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LPO Scenario in India

Legal services are the next destination for the Indian outsourcing industry. With the legal services industry in the US estimated to be \$166 billion, employs approximately one million trained attorneys and 500,000 support personnel such as paralegals and legal assistant, the opportunity for offshoring to India is abound. According to a study by the US based Forrester Research, the current annual value of legal outsourcing, which is worth \$80 million can rise up to \$4 billion and can fetch around 80,000 jobs in India by 2015. KPO CONSULTANTS estimates that Indian LPOs can become around \$20 billion industry in the next decade.

Why Indian Lawyers

There are currently over a million lawyers in India and an average of 75,000 more passing out every year from Indian law schools. India with its crop of intellectual lawyers has the relevant skill-set to handle even high value legal tasks like legal research, drafting contracts and making determination regarding responsiveness of the document and privilege. It goes without saying that the LPO trend offers great benefits. India's legal services are affordable, efficient, and above all, skilled. Outsourcing legal work to India costs up to 80% less than the cost of using the services of American law firms. Top of all, India, like the US, is a common-law jurisdiction rooted in the British legal tradition, appellate and Supreme Court proceedings in India takes place exclusively in English.

Divergent Streams of LPO Companies

The first will be BPO / KPO companies that will rise up the legal knowledge chain to become a key player in the LPO industry. BPO Companies are providing legal transcription or legal data management services to law firms abroad would like to provide high-end knowledge based legal services. The second one would be the professionals running their law firms in India imparting services to companies, legal departments and law firms abroad. The third category is formed by experts creating niche meant for only the international markets like legal support or patents portfolio management services. The last category is the captive units of large multinational corporate houses and law firms.

Categories

BPO/ITES Players Providing
LPO Services

Name of LPO Vendors

- Quattro
- Datamatics
- Office Tiger
- Intrust Global

Arms of Law Firms Providing LPO
Services

- J Sagar Associates
- Kochhar & Company
- Nishith Desai Associates
- Patent Metrix

Third Party Units (Single-Focus LPO Excluding Patents Services)	· Legasis · Quislex · Lexadigm · Mindcrest
Third Party Units (Single-Focus Patents Services)	· Brain-league · Intellevate · Ripple IP · Ippro
KPO Players Providing LPO Services	· Evalueserve · Manthan · Integreon · WNS
Captives of Law Firms	· Lexecute · Atlas Legal Research · Baker & McKenzie · Allen & Overy · Lexsphere
Captives of Corporate Legal Departments	· Dupont · GE · Oracle Sun Microsystems

What LPO Companies Demand

The companies predominantly require people for legal support services and patents outsourcing related jobs. Hence, lawyers (and engineers) having inclination towards learning and implementing the effect of foreign laws are in high demand. They desperately look for the following requisites in any of the candidates in the queue to LPO sector:

- Experienced professionals (Patents or Legal)
- Trained professionals
- Exposure with foreign laws
- Foreign qualifications in legal stream

The table below depicts the range of key services offered by the LPO companies:

Litigation Support	Patent Services	Paralegal support
■ Extensive Contract Review ■ Conveyancing ■ Memorandum and brief writing ■ Legal research ■ Drafting ■ Enable e-discovery ■ Legal Research	■ Prior-Art Search ■ Freedom-To-Operate Research ■ Patentability Search ■ Product Clearance Investigation ■ Patent and Technology Landscaping ■ Patent Data Mining Services ■ Patent Watch Services	■ Image and Document coding ■ Indexing and Tagging ■ Legal transcription ■ Archiving ■ Deposition and Testimony summarization ■ Document/Evidence Review

Placements by LPO Companies

As per the study by KPO CONSULTANTS, it is estimated that at present there are approximately 1200 professionals working with around 50 LPOs operating from India while the expected headcount of professionals (lawyers) is 30000 by 2010. As of now, the LPO companies recruit lawyers and other supporting staff through the following ways:

- *Campus recruitments*
- *Placement consultants*
- *Online job portals*
- *Employee recommendations*
- *Industry networking*

The Grey Area

Every year, Indian law schools produce thousands of law graduates. These intellectual brains attain their legal knowledge base in the common law system that is followed in UK and the US. Legal skills honed by Indian law graduates are comparable to a recognized law school in the US or the UK. They get themselves equipped with analytical skills, communicating skills and writing skills. The training by the LPO companies is imparted with similar rigor and methodologies as those in the U.S. But the question is - "how many such brains are available readymade?" or "How many companies would afford to impart training and till what time?"

Apparently, the supply of legal talent for the LPO companies would not be an issue till the time they are adequately trained in pursuance to the standards decided by the US clients.

Why Working in LPO Space

As the LPO sector keeps rising, the importance of lawyers working in LPOs would also increase. It trains a professional for creating better career opportunities in this domain. Lawyer who works for a domestic company as the legal manager and compare his working style with a person is working with an LPO carrying equal amount of experience but the difference is staggering. The LPO professional gets international exposure to interact, discuss and influence with the foreign lawyers and corporate legal departments. He/she copes up with the LPO services as per as the international standards and practices. In the sector, the fresh graduates are being offered salaries which are five to six times more than what BPOs pay. They are getting attractive salaries ranging between Rs 15,000 to Rs 30,000 per month. Just 2-3 years back the package was very less as compare at this time. Most of the companies now offering annual salary hikes which range between 15-18 percent. The effective annual hike for senior professionals comes to about 25-30 percent.

Challenges

As far as LPO industry is concerned, there still is a major demand-supply mismatch. Finding experienced people is an uphill task. In-house training costs are too high. Screening, security-checks, interviews and induction process takes lot of time resulting in costs enhancements. Executive search is next to impossible. Attrition would soon come into picture.

Role of KPO CONSULTANTS in cultivating the talent

An Indian lawyer can be as good as his American counterpart in US or UK legal industry if suitably advised and trained with the pertinent laws. What is required of a lawyer, either Indian or American, is not that he should be aware of all laws and regulations but that he should be inclined to get his hands on that knowledge. It's more of legal management than learning the foreign laws. Awareness is always a value addition.

We impart LPO Training and Placements in collaboration with Industry experts.
