

## Legal Recruiter Profile

### The Artemis Group LTD., Executive & Consulting Services

By Nabeal Twereet

#### Personal Life

Nancy D. Zehner, Esq. is the President and founder of The Artemis Group Ltd., an executive search and consulting firm focused on attorney search based in New York, NY. The Artemis Group specializes in conducting searches for lawyers at all levels and in all areas of practice internationally (e.g., Europe and Asia) and nationally (many states), with a primary focus on the NYC metro area.

Prior to founding her company, Nancy practiced civil litigation in New York City for six years, first with Shea & Gould, and later with Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis. She then worked as a legal recruiter for three years before establishing her own search firm in 1999. Nancy is a frequent lecturer at law schools and conferences on issues regarding attorney recruiting, placement, retention, corporate law department re-engineering and knowledge management.

Nancy was born at North Shore Hospital on Long Island, NY. She was raised on Long Island, first in Port Washington and then in Greenport when her engineer father decided he wanted their large family to own and run a marina. Nancy joked that, despite certain egregious violations of child labor laws perhaps, at age 10, she was operating a 30-ton boat travel lift, building docks and helping to repair boat engines; and she later taught sailing and lifeguarded when her family built a pool and tennis club to adjoin the marina.

She graduated with her B.A. in English Literature from Muhlenberg College. During her undergrad studies, Nancy was on the Dean's List and received numerous awards for academic excellence and leadership, as well as the senior students award for most outstanding all-around musician. She was President of the National Theatre Honor Society, and she enjoyed leading roles in musical theatre and an opera, was the lead singer for the college jazz ensemble and rock band, and concertized in classical piano and voice. Nancy earned her J.D. from Fordham University School of Law, where she was on the Dean's List and Moot Court Board.

When this legal recruiter isn't working, she pursues music and sports. She is the lyricist and musical director for the NYC Bar Association's Entertainment Committee, for which productions she has held leading roles for nearly a decade, and she performs in musicals with the New York American Inn of Court as well. She also recently took up composing. Nancy also enjoys long-distance running; she has completed the New York City Marathon twice (once as a volunteer for a disabled athlete) and she plans to run Philly this year. As well, Nancy is an avid long-distance cyclist and enjoys swimming, hiking, roller-blading, skiing (snow and water) and golf (though she claims that her golf game is sub-par and not in the desirable sense!). She also enjoys tap dancing.

If pressed to name one favorite restaurant, Nancy would name the Mediterranean restaurant Ilii. Nancy is currently reading several books, including Edward Jones' *The Known World*, Christopher McDougall's *Born to Run*, and O. Henry's best short stories.



## Nancy's Successful Career Path and Tips for Legal Recruiters

Nancy was accepted to several strong music schools. Why didn't she pursue a music career? "I love musical theater, but one has to be willing to live a nomad's life and for pauper's wages - at least in the beginning - plus, I enjoy doing many different things, and dedication to one's art on a professional basis has to be total." Law school satisfied her love of writing, debate and advocacy, and she found it intellectually stimulating. Nancy still loves to write and believes she is an excellent advocate - she simply transferred her passion for clients as a lawyer to passion for the candidates and employers for whom she now works. Nancy added, "Law school was a wonderful blessing."

Does Nancy have a top memory from law school? She explained that learning how to ace the exams was a high point. "I had an 'aha' moment when I realized that my law professors were testing almost entirely from their lectures. So by taking excellent lecture notes and focusing my studying on those, my grades improved significantly!"

What does it take to become a successful legal recruiter? The candid recruiter admitted, "It's hard to be a successful recruiter; it shouldn't just be a default choice for someone desiring to leave legal practice. You have to have the right motivations, including a sincere desire to help your candidates." Nancy continued to say that successful recruiters must be intuitive, intelligent, diligent, strategic, and ethical. She also emphasized being a good listener and following through on what you say you'll do for candidates and employers.

What motivated Nancy to become a recruiter? After practicing law for six years and working all day and all night on a regular basis, Nancy decided to leverage her legal background in a career where she could have a better balance and also help people in a way that felt more positive than conventional litigation. She noted that she had a knack for helping friends get their jobs and over the years many people encouraged her to consider recruiting.

When asked what she is known for professionally, the humble businesswoman replied, "I work with a fantastic team, an intelligent team, which is known for their great work and ethical standards."

Nancy discussed her strengths and one weakness as a recruiter. She reiterated the importance of being an intuitive, intelligent, diligent, strategic, and ethical legal recruiter. Nancy is also an advocate who has keen listening skills. As for her weakness, she claimed it's challenging to manage the inflow of emails she receives daily and it requires a lot of prioritization and organization.

So what is Nancy's advice to new recruiters? "Legal recruiters have to understand that it might be a while before they make a placement and see the type of results they're expecting. But they need to trust that if they work hard and have a natural affinity for the business, it will work out."

Considering her eighteen years of experience in the legal recruiting industry, many readers may want to know where Nancy sees the legal field in the next five years. She sees more and more firms changing their fee structures and she also sees a departure from the pure lockstep system for associates (as has been seen for partners) toward more of a "levels" system that advances associates based upon merit as opposed to strictly class year.

Where does she see the recruiting field in the next five years? Nancy stated that the legal recruiting industry has still not fully recovered from the Great Recession. She predicts a dwindling of search firms and believes that many in the recruiting field will continue to face challenges as the legal market changes.

