

Let's Talk Business

For Ted Rogers School Students

These reports describe industry sectors and career paths of interest to Ted Rogers School students and alumni. Each report leverages BCH employment data and the expertise of our staff. This collaborative effort engages staff, students, alumni and the University Business Librarian.

Published December 2022

A Day in the Life of a Legal Analyst

We had a conversation recently with Michelle Chalator, a Ted Rogers School alumna from the Law & Business program (2022), with a minor in Human Resources.

She is currently working as a *Legal Analyst* at [Dropbox](#).

Headquartered in San Francisco, Dropbox is a file hosting service that stores thousands of documents in a single place, making it more convenient for clients to organize and access their valuable information. Within this report, we take an in-depth look into her experience as she guides us through her journey leading to her current role as a Legal Analyst.



Q: What do you do on a "day-to-day" basis in your current role as a Legal Analyst at Dropbox?

A: As part of the in-house commercial legal team, I work with attorneys, contract managers, and several other legal analysts to draft and negotiate contracts across Dropbox's global offices. These can include anything from NDAs, events contracts, sponsorship agreements, data processing agreements, services agreements and more. My job is to promote business while limiting the amount risk posed to our company.

Each morning I check my email for updates on any new contract requests that have been assigned to me and continue working on previous deals. Depending on the complexity and urgency of my deals, I spend the morning working on the most high-priority ones.

Most of my time is spent redlining contracts and working with business clients to get the most favourable terms possible for our company. This includes communicating with clients, hopping on calls to discuss the terms of their agreements, and walking them through the negotiation process. Once I've gathered all the relevant information and prepared my redlines, they're sent to the counterparty's legal department which then responds. This back and forth continues until we've negotiated all of the contract's terms.

Since I work from Toronto and most of my team is located in San Francisco, their day doesn't start until 12pm my time, which means I get a few hours in the morning to prepare for any meetings I have in the afternoon. Some of these meetings are regular 1-on-1 touchpoints with my direct lead and other members of the team, while others are larger calls where we have specific agenda items to discuss. Additionally, I have calls with my clients and various stakeholders across the company. When I'm not in meetings or working on contracts, I'm usually helping with larger side-projects and creating internal documentation.

Towards the end of my day, I route any contracts that have been completed for signature and close out any deals that have finished. Afterwards, I make sure our contracts repository is up-to-date and I take a look at what's on the agenda for the next day.

Q: What technology platforms do you use in your role?

A: [Dropbox](#) and [Dropbox Paper](#) to store files and collaborate with team members on internal documents.

[Zendesk](#) is the main ticketing system our in-house counsel uses to communicate with internal clients. Dropboxers that have a legal question will submit their request as a Zendesk ticket and their ticket will be assigned to a member of the legal team to handle. This will be an attorney, contracts manager, or legal analyst depending on the request.

[Dropbox Sign](#) is our e-signature product which allows users to send contracts out to a counterparty (suppliers, vendors, clients etc.) to be electronically signed. I use Dropbox Sign to send contracts out once I've finished working on them.

[Ironclad](#) is a contract management software that hosts our contracts repository, acts as a self-service tool for clients, and allows us to run analytics. With Ironclad, client's can access certain standard-form templates developed by the legal team and send contracts out for signature on their own. In terms of analytics, we might pull reports that tell us which type of contract is most commonly sent through Ironclad or how many contracts of a certain type we have signed each quarter. This data informs business decisions our team will make later on.

[Microsoft Word](#) to draft and redline contracts when negotiating the terms of an agreement with a counterparty.

[Zoom](#) to host meetings and run live negotiations with business partners and legal teams.

[Slack](#) to communicate with my lead, colleagues, and the broader team on a regular basis.



Q: How does your industry impact the world?

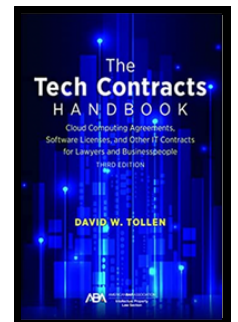
A: Technology plays a central role in almost every aspect of modern 21st century life. As such, working in the technology industry often means being at the forefront of cutting-edge innovation, which is both incredibly exciting and rewarding. Dropbox is on a mission to create a “more enlightened way of working” which is something a lot of us can connect to, particularly in a post-COVID working world. Studies show employees spend a shocking amount of their work day doing things that are not core to their job - such as finding documents and sifting through countless tabs and applications. By enabling people with the right resources and collaborative tools, Dropbox is helping individuals do their best and most impactful work.

Q: Which industry trends should aspirational students be aware of?

A: Students aiming to work on an in-house counsel team should learn as much as possible about organizational structure and keep an eye on trends across various industries. In-house counsel engages with clients from every department at a company; from marketing, to sales, to procurement, and product design. The more we know about the kind of work our clients do, the more effective and helpful we can be as legal advisors. Students should also consider subscribing to websites like [TechCrunch](#) or [VentureBeat](#) which give regular updates on new and emerging technologies. Larger firms will usually publish annual tech trend reports, which can be a great read as well.

Q: What advice would you provide a Ted Rogers School student who aspires to work in your industry?

A: Be open-minded and have a willingness to learn. Technology is an ever-changing, fast-paced industry. You need to be flexible and able to adapt to changing trends and new developments. Learn as much as you can about the industry and company you’re interested in working for and be passionate about the mission you’re a part of.



If you’re interested in working at the intersection of law, business, and technology, consider investing in a copy of “[The Tech Contracts Handbook: Cloud Computing Agreements, Software Licenses, and Other IT Contracts for Lawyers and Businesspeople](#)” by David Tollen and “[Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In](#)” by Roger Fisher and William Ury.

The Contracts Handbook is a technical book where you can learn more about the most common kinds of contractual issues legal professionals deal with in the IT world. Getting to Yes covers best practices for negotiating by focusing on the psychology of negotiation. In addition to this knowledge being central to the work a commercial legal team does everyday, knowing how to negotiate effectively is generally an important life skill. Whether that means negotiating your salary or rent one day, learning how to master negotiation is invaluable.



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Career Consultant Contributor

Olivia Baratta

Olivia is a Career Consultant and TRSM Alumni, with 9+ years of experience in the hospitality, real estate and academic sectors. She brings her passion for building meaningful experiences for her clients to develop and showcase their unique brand.



Student Contributor

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Terel is a 2nd-year Human Resources Management student working as a Project Coordinator at the Business Career Hub. He is deeply interested in the world of workforce management and development and strives to pursue a career in the human resources field.