Bing-Hong Lee

Hello, everyone, my name is Bing-Hong Lee. I am a lawyer. I have been a lawyer with the Legal Aid Foundation for 15 years. Our foundation provides free telephone legal consultation (one hour/per person) for people to deal with lawsuit case. And we offer other services with affordable rates.

My jog also handles customer complaints, appealing complaints, and the litigation of cases.

I passed the lawyer’s license exam in 2004. I am the first blind person who passed the exam in the history in Taiwan. Then we had to do an internship. I was quite thankful that I met a very nice lawyer, Mr. Lixiong Gu, who allowed me to complete my internship at his Wanguo Law Firm.

Fortunately, I came to the Legal Aid Foundation recommended by a Lawyer, Mr. Yong-Song Lin, who is the founder of the Legal Aid Foundation. I passed the lawyer’s license exam in the first year that the Foundation was established. Mr. Lin saw me on the news. I remembered when I was about to finish my internship, he contacted me and told me about the requirements and the characteristics of this current job. It was the first time I heard about the Foundation. I thought the salary was okay, and I felt that the job was also quite meaningful because it provides services helping people dealing with lawsuits at an affordable rate.

In the blink of an eye, many years passed

To get the assistive technology devices I need at work, my employer and I went to the City Labor Department to apply for the devices. I got the accessible computer with screen reader software, which converts the text message to voice. I also got a refreshable braille display device, which converts the print message into braille.

In recent years, the City Labor Department also provided me with sighted assistants at work. This is important because assistive technology devices have some limitations in some situations. For example, if someone receives an official document (in paper) from the city government, a sighted person would pick it up and read it directly. But how do visually impaired people read the document? We need assistive technology devices to convert it into electronic text. However, photos and tables embedded in the text can not be converted. If someone can help read it, then we could get the information about the entire document. So, I also get a part-time sighted assistant at work. I also realized that using smartphone is helpful for me at work. I had to read email messages from a computer before, but now I can use my cell phone to read emails when I am on the bus, which is actually quite convenient for me.

Usually, a person with visual impairments can do most jobs if they obtain adequate assistive technology devices. However, most visually impaired people will learn that getting a job is not easy. Therefore, when they do find a job, they will cherish it very much. They will work hard beyond their capacity.

Work Experience

When I first graduated from law school, I applied for jobs and I was rejected for most. When employers heard that you were visually impaired, they would not interview you. My most unforgettable experience was I was going to apply for a legal assistant at a company, the employer said that I shouldn’t come to the interview before the interview started. I remembered that I felt frustrated and realized that it was hard to find a job. After that, I wrote an email message to the President’s Office. Fortunately, there was a vacancy in the Labor Insurance Bureau. So, I got the job: I collected labor insurance premiums there. I was very young at that time. It was a year after I graduated from college. I worked for 14 months at this job. Then, I went to Wanguo Law Firm for my internship. Last, I came to the Legal Aid Foundation where I work now.

I can imagine a situation: when someone finds no jobs, he/she may not know what to do. For persons who are trying to enter the job market, I would suggest that they open up their vision. If the current environment does not allow you to engage in one job, think about the alternatives: what else can you do, and what other options are available?

What Bing-Hong Lee has gained from work…

Through this job, I met people with different educational and socio-economic levels. Sometimes I met people who did not understand the capabilities of persons who are blind. They did not believe that blind persons can be a lawyer. When graduated from the law school, I was very knowledgeable, but very inexperienced in terms of helping people to deal with their lawsuit cases. Frankly speaking, I was inexperienced when I first became a lawyer at that time. It embarrassed me that sometimes I could not make my clients understand the key points regarding their cases. These situations made me feel unhappy and even frustrated. As I met more and more clients, I then realized that these clients came to me because they did not know how to deal with their lawsuit cases. Therefore, I learn to communicate with them in their language. Thus, I learned to transform the law and regulations-related information into something they can understand. In retrospect, I think having communication skills is an important thing. The most important lesson is to communicate with people of different backgrounds with a more open mind.

I don’t think of myself as a role model. But I am proud of myself because I don’t live on unemployment compensation although I’m a person with visual impairment. This is the thing that supports me to go on. At least, I can work, and I’m a member of the productive forces. And I can contribute something to the society even if my contribution is little. This is the positive value of me.

To those people who are still doubting about themselves…

Everybody has his/her own value. Perhaps your life path is challenging, or you are not the top ranked person in education or employment. But please believe that you can be a contributing member of the society although your life may be uneasy. There is also another possibility in you although you may not be satisfied for your current job. So, if you think you do not perform well at work, please do not be afraid. This does not mean you can do nothing. I believe that you can still contribute to the society in your own way.