



## Pro Bono in Practice

Pro bono work can be done in service to the client—and benefit you, as well.

If you ask typical law students why they seek their degree, many of them, with or without prodding, will tell you that they want to help people who may be unable to help themselves.

If you ask the typical lawyer to what extent he or she is able to help others in a pro bono or reduced-fee capacity, you might be pleased to discover how many lend a hand.

Many other attorneys, though, will ask how those efforts fit into their practice.

“Very well, thank you,” would be the response from the lawyers featured in this month’s cover story by Leslie Ross.

Is the consideration of fee and no-fee a balancing act? You bet, these lawyers admit. But it is a paradoxical balance: The more they help, the more they achieve equilibrium in their lives and practice.

Many lawyers sense that today is simply not the right time to extend a legal hand. And they’re right: The time is never perfect. As attorney Cesar Ternieden notes in the story, you may have too many clients or too few, too little time or—a frightening prospect—too much time.

But waiting for the perfect time is rarely a recipe for success.

Instead, these lawyers suggest a different worldview. Pro bono work can be done in service to the client—and benefit you, as well, whether seen through the prism of increased experience, client and lawyer contacts or a sense of accomplishment.

As Cesar says, “There is always an excuse for not doing pro bono.” How much better it is to see the pro bono plunge—without excuses—as an expedition into profitable territory.

Here’s hoping your own scale is in balance.

As always, send your stories to [soundoff@azbar.org](mailto:soundoff@azbar.org). ▲



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