*Argument 3*

*The following appeared in a newspaper article about law firms in the city of Megalopolis.*

*"In Megalopolis, the number of law school graduates who went to work for large, corporate*

*firms declined by 15% over the last three years, whereas an increasing number of graduates*

*took jobs at small, general practice firms. Even though large firms usually offer much higher*

*salaries, law school graduates are choosing to work for the smaller firms most likely because*

*they experience greater job satisfaction at smaller firms. In a survey of first-year students at a*

*leading law school, most agreed with the statement that earning a high salary was less*

*important to them than job satisfaction. This finding suggests that the large, corporate firms of*

*Megalopolis will need to offer graduates more benefits and incentives and reduce the number*

*of hours they must work."*

This article concludes that despite the relatively high salaries at Megalopolis' large law firms,

these fro-ns must begin offering more benefits and incentives to new law-school graduates,

while requiring them to work fewer hours, in order to reverse a 3-year 15% decline in the

number of graduates going to work for these firms. To justify this conclusion the article's author

notes that during the last 3 years the number of new law-school graduates going to work for

small firms has risen. The author also cites a survey at one leading law school in which most

first-year students indicated that job satisfaction was more important than salary. I find this

argument logically unconvincing in several respects.

First of all, the 15% decline that the author cites is not necessarily due to the vocational

preferences of new law-school graduates. It is entirely possible that the number of new

graduates preferring to work for large firms has not declined, but that during the last three

years MegalopoLis' large firms have had fewer and fewer job openings for these graduates.

Since the article fails to account for this alternative explanation for the 15% decline, the

article's author cannot make any sound recommendations to law faa-ns based on that decline.

As for the survey that the article cites, the vocational goals of first-year law students do not

necessarily reflect those of graduating students; after all, a law student's vocational goals can

change over a three-year period. Moreover, the goals of students at one law school do not

necessarily reflect those of the overall pool of graduates that might seek employment with

Megalopolis law firms. In fact, given that the school whose students participated in the survey

was a "leading" school, it is entirely possible that the vast majority of the school's graduates

may choose among offers from many large firms in many cities. If so, this fact would further

undermine the survey's relevance in prescribing any course of action for Megalopolis' law

firms.

Finally, the author falsely equates the proposed tangible incentives with job satisfaction,

which is an intangible reward based on the nature of one's work. Moreover, enhanced job

benefits can be tantamount to an enhanced salary, and shorter working hours amount to a

higher hourly wage. Thus if new law-school graduates seeking jobs in MegalopoLis are less

interested in monetary rewards than in job satisfaction, then the proposed incentives are not

likely to entice these graduates.

In sum, the argument is logically flawed and therefore unconvincing as it stands. To

strengthen it the author must either modify the proposal to provide incentives for those seeking

job satisfaction over monetary rewards, or provide better evidence that new law school

graduates seeking jobs in Megalopolis would fred the proposed incentives entic ing.