

Nontraditional Careers with a Law Degree

You may have heard, “You can do anything with a law degree!” While this can be true, if your career goal is to become a CIA special agent, going to law school neither hurts nor necessarily helps this aspiration. In fact, there may be more direct ways to achieve your objective.

We strongly recommend that you go to law school because you want to study the law—not for the potential non-traditional career positioning you may have after graduating with a law degree.

Even if your eventual career goals are much different, most law school graduates will practice law before venturing into non-legal fields. This is because law firms are the primary recruiters at law schools. Thus, if you desire to be an editor for Random House Publishing, you may be disappointed to discover that Random House doesn’t even recruit from law schools. The adage that “you can do anything with a law degree” comes from the experience that many lawyers have after practicing law. A lawyer may negotiate an author’s book deal with Random House. After making these connections and working with Random House on a variety of matters, that lawyer may then find the opportunity to work directly for the publishing company.

A law degree does give you specific skills that can be applied to many fields aside from the law. These skills include the following:

- In-depth research experience
- Legal and technical writing
- Analytical, multifaceted thinking

If you do have other career goals that you plan to pursue after law school, your own research is your best tool. Below are some careers that have been pursued by law school graduates. Remember, positions like these do not require a law degree nor does a law degree necessarily make you more qualified than another applicant. It is the experience after law school where you utilize your researching, writing, and analytical skills that provides you with the opportunity to differentiate yourself from someone without a Juris Doctorate.

Better Business Bureau manager
Business consultant
Campaign compliance organization
Chamber of commerce
Charitable associations
Child advocacy
CIA special agent
Computer-aided litigation
Counseling
Court reporting services
Environmental consultant
Executive and legal recruiting
FBI special agent
Federal agencies

Hospital risk management
Legal computer research instructor
Legal journalist
Legal publisher
Legal web design firm
Librarian (law or general)
Litigation support research firm
Lobbying and association management
Media consultant
Medical consultant
Peace Corps
Police department manager
Political campaign manager

President’s staff
Privacy officer in medical field
Private investigator
Professor
Purchasing consultant
School dean
Senate/House committees
Senator/Representative
Social services
State/local clerk’s office
United Nations administrative/management
US court administrator
US Immigration and Naturalization Services