



Looking for a
new pond?

We can help you achieve your goals.

Fishing for a
great catch?

WISNIK INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT SURVEY

LEGAL RECRUITING

SUMMER 2009



Contact: Eva Wisnik
Wisnik Career Enterprises, Inc.
e: ewisnik@wisnik.com
www.wisnik.com

Our Goal is to Help You Achieve Your Goals[®]

Dear Friends of Wisnik,

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in our second industry survey. We are thrilled by the great response we received and believe that we have captured a clear snapshot of what is happening in law firm recruiting. We received 180 survey responses from Recruiting Professionals all over the country and are excited to share the results with you.

Change continues to be the only constant in the legal recruiting world. More than 75% of you indicated that there have been significant changes to your summer program. The biggest differences are simply reflections of today's strained economic environment: shorter programs and decreased class size. Strikingly, over 90% of you said that your budgets for the summer have been reduced and for 3 out of 5 firms reporting reductions, the amount was greater than 20%. The magnitude of these numbers is sobering, and tells us just how drastically the environment has changed.

In terms of the impact on lawyer morale, we find a double-edged sword: The comment that "People are constantly expressing how grateful they are that they have jobs" is one side of the coin, while "Morale has changed—lawyer anxiety has made the already anxious summer associates more so."

A glimmer of good news is that 85% of you said that your current Summer Associates are as busy work-wise as their counterparts last year. As for fall recruiting, 95% of you are planning to go on-campus to recruit, but the majority of you are planning to hire smaller or significantly smaller classes for next summer. In addition, 66% of you say you will be deferring you new associates, most until January of 2010.

There is definitely a sense that you are all being asked to do more with less. Many of you have taken on new responsibilities, beyond recruiting; 49% of you are actively involved with training initiative many of which have been brought in-house because of budget restrictions. You also said that if your department were given additional funds you would spend the money on training, outside consultants and moral boosting events. When asked what is keeping you going through these challenging times you mention resilience, budgeting skills, ability to counsel and communicate difficult messages.

Having worked in the legal recruiting world for 20 years, I can honestly say that I have never seen such drastic cuts before. I can't help but wonder if some of these actions are more reactionary than they are strategic. I can only hope that Firm leadership is thinking long-term about talent, their greatest asset. Will cutting recruiting, training and development to the bone really make the budget impact needed? Or, would it be wiser for the long-term to re-examine the current law firm structure and compensation system to make sure it aligns with business and clients needs? A person I admire greatly, who is often referred to as the law firm economics guru, Bruce MacEwen (<http://www.AdamSmithEsq.com>) says "a crisis is a terrible thing to waste."



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Who responded to the survey?

