

Tough Questions to Expect in an Interview

- ◆ Tell me about yourself
- ◆ What are your weaknesses?
- ◆ What are your strengths?
- ◆ Why should we hire you?
- ◆ Where do you see yourself in 5 to 10 years?
- ◆ Are your grades indicative of your ability?
- ◆ Why aren't your grades better?
- ◆ Why do you want to work for us?
- ◆ Why did you go to law school?
- ◆ Why did you choose UD?
- ◆ Why did you go to school in Dayton, OH if you wanted to work in "X" city?
- ◆ Why is there a gap in your employment history?
- ◆ Why do you want to work in this city?
- ◆ Why didn't you get an offer from your last employer?
- ◆ What's the biggest mistake you ever made?
- ◆ What kind of salary are you looking for?
- ◆ How do you like law school?

Sample Questions You Might Ask in an Interview

- ◆ You seem to like your job. How did you choose it?
- ◆ What kinds of cases are you working on?
- ◆ Did you clerk here?
- ◆ How is your job different than what you expected it to be?
- ◆ What do you like about your job?
- ◆ What's the best thing that's happened to you while working here?
- ◆ If you could change anything about your job, would you? If so, what would it be? (Be careful- you don't want this to come across as a negative question.)
- ◆ What's the most interesting case you've worked on?
- ◆ What have you learned as a result of working here?
- ◆ How long were you at the firm before you had significant client contact?
- ◆ Did you start off in your current practice area? If not, why did you switch?
- ◆ What do you find most challenging about being a lawyer?
- ◆ Who'll assign my work? (If that's not obvious from the firm's literature.)
- ◆ Will I get feedback on my work?
- ◆ What kinds of cases will I work on?
- ◆ How does someone become a star-what makes them stand out?
- ◆ Do you work mostly on your own or do you work on projects with other attorneys at the firm?
- ◆ Do you have a formal mentor or training program for law clerks and new associates?

Questions You Should Avoid Asking in an Interview

A. Any Questions That Have a “What’s-In-It-For-Me?” Flavor

- ◆ How many hours do I need to work?
- ◆ What’s expected of me?
- ◆ What billable hours do you expect from new associates?
- ◆ What does the benefits package entail?
- ◆ How much paid time off will I get?
- ◆ What’s the salary?
- ◆ What kind of support staff will I have?
- ◆ How many people besides me are you hiring (or interviewing)?
- ◆ How long is the partnership track here?

B. Questions With a Negative Tone

- ◆ I’ve heard negative rumors about your firm. How’s business really going?
- ◆ What *don’t* you like about the firm?
- ◆ How does your firm compare to “X” firm?

C. “Imponderables”

- ◆ What’s the culture of the firm?

D. Any Question You Could Have Answered Yourself Through Simple Research

- ◆ How many attorneys do you have?
- ◆ What are your practice areas?
- ◆ In which cities do you have offices?

E. Any Question Showing You’re Clueless About What You’ve Already Covered in the Interview

F. **The Worst Possible Mistake: Not Having Any Questions at All!**

“Tell Me About Yourself” Model

(1-2 Minutes)

1. Your Objective:

(“I’m interested in practicing in the area of (*practice area*)” or “I’m hoping to find an associate/summer clerkship position in (*geographic area*).”)

2. Three Major Transferable Skills:

(“I’ve been very effective in the areas of (1), (2), (3)”)

- ◆ Organization
 - ◆ Leadership
 - ◆ Problem solving
 - ◆ Quick learning
 - ◆ Taking initiative
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- ◆ Oral written communication

3. Relevant Experience:

(“I’ve developed these skills in a variety of positions, including...”)

4. Examples to *Prove* Skills:

(“In my second year of law school I competed in a National Mott Court competition where I received awards for best brief and best oralist.”)

(“In my last position as a law clerk at Dinsmore & Shohl, I consistently received highest marks on my evaluations for taking initiative. One specific example of that would be the data base I developed for organizing exhibits for a multi-million dollar trial.”)

5. Summation:

Why my experience, education effectiveness and attitude make me a good candidate for a clerkship/associate position.