What does Nancy look for to find the right fit? What makes a great candidate? "I find out what my candidates issues are in their current environment and what their ideal position would look like. I listen well and try to get to know them well so that I can recommend positions their will best advance their interests." Nancy said to find the potential fit, The Artemis Group conducts

many screenings and meetings with employers in order to get to know each side intimately and thus facilitate the best matches.

In regard to what makes a great candidate, Nancy noted, "A great candidate is someone who is honest, self-aware, forthcoming, responsive and a high achiever."

Does Nancy have a recipe for a perfect match? "As they say on Wall Street, 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating.' A successful placement is one that has a shelf life because both sides are very satisfied. There are many factors that go into that recipe, and we try to tick off every one."

How does the businesswoman tackle obstacles? Nancy has embodied the works of *New York Times* best-seller Eckhart Tolle. He was listed by the Watkins Review as the most spiritually influential person in the world. Nancy tries to stay focused on the present, and not worry too much about the past or future. She also meditates and commits her thoughts to writing, as she said, "writing can be a great organizational tool and can also help you commit to your goals."

Has Nancy learned something of value from her mistakes? "Oh, absolutely. Successful action doesn't draw much attention to itself, but mistakes do, and I try to learn from every mistake."

Where does she derive her confidence? Nancy derives some of her confidence from her mother and siblings, whom she admires greatly. Her family taught her that, given a realistic assessment of one's abilities and the commitment to work as hard as necessary to achieve a goal, almost anything is attainable. Nancy feels she has also grown by following the ethic of doing the right thing for its own sake - not because of the personal gain involved - which she finds also ends up being good business. She recalled that whenever she had a moral dilemma growing up, her mother would advise, "just do the right thing." Nancy also credits courage for advancing her in her goals.

#### **Professional Associations, Non-Profit Organization, Facing Obstacles and Favorite Quote**

Nancy is a member of the New York and Connecticut Bars. She has served the Association of the Bar of the City of New York: International Legal Services Task Force, Secretary (1993-1995); the Career Advancement and Management Committee (2000-2002); and the Entertainment Committee (2004-Present). Nancy was a Director for National Association of Legal Search Consultants (NALSC) (2003-2004), which is a voluntary organization of legal recruiters that adhere to the highest ethical standards in the profession. She is also a member of The Lambs (the oldest theatrical club in the US), the New York American Inn of Court, and the New York Flyers (which is affiliated with the New York Road Runners).

Is the recruiter involved with any non-profit organizations? Nancy and The Artemis Group support Achilles International, whose mission is to enable people with all types of disabilities to participate in mainstream athletics in order to promote personal achievement. Among other things, through Achilles, Nancy guided a Cerebral Palsy (CP) individual as he pushed his wheelchair backwards for 26.2 miles in a New York City Marathon.

Has she faced any obstacles in her life? Nancy acknowledged that she has overcome many obstacles. "I've faced a lot of obstacles in my life and being an overcomer and striver largely defines who I am. It's one of the reasons I am a long-distance runner - I figure that if I can do something that mentally and physically hard, other things will seem like a cakewalk. After I completed my first marathon, I decided to continue running long distances. Marathon training and running may be one of the things I am most proud of."

Nancy's favorite quote is by Albert Einstein: "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."

## Motivation and Nancy's Goals

What motivates Nancy to be a recruiter every day? "I enjoy helping people and I take the responsibility of furthering someone's career interests very seriously. Plus, I'm jazzed by the opportunity to get the best results for my candidates and employer clients."

Does the New Yorker have goals? Nancy expressed that her goal is to continue to be the best recruiter she can be. Her focus has always been on doing whatever is before her as well as possible.

## What to Expect When Working with The Artemis Group LTD

One candidate claimed:

"A lot of recruiting agencies tell you they'll give you individualized attention, but they don't. They send your resume to a hundred places in the hopes that one will respond. In contrast, The Artemis Group thought of the best places for me - places that would meet my needs - and targeted those places exclusively. They were very responsive, were great intermediaries, followed up with my applications and with me conscientiously, and made sure that I was comfortable throughout the process and that my needs were being met down the line."

A client stated:

"Speaking as a client of Artemis, I particularly appreciate that they keep current in their homework about our Firm and thoroughly screen every candidate they present. As a result, they find the right fit and my time isn't wasted - their efficiency streamlines the process for everyone. As well, their follow up is terrific, they are 'on the ball,' and they are always accessible when I need them. Working with Artemis is a pleasure."

Another candidate acknowledged:

"I was very impressed with Artemis where in my case they went over and above the call of duty to help me make the move I was hoping to make. They were always vigilant in returning and following up on calls, both my own and in contacting firms, professional in the manner in which they handled all communications, and attentive to detail in every respect from resumes to transcripts to interview prepping and follow-up. I am also delighted to say that, not only was I able to make the move I was aiming towards (moving to London) but I landed the firm of my choice, a premier UK firm with international reach, exceptional work, and a sterling reputation. It really could not have worked out better."

A candidate disclosed:

"From my initial consultation, I felt that I was receiving the best service possible in working with Artemis. I trusted them completely. The Artemis team listened carefully to me and to what I wanted and identified appropriate and interesting potential positions for me. They also then helped in each subsequent stage of the recruiting process - from helping me with my resume to preparing me for interviews to helping me to assess my options and make my final decision. I was able to obtain a bankruptcy position with a prestigious international law firm, where I am receiving excellent work and working with great people. I am thrilled!"



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