126 – Chiefs, Directors & Managers

42 – Coordinators

9 – Assistants

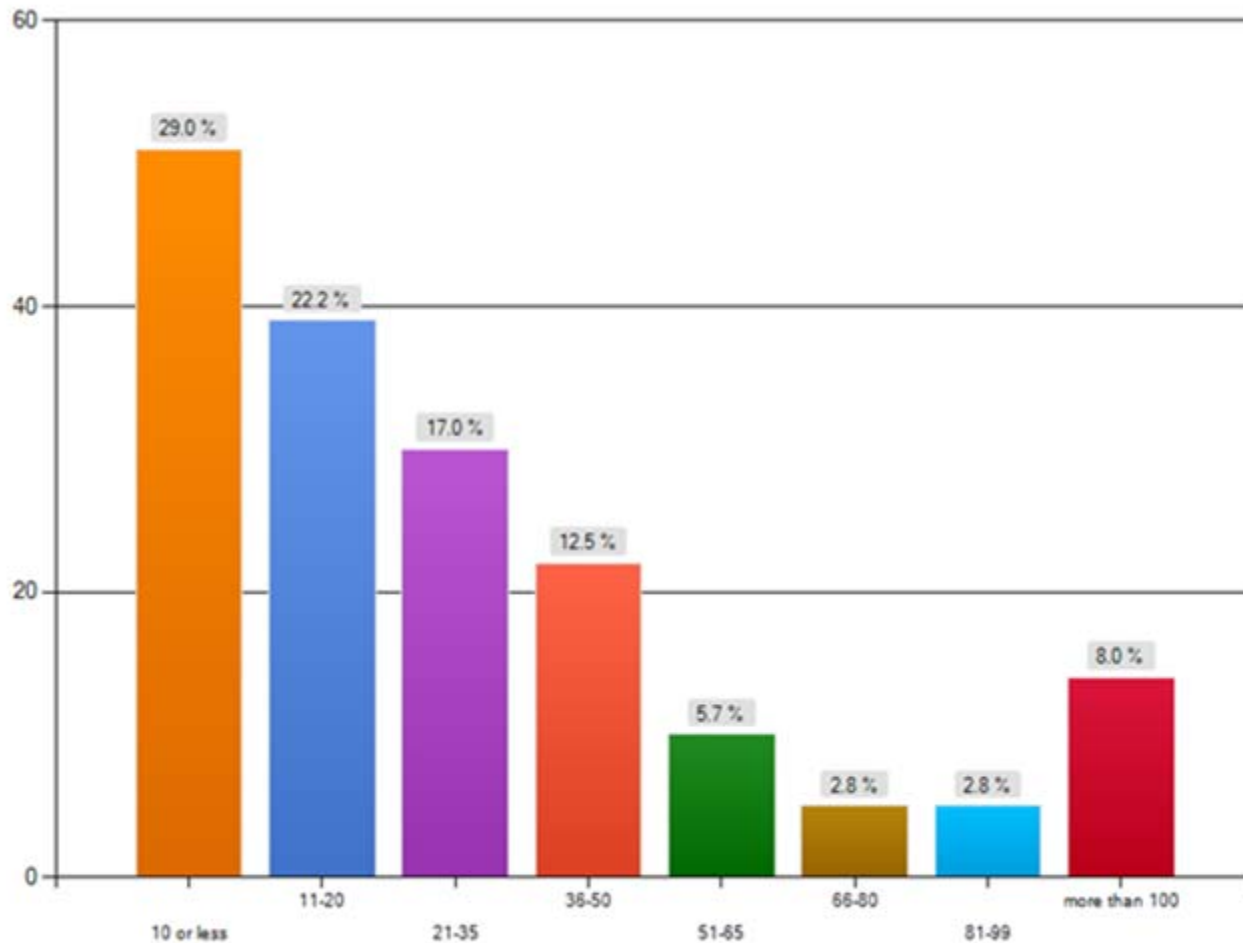
Where are they located?

CITY	# RESPONDENTS
New York	83
Washington, DC	56
Chicago	17
Texas	12
Los Angeles	6
San Francisco	3
Boston	3



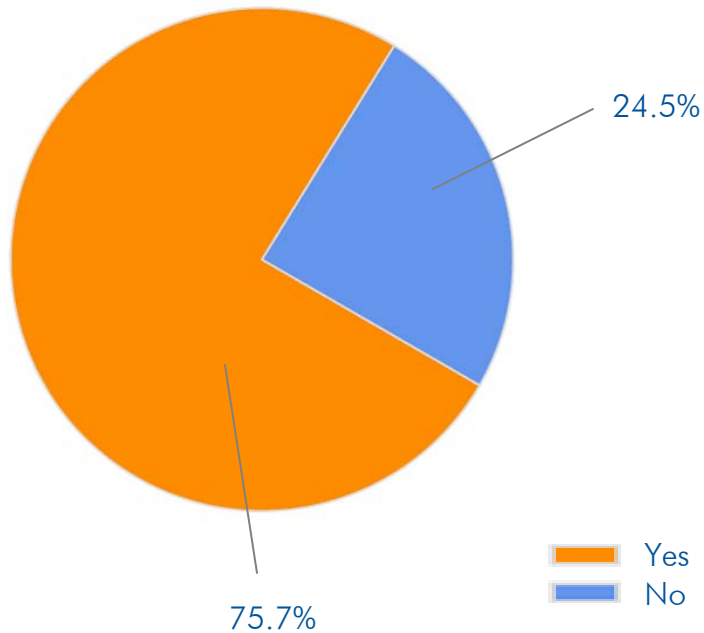
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How many 2L summer associates do you have in your office this summer?



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Have there been significant changes to your program this summer?



Biggest Changes:

- Shorter program duration
- Decreased budget
- Less and lower scale events
- Decreased class size

“Events are being done on a different scale-- they are smaller and more intimate instead of big and flashy.”

