



The Corner Office: Commonly-Lacking Skills

In The Corner Office we ask Senior and Managing Partners across Central and Eastern Europe about their unique roles and responsibilities. The question this time around: “What is the one skill, ability, or characteristic that fresh law school graduates in your country most commonly lack?”

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Fresh law school graduates obviously lack experience – both practical professional experience and basic life experience. This is natural and probably true in every country. Interestingly, in Ukraine the situation has its peculiarities. The still-dominant post-Soviet legal education provided by most universities in Ukraine is very academic. To make up for this shortcoming in their education, a majority of students seek part-time jobs during their final years in law school. When I graduated from law school at the age of 21, I already had two years of solid professional experience with one of the country’s leading law firms and qualified as mid-level associate. Today, a number of private companies provide practical training for law students to prepare them for real jobs. Our law firm, for example, runs a summer school for law students, which serves as a good source of talent for our internship program. Proactive students who want to develop quickly will typically find a way to gain practical experience before they start full time jobs. Some of them even manage to turn their lack of experience into an advantage. Such people approach each new task with an open mind. They quickly absorb precedents and guidance prepared by the knowledge management team, while trying to improve processes by offering document automation and other solutions. Our firm organizes ideation training to make people think outside of the box and encourage innovation. The only problem then is to convince the new generation of lawyers that they still need to be patient before they start running the most complex projects and become real partners in the legal business!