of the country, while assisting the courts in the development of the law. Not to forget, a vast percentage of successful politicians, bureaucrats, and ministers are trained in the law. In sum, one can contribute vastly to the development of the nation and the law as a successful lawyer.

Why did you choose Litigation over Corporate or the other forms of law? What skills do you think you need to be a good litigation lawyer? Are they different from the other forms of law?

I chose litigation primarily because I always found court work interesting. Reading books about great lawyers of the past such as Nani Palkhivala, CK Daphtary, MC Setalvad, etc., and their exploits in courts were extremely inspiring, and I could not imagine practicing law sitting at a desk and not going to court. As regards the skills that are required for a litigating lawyer, I believe that the greatest skill a litigating lawyer needs to possess is an analytical mind that can assimilate the facts of the case and apply the law to it. One needs to have a thorough understanding of the facts of each case, the law applicable to it, judgments if any on the point, and only then can one present the case in court in an effective manner.

One unique skill set required for litigating lawyers is an ability to improvise and think on their feet while in court. Quite often, one is not prepared for a question from the court or an argument from an opponent. The very best litigating lawyers are able to think quickly and adapt to any situation.

Could you give us any one example when you felt really happy that you had chosen Law as your career. Any one moment when you felt a real sense of achievement?

I was very fortunate to have been able to assist the Court as a government advocate initially and then as an amicus curiae in a public interest litigation regarding various issues faced by the State and the country during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this case, the Court issued various orders on a wide variety of issues, including food shortage during the lockdown, the migrant crisis, patient management, oxygen shortage, etc., and it was extremely satisfying to have been able to contribute during these unprecedented and difficult time.

Would you recommend this career to students? If yes, why; if no, why? Would you recommend Law as a career for girls/women as well?

I would definitely recommend law as a career. In addition to becoming increasingly lucrative, it provides a great platform for public service. As I was mentioning earlier, through the practice of law, one can contribute greatly to the development of the nation. By practicing law, one can contribute towards the protection of human rights and animal rights, defend a person from the excesses of the State's powers, fight against bureaucratic red-tapism and corruption, etc. The possibilities are endless.

And I don't see why all of the above doesn't apply to women in equal measure. I cannot think of a single skill set that a litigating lawyer needs that a woman does not have in equal measure to a man. So my advice to any young woman thinking of entering the practice of law is that there should be no hesitation whatsoever, and the bar will only be happy to welcome her.

Anything else you would like to say to our aspiring lawyers?

I would just like to conclude by saying that the practice of law is, more than anything else, great fun. There is hardly a dull moment. It's a very social profession, as one gets to meet so many people on a daily basis, including other lawyers and clients. There is also always something to learn every day and very few days go by that one can call monotonous. So, in sum, if one has a passion to study law and enter the legal profession, I'd say you've made a wise choice!

Keen to know more on Law?
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Career Queries

by : Dr. Sudha Bhogle



Q1. I'm a person good in debate, want to work for social welfare, want to earn more money, like to travel different places interested in law, science and music, what is the suitable job or career I can make?

Being variously skilled is very important to survive and do well in today's competitive world. To be able to multitask is a great gift. Remember to have an interest in something is one thing and to have the ability to pursue that is another. A person may be interested in many activities but may not have the ability to succeed in that career.

To find out which career/job is suitable for you, the best method you could employ is to first write down all those things that you have an interest in. Then rank them in order of highest to the lowest interest. Once you have filtered that list make another list of abilities corresponding to your interest, again ranking your abilities from highest to lowest. Now, match the two lists.

Once this is set, try and get maximum information about these fields from all possible sources for e.g: You could browse the net, talk to people who has established themselves in that field and get to know about institutes and colleges where you could gain more knowledge about the subject.

If you have conflicting interests you could still find ways to pursue them. For e.g. If person is interested in Music and Engineering he could choose to make a career in Acoustic or Sound engineering.

You could also meet a career counselor who could guide you in making an informed career choice.

We will talk about this in our next Edition.
Can you guess?

Mail us your answers at
 educafestudentsolutions@gmail.com

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