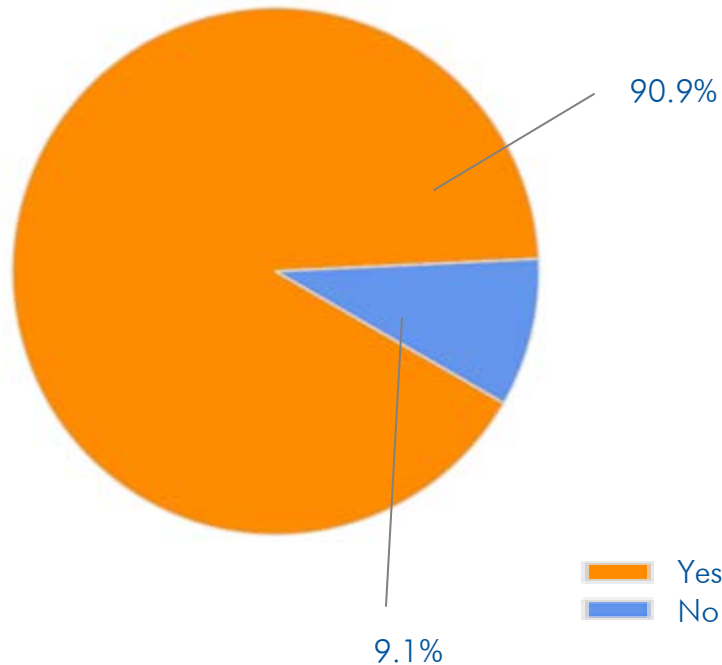
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“We are exercising more conservative spending in light of the current economy.”

