Choosing a Career in Computer Forensics Paralegal

In computer forensics you will do e-discovery for litigation support; which is a powerful tool you can use during litigation. This type of forensics requires the paralegal to prepare a company for computer-related security problems, efficiently do investigation and then have the legal background to prepare the evidence for litigation.

The short definition of Computer Forensics:

"The use of specialized techniques for recovery, authentication, and analysis of electronic data when a case involves issues relating to reconstruction of computer usage, examination of residual data, authentication of data by technical analysis or explanation of technical features of data and computer usage." (Computer Forensics and Litigation Support Training, 2009).

Computer forensics is an expert knowledge that is very different than data techniques of end-users or system support departments. Computer forensics uses a system that follows evidence standards that are admissible in a court of law. Therefore, computer forensics requires a person who is techno-legal in nature. A Computer Forensic Paralegal must have an understanding of the theory behind computer forensics and the techniques used in computer forensics.

The work of a computer forensics paralegal can be used in corporate cases of wrong doing with mounting attention to cyber crime and cyber terrorism. The possibilities of these crimes has made electronic evidence discovery an important part of a corporation’s plan for security.

Training for Computer Forensics certification is necessary and is currently available online and in some post secondary schools and colleges. Graduate degrees are now available in Computer Forensics. Advanced skills in a Computer Forensics survey by the System Administration Networking and Security Institute places forensic professionals as the highest-paid workers.

The duties of a computer forensics paralegal:

- Must conduct forensic investigations. The entire process from acquiring the data to presenting the findings.
- Locate strengths and weaknesses of the automated tools used by the computer forensic paralegals.
- Computer forensic paralegals must understand of how the automated forensic tools work, and how to clearly see digital evidence to be able to conduct complete examinations.
Computer forensic paralegals must know the importance of automated software, but how alone they can miss vital evidence that can cause a negative impact for an investigation. The outlook for new forensics professionals is strong as there is a growing demand in all sectors or business to increase computer security and understand why intrusion and invasion into secure areas happen. In perspective, this rapidly advancing field offers opportunities for paralegals with computer forensic training.

In conclusion, computer forensic paralegals must have a certification for computer forensics and paralegal work. They are currently the highest paid paralegals in the business. Professionals are in high demand, and their average salaries are in the high five figure and six figure range. Experienced computer forensics paralegals can earn $50K up to $120K per year. Some investigators work as consultants, and bill a couple of hundred dollars per hour. As experience and training increases so does the salary. Consider a career in this up and coming field of work.