

# INTERVIEWING RULES, TIPS & TRICKS, AND POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

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## Rules:

1. **Dress Professional:** Wear a suit and dress shoes for *all* interviews. Look the part in order to get the part. Aloha shirts or nice dresses can be worn once you get the job. If you get a new suit check for tags or tailor's tacks.
2. **Be Confident:** Give a firm handshake, smile, look them in the eye, sit up straight, wait for the interviewer to sit down before you do or wait until they request you to sit down. Have faith that you have more skills than you realize and by the time you get to your summer associate summer you'll be more than ready.
3. **Be early:** To be on time is to be late. For off-campus interviews, do a test run the day before, find the building, find the parking structure, and determine how long it takes to get there. On the day of the interview, leave extra early there could be traffic, etc. You don't want to feel rushed or get there all sweaty.
4. **Know your interviewer:** Research the company and the interviewer. Know the firm's practice areas, the interviewer's practice areas, and know a recent article they've written or a recently published decision that they've won. Know the firm well enough that you're not spending time asking basic questions. They'll be more impressed, and your time will be better spent, if you ask in-depth questions.
5. **Bring extra copies:** Bring extra copies of your resume, cover letter, and writing sample on nice paper (typically white 24 lb. paper). If any information has been added give the interviewer a new copy. Or if they bring another interviewer to the interview its helpful. It shows that you're prepared.
6. **Be honest:** Know the hard questions that could be asked of you and prepare an answer. Know the weak points or gaps in your resume. If they ask you a question that you don't understand or don't know the answer to, be honest but professional.
7. **Be Personable:** They are trying to assess if you're a good fit for their firm and you should show enough of your personality to help them make that determination. Showing some of your personality will also help you to determine if the firm is a good fit for you.
8. **Sell yourself:** This is your chance to impress them. Find the balance between being boastful and being too humble. This is the time to inform and explain your accomplishments. The purpose of the interview is for you to explain everything that's not in your resume and put a face to your accomplishments.

## Tips & Tricks:

1. There are different types of legal jobs out there: big firms, medium firms, small firms, solo practioners, in-house counsel, government jobs, and non-legal jobs. Research the different

types of jobs to determine what you would be interested in. But interview for as many different types of jobs that you could possibly enjoy because you might find something you really enjoy.

2. There are numerous different interviewing styles. Be aware of them, so you can be prepared for any interview. Here's a quick overview of the styles.  
<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2014/07/24/6-types-of-interviews-and-how-to-nail-them>
3. Know your weaknesses. Have an answer prepared for the difficult questions. Find a way to turn your answer into a positive answer.
4. In the interview don't chew gum, but maybe use a breath mint before you get there.
5. If the interviewer asks an argumentative question don't argue with the interviewer. You're not there to prove a point you're there to get a job.
6. Stay alert, mentally sharp, and engaged during the interview.
7. Bring a pen and notepad into the interview. That way you can have your notes right in front of you and as soon as you leave the interview right down notes about the interview.
8. Send a handwritten thank you card to each interviewer after the interview. Write and mail the thank you cards the day of the interviews, the interviewer may make their decision for call-backs within a day a two.
9. Remember everything you do leaves an impression and creates your reputation.
10. On-Campus Interviews, or really any law school interviews, typically request your resume, a cover letter, a writing sample, transcript, and yes your advisory first semester grades.
11. Make sure all documents submitted for interviews are finely polished. Review, revise, review, revise, and review some more.
12. The best way to become good at interviewing is to practice. So, sign up for the mock interviews, do the spring OCIs, and sign up for as many fall OCIs as you can. There is no harm in interviewing with every firm. Play the odds, you never know who will be interested in you. Nor do you want to be shortsighted and limit your possibilities by limiting the number of interviews you have.
13. Generally, the bigger firms are most interested in, and generally these are considered the most accurate factors for determining future success in the legal field,: (1) grades, (2) a writing sample, (3) moot court team membership, and/or (4) journal membership. These four factors are important, however, they are not a complete assessment of your abilities and not a guarantee of your future success. So, do not let your grades prevent you from interviewing, because grades are just one litmus test and law firms are looking for the whole package. And not all firms and law jobs are just interested in the top four factors.
14. Externships are another great experience to add to your resume, especially appellate court externships.

### **Possible Questions:**

1. What are your greatest strengths?

2. What are your weaknesses?
3. Where do you see yourself in five years?
4. What are your passions?
5. Tell me about a time that you had to make a difficult decision?
6. Tell me about your biggest failure?
7. What type of law do you want to practice?
8. Do you want to do litigation or transactional?
9. They may ask you a question that is directly opposite of your personal viewpoint. For example, lets say you love environmental law they may ask you “what would you do if you had a client that didn’t follow the environmental regulations and the client has asked you to defend them in court?” Be true to yourself, but don’t shoot yourself in the foot by giving the altruistic answer. Remember the firm wants to know how you’re going to work for the clients.