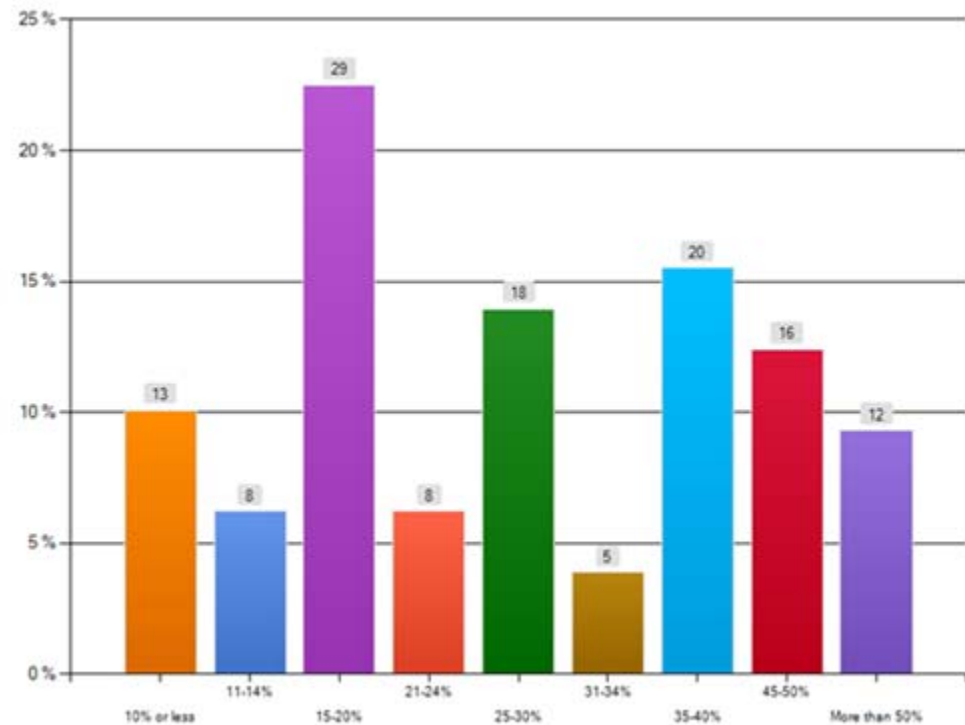


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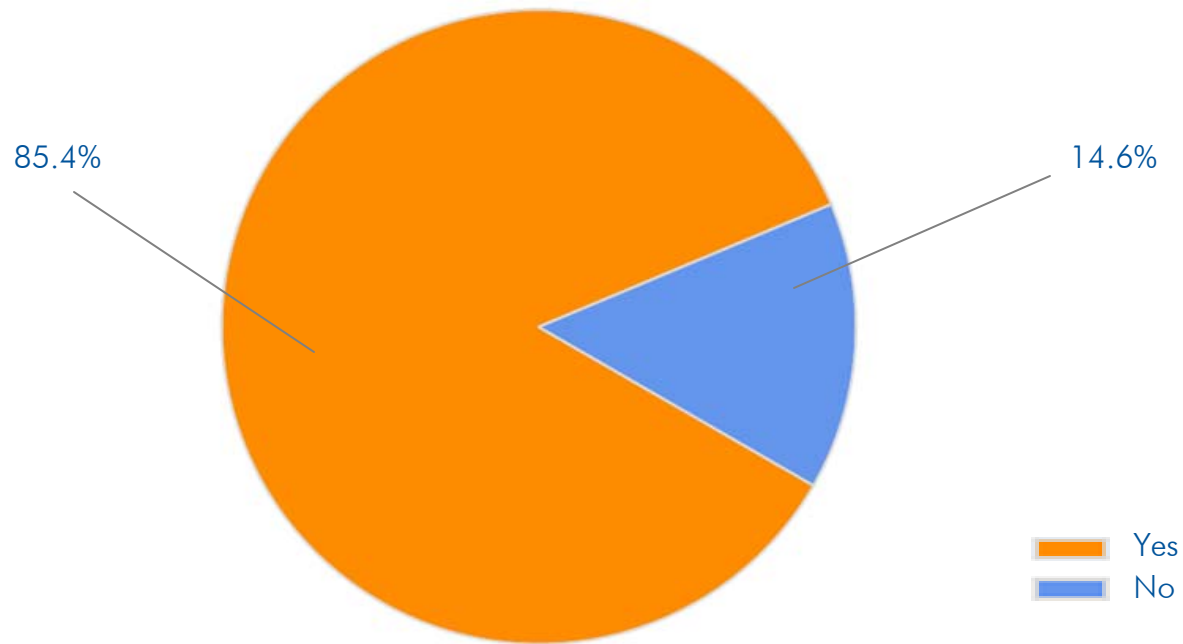
Did the summer program budget decrease this year?



If yes, by approximately how much?

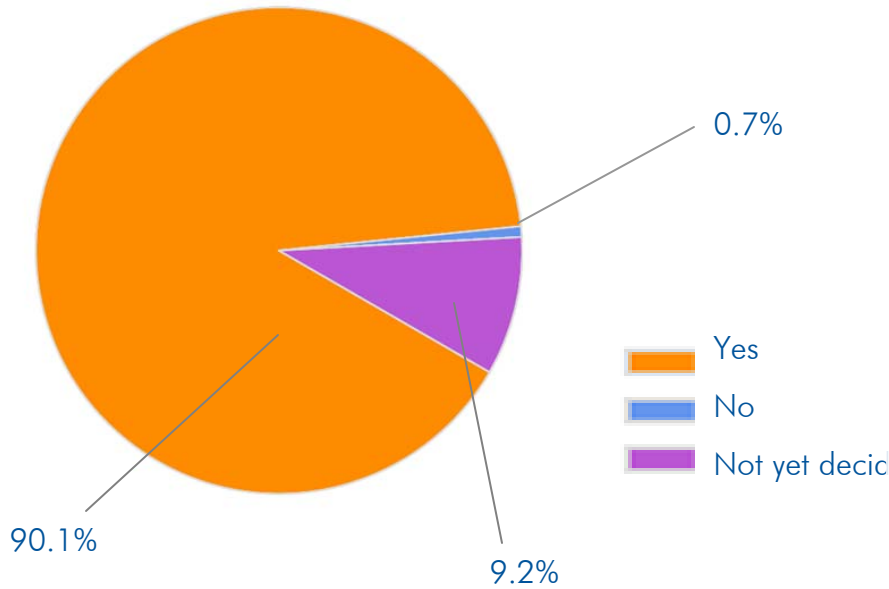


Are your summer associates as busy work-wise as they were last summer?

