FOR LAWYERS

Before you say yes to a role

From our article: **What a wrong job really costs a lawyer, beyond the salary**
Read it in full, with the sources for every figure: https://www.wilsonmannion.co.uk/insights/what-a-wrong-job-really-costs-a-lawyer
Checked 22 October 2026. General information, not legal advice.

IN SHORT
No UK study puts one pound figure on what a wrong job costs a lawyer, so any single number is an estimate. Published data does show the parts: faster pay growth for people who change jobs, 22.9 working days lost per case of work-related stress, and falling odds of finding work the longer you are out. Most of the cost is avoidable if you check the role before you accept it.

Key takeaways

- No UK study prices a wrong job for a lawyer. The cost has to be built from parts, and most of those parts are about pay, health and time.
- Pay growth is lower for people who stay than for those who change jobs, so a move that goes wrong is judged against a good one.
- The longer you are out of work, the lower your odds of getting back in. Line up the next role before you resign.
- Most of the cost can be checked before you accept: supervision, caseload, hours, probation and review dates, in writing.

Before you say yes to a role

- [ ] Ask for the pay and the working pattern in writing, not just in conversation.
- [ ] Ask how many live files you would carry, and what is typical for the team.
- [ ] Ask who supervises you, how often you would meet and who covers when they are away.
- [ ] Ask about probation length, notice during probation and the review dates.
- [ ] Ask what happened to the last person in the role, and why.
- [ ] Talk to someone who works there now, if the firm will allow it.
- [ ] Check your own notice period, so you know your earliest sensible start date.

What to do, in order

1. **Write down what is not working**
   Facts and dates, not feelings. It helps you judge it clearly and say it clearly.
2. **Raise it with someone**
   A supervisor, a partner or a mentor outside the firm. Ask for a dated review and note what is agreed.
3. **Look after your health**
   If sleep, appetite or anxiety is affected, speak to your GP, or LawCare on 0800 279 6888.
4. **Check your contract**
   Read your written statement for notice and probation, so you know your earliest exit date.
5. **Line up the next role first**
   Where you can, start the search before you resign, because time out of work lowers your odds.

Should you act now?

QUESTION	IF YES	IF NO
Have you raised it with anyone at the firm?	Ask for a dated review and write down what was agreed.	Choose who you can raise it with first. A mentor outside the firm counts.
Is it affecting your sleep or your health?	Speak to your GP or LawCare before you decide anything about the job.	Keep notes of what is not working, so you can judge it later.
Do you know your notice and probation terms?	Work out your earliest sensible exit date.	Read your written statement first, or ask HR for it.