



Jennifer Gillman

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Tell us about your firm or business including history, specialization, and years in business.

Gillman Strategic Group has been in business for more than 5 years. We exist to help lawyers create sustainable, enjoyable careers. Our primary line of business is candidate-facing recruiting. We really care about the lawyers we serve and work more like a talent agent for lawyers and firms with books of business. We do not take retainers from law firms or agree to fill openings for firms; instead we help our candidates find or create positions at or mergers with their exact right, perfect-fit firms. We also support law firms with succession planning. I, personally, am passionate about supporting the community and have developed a 6 Pillar strategy to Be(coming) a Happy Rainmaker and am always happy to advise lawyers and connect them with resources in my network.

What's an interesting fact about you or your firm that most people don't know?

We are passionate about lawyer happiness. People assume, often correctly, that recruiters are only focused on themselves and their business. They shoehorn candidates into roles that are a poor fit just for the commission. Most people don't understand that we don't work that way. We are essentially talent agents who *work for* lawyers, groups, and small firms at no cost to them. The acquiring firms are always happy to pay us for perfect fit lawyers, whether they are looking or not. This means that we can offer a white glove, personalized service to candidate lawyers at no cost to them.

What's a favorite moment of your career so far?

Although I love to help all lawyers enjoy practicing law, one of my favorite things to do is to spot potential. A year or so ago, I met a lawyer from Oklahoma who had amazing potential. Against the odds of not having enough support, he'd built a book of business with clients who were very loyal to him, but he'd reached a ceiling in his area and didn't know what to do next. I acted as his agent, found the perfect fit firm and sold them on the opportunity he represented. They took a chance on him with a better platform and more pay and in the last couple of years he's become a rising star and integral to the firm's succession planning. I don't think he would have found this on his own and it is very rewarding to give lawyers these kinds of opportunities.

What challenge are you most proud of overcoming?

I've always enjoyed the law, but, when my second child was born, I realized that I wanted to bring more flexibility into my life. I wanted something that combined my love of connecting with people and the law, and that gave me the flexibility to be with my kids. These days, I teach lawyers that, with a book of business, they can bring flexibility into their career, but I didn't know that then and I didn't have the book of business. So, I'm proud of taking the step to take control of my career.

Tell us about a recent professional accomplishment of yours.

Recently I had the amazing opportunity to merge a small firm into a larger, perfect fit firm. The small firm needed a succession plan and a growth platform. They were a close-knit, well-functioning team that wanted to stay together. We managed to find them a firm that loved what they were doing, gave them the opportunities and platform they needed to grow, while allowing them to stay together as a team, and even keep their location and office building. Now the managing partner is free from admin work, has a well-defined succession plan, and both firms are so excited to be working together.

Tell us about a recent personal accomplishment of yours.

As focused as I am on getting other people to take time for themselves, I haven't been very good at it myself. It took being sick to realize that stepping away was both good for me and my business. Creating unscheduled time to think is huge; I've managed to do this a lot more and find more balance.

What advice would you offer new business owners?

I wish I'd started earlier. I enjoy it more than I expected, so take a deep breath and start. But don't do it alone. There are other businesses out there to help, there's expertise that is free, as well as expertise that you pay for, but the point is that building your business requires the support of others. Find people in the same situation and build a community. Start a mastermind. Hire a coach. Find resources to help.

How can you help other Women Owned Law members improve their businesses?

As an individual lawyer or part of a firm, finding balance is crucial to building a sustainable career. As a law firm owner, having a happy, engaged business-building team is also essential to a successful law practice. Our 6 pillars of Be(coming) a Happy Rainmaker were created to help lawyers enjoy practicing law. I've found that the firms that embrace these pillars and support their lawyers tend to be stronger, better firms. We're continuing to build out the network and resources to help lawyers over the span of their entire careers.

I'm also always happy to be a sounding board, give intel on the market, or help find your perfect fit. As you consider succession planning or consider opportunities to merge your successful small firm into a larger firm, I can help you discover the opportunities and negotiate to achieve the best result.

How has Women Owned Law been of value to you and your career?

I really appreciate this community. I've made good friends and enjoyed attending the Symposium in Philadelphia and other networking and events. The people I've met have been great resources, great sounding boards, great support and their feedback has helped me improve my business. Ultimately, you like to do business with people you like and trust, and I feel that Women Owned Law is a community of people I like and trust.

About Women Owned Law

Women Owned Law empowers women lawyers to achieve success in the business of law.

WOL supports its members and other women entrepreneurs in the law in their business endeavors at every point in the business life-cycle. We advocate on behalf of women legal entrepreneurs and have been instrumental in raising the profile of women entrepreneurs in the law.

For additional information about Women Owned Law visit <http://www.womenownedlaw.org>