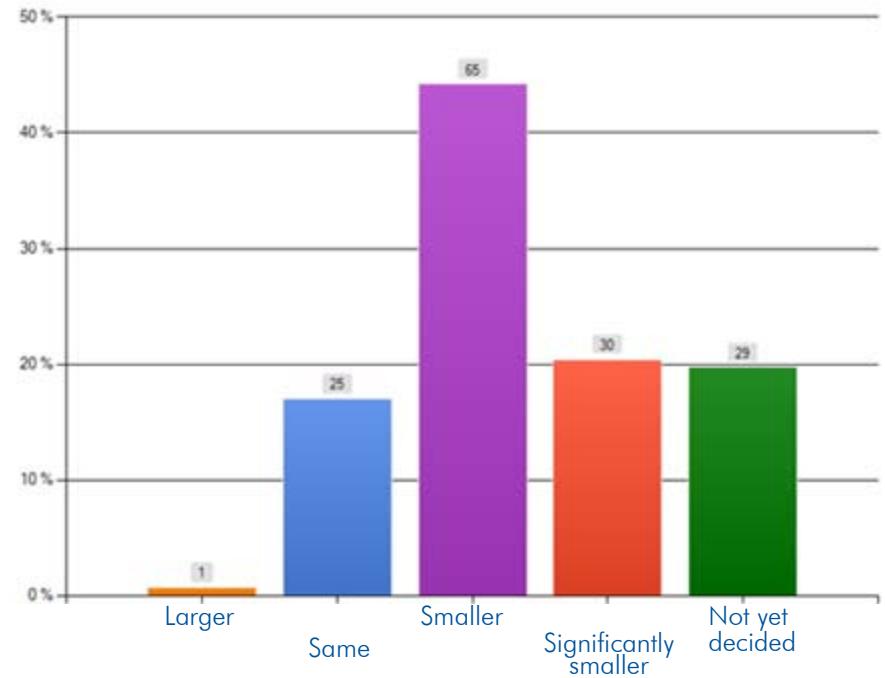


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Does your firm plan on having a summer program in 2010?

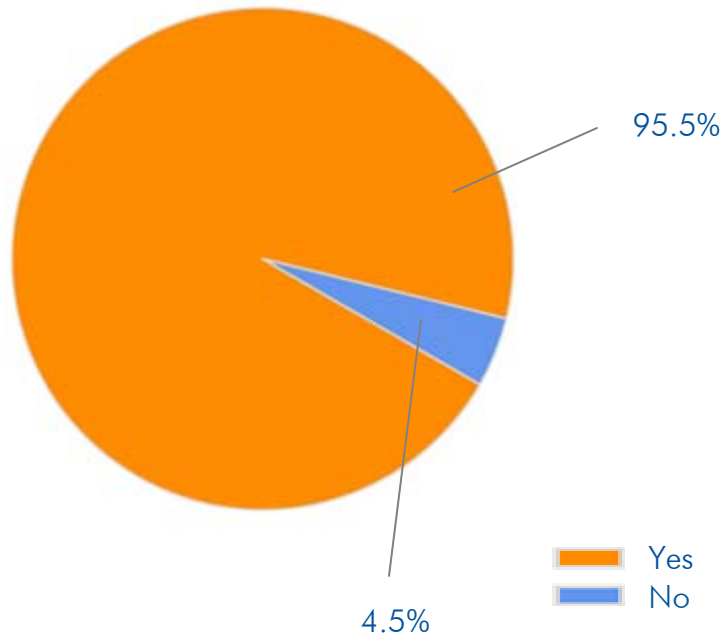


If yes, do you plan for the program to be:

