

Why Some Attorneys Get Off The BigLaw 'Treadmill'

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Flaster Greenberg co-managing shareholders Jordan A. LaVine and Steven S. Poulathas were quoted extensively in a Law360 Pulse article discussing how many attorneys started off the new year by continuing the trend of becoming more comfortable leaving BigLaw behind and moving to smaller firms.

Law360 Pulse reporter Justin Wise interviewed several industry experts that left BigLaw at some point in their legal careers in part for more autonomy and control over their book of business. In this article, interviewees also pointed out that the move is becoming more common for associates, as the path to partner becomes longer at some of the largest firms and as their decision-making gets tied to their student loan debt.

"For Jordan LaVine and Steve Poulathas of 60-lawyer firm Flaster Greenberg PC, the move away from BigLaw was a matter of taking more control over their client base while eliminating the higher billing demand of a larger firm."

LaVine joined Flaster Greenberg in 2006 after seven years at Atkin Gump Strauss Hayer & Feld LLP. He told Law360 he was motivated by Atkin Gump's lack of interest in taking on a wider array of clients in intellectual property and trademark counseling. Poulathas, who spent the early part of his career at Morgan Lewis & Bockius LP, said that as a tax attorney he did not have opportunities to market himself and create a book of business.

"As an associate at a larger firm, you're not encouraged to do marketing. You're focused on producing and getting work out," said Poulathas, who is now co-managing shareholder along with LaVine.

"As long as I'm able to serve my clients and have a full-service commercial law firm behind it, It doesn't have to be 3,000 people for me to be able to satisfy my clients' needs," he said.

BigLaw still has advantages in the training they offer associates and the salaries they can pay first-year employees, a significant plus in recruiting. LaVine said that because of rising student debt, a lot of lawyers feel pressured into taking the job with the best pay.

"That will always continue to be BigLaw," he said.

Click here to read the article in its entirety on Law360 Pulse.

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ATTORNEYS MENTIONED

Jordan LaVine

Steven Poulathas