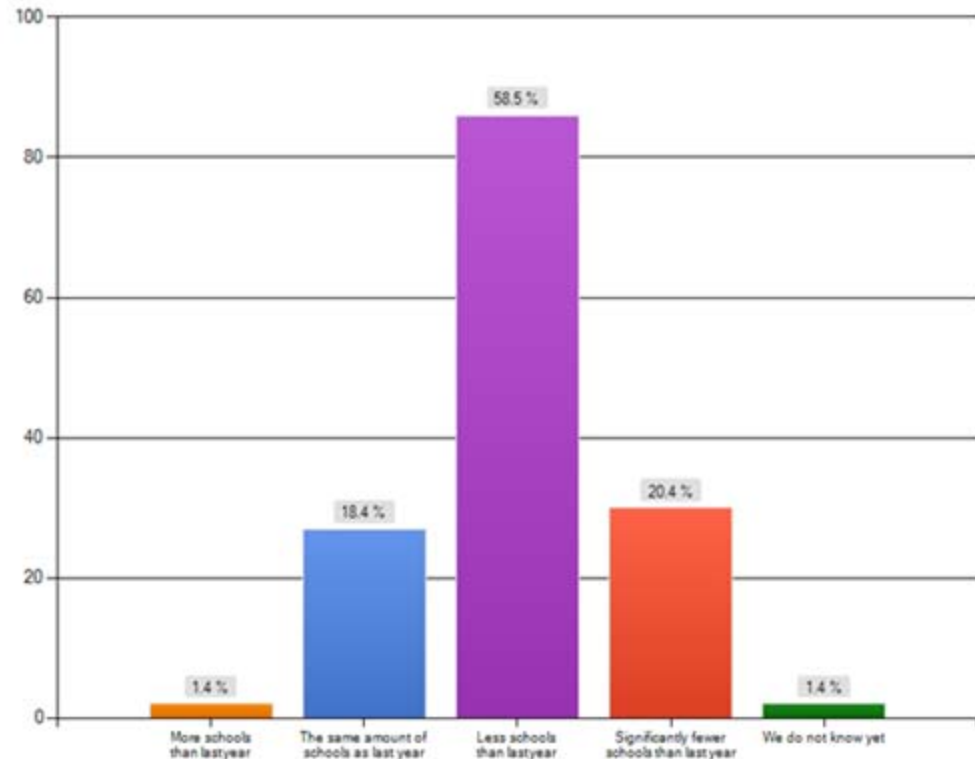


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Do you plan to go on-campus to recruit this August?

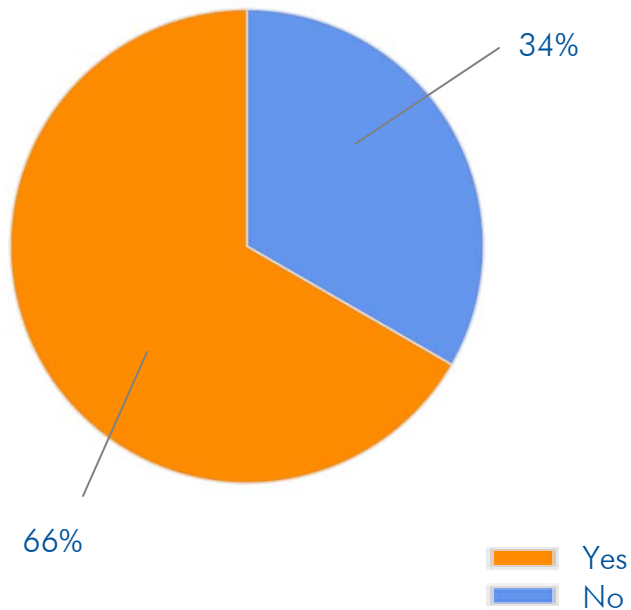


If yes, will you be going to:

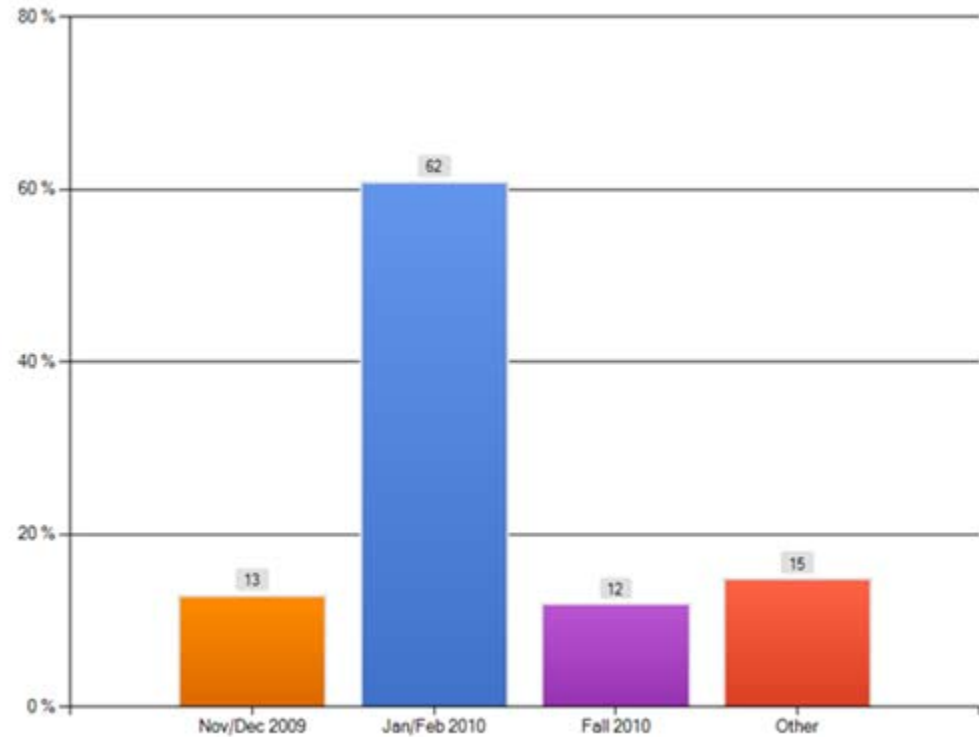


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Have you deferred your 2009 new associates start date?

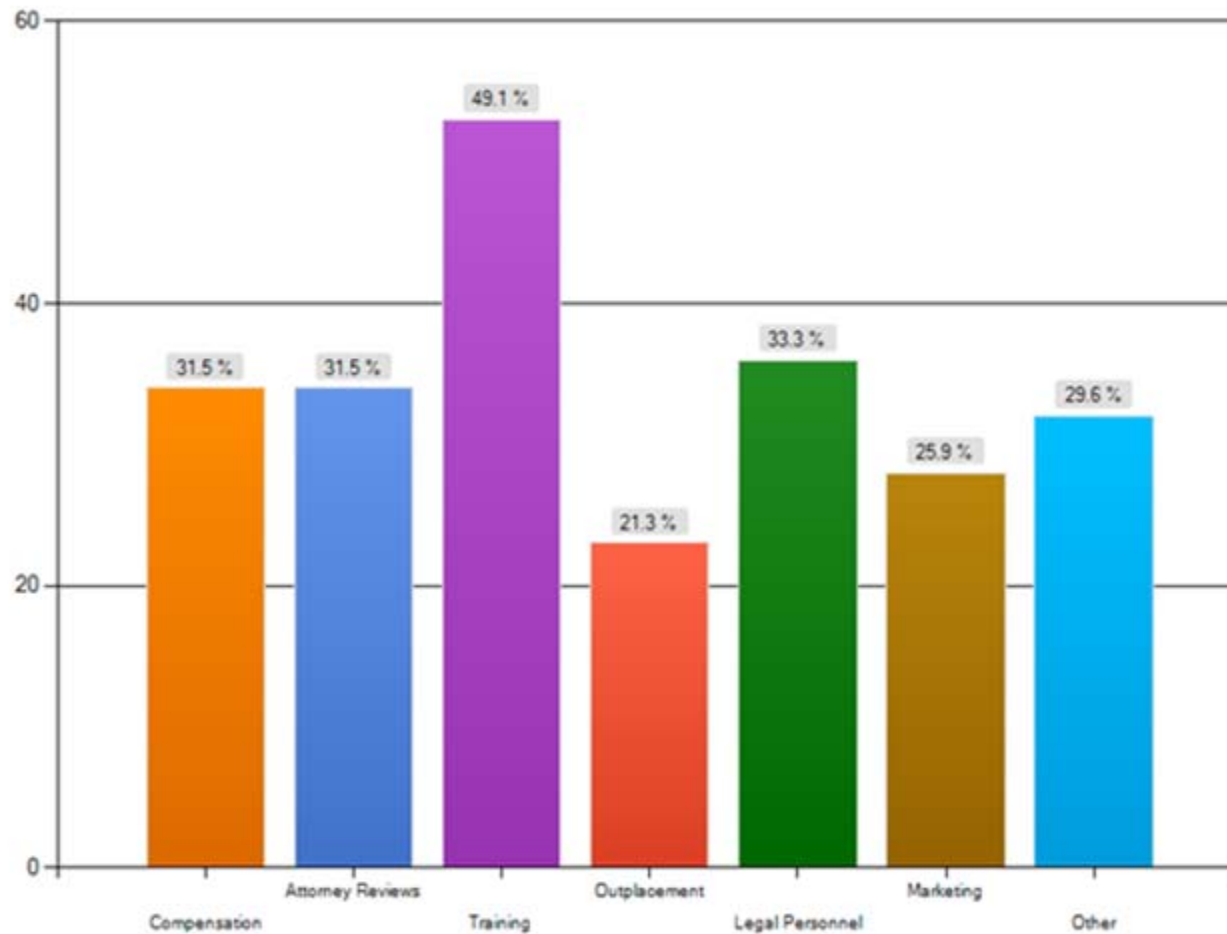


If yes, will they be starting in:



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What are you spending time on other than recruitment?



What is different in your firm today versus 12 months ago?

“People are constantly expressing how grateful they are that they have jobs”

“There’s a more pronounced discomfort in terms of hiring. Anything can happen... We’re truly fine, but could client X fall off tomorrow?”

“All the fat has been cut”

“We are cautiously optimistic and more conservative with our spending”

“Just about everything- I am reinventing what I do daily”

“Morale at the firm has changed. Lawyer anxiety has exacerbated the already anxious summer associates”

“Coming out of this recession, it is safe to say that legal recruiting will not look the same”

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How would you spend an additional \$250,000 budget allowance?

Top Responses:

Training- 40.2%

Additional staff- 17.4%

Law school/diversity outreach- 15.2%

Salary increase/bonus- 14.1%

“ Training, training and more training. Making sure our associates are equipped not just for today, but for the future”

“Reinstate the diversity, women’s and associate level retreats as well as use live speakers”

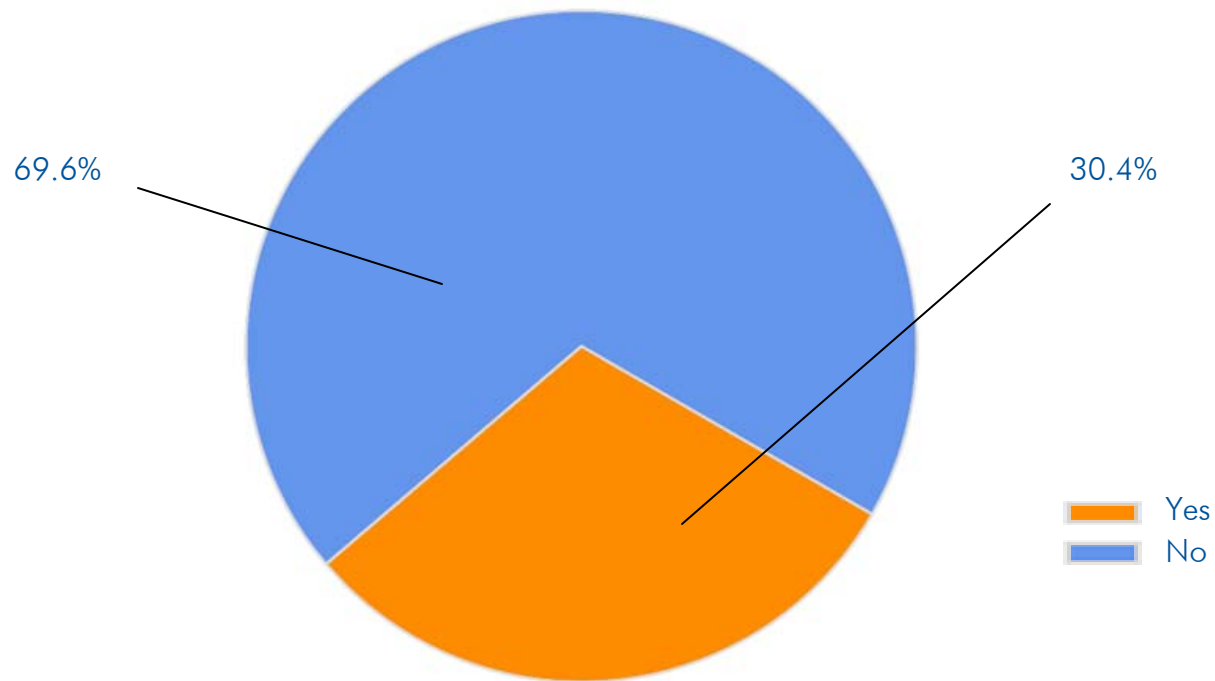
“ Hire a consultant to help with strategic hiring plans”

“ Sponsor and support more law school activities and student associations”

“ Morale building events!”



Are you concerned about your job security in the next 6 months?



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What resources or skills would you find/have found particularly useful during these challenging times?

“I have definitely honed in on my budget skills. I’ve also become great at bargaining”

“Networking and modern communications have been very useful”

“Communicating difficult messages as well as outplacement counseling skills”

“Resilience. I can’t control the economy. I can only control my own performance. So that’s all I worry about!”

“The importance of honesty, respect and credibility in all that we do”

“A belief that it is better to be ‘in the solution’ than ‘in the problem’ which usually translates into productive action”





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