
GONZAGA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

A GUIDE TO INTERVIEWING

Congratulations - you got an interview with a great employer! Now you have to get ready for the actual event. Remember, interviewing is stressful for everyone. The more you learn about the process, the easier it will become - and the more effective you will be in your interviews.

Purpose of the Interview

The basic point of an interview is to let the employer get a feel for what you are like, and vice versa. An interview is a two-way street. People want to work with folks they like, and an interview is the best way for employers to figure out if you'll be nice to work with. It also gives you the opportunity to ask questions about the employer and figure out if you would like to work there. Finally, the interview gives you a chance to sell yourself - so make the most of it.

Components of an Interview

Like a letter, an interview generally has three parts - a greeting, a discussion/exchange of information, and a closing:

Greeting - First impressions count! The greeting sets the tone for the entire interview, so be confident. Be on time and dress professionally. Smile, look the interviewer in the eye, introduce yourself, and offer a firm handshake. Present a relaxed and positive appearance. Be prepared to engage in some small talk about the weather, your professors, current events, etc. before moving on to the rest of the interview. Just follow the interviewer's lead and allow a natural rapport to develop.

Discussion - At some point, the interviewer will move from the small talk to the "meat" of the interview. You and the employer will engage in an exchange of information about your background, goals, and experiences and how they mesh with the needs of the employer and position for which you are interviewing. This is your chance to sell yourself, demonstrate your enthusiasm for the job, and ask questions. Continue to maintain good eye contact and a professional and thoughtful demeanor. Avoid nervous gestures or habits. Speak clearly and thoughtfully, answering the questions asked and making your desired points about your qualifications for the job. Remember, an interview is in part a sales presentation - convince the employer you are best for the job! However, be sure to keep answers to the point, so that you make the most valuable use of the short time available for the interview.

Closing - Leave the interviewer with a good impression. Reiterate your interest in the position and the employer. Ask if there is any additional information you can provide, and what the employer's time frame is for making a decision. Find out who to call if you have any further questions. Smile, shake hands, and end on a positive note. You might want to use a parting line such as "I have enjoyed meeting with you. Your practice sounds wonderful and I would like to be a part of it." You get the idea!

Interview Preparation

The secret to a good interview is preparation! This cannot be emphasized enough. Your preparation should include three parts - researching the employer and interviewer, coming up with your

own “sales pitch,” and practicing answers to common questions you will be asked and the questions you want to ask. Preparation will pay off, and a lack of preparation will be deadly.

Researching the Employer and Interviewer - Knowing as much as you can about the employer and the interviewer will make you feel more confident and will impress the interviewer. It will also save you from making unfortunate comments such as “I don’t want to practice criminal law” when interviewing with a firm that specializes in that area. Being prepared will also demonstrate your enthusiasm for the position. Finally, your research may tell you whether or not you really want to work for this employer.

How do you conduct all this research? There are many resources, including Martindale -Hubbell, Lexis and Westlaw Career Search databases, trade publications such as the Washington State Bar News, Career Services employer files, and the Internet, where many firms have their own web page. Using these resources you can learn what areas a firm practices in, how many lawyers they have, where their offices are located, and all sorts of other useful information. For government agencies, also check with Career Services for additional guidance. In addition, you may consider contacting alums who work at the firm or agency (Career Services has an alumni directory) or students who have worked there. Try to become as familiar as possible with the employer by checking these resources.

If you know who you will be interviewing with, also research that person. Martindale Hubbell lists an attorneys’ birthplace, undergraduate and law schools, areas of practice, and professional affiliations. If you both went to the same undergraduate school, that will be an instant bond. Another tactic that is always impressive is to do a Westlaw or Lexis search for recent cases on which the particular attorney appeared. Then you can come to the interview and mention his or her most recent case, and ask a question or two about it. This definitely shows your interest and enthusiasm!

Students and non-licensed graduates should be aware that performing legal work in any state under the supervision of anyone, or for anyone, who is not a member of that state’s bar may be civilly prosecuted for the unlicensed practice of law. All job applicants are personally responsible for carefully researching any potential employer before applying for a position.

Practicing Your “Sales Pitch” - The interview is your time to shine. If you have given some thought in advance to your strengths and why they make you perfect for the job, things will go much more smoothly. Similarly, if you have thought about how you will answer the typical “tough” interview questions, you will make a much better impression.

Kimm Walton, author of *Guerilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams*, recommends making up an infomercial about yourself. This would be a short statement that says the most important things you want employers to know about you. It will include those points you want to be sure you make - for example, highlighting your writing skills by noting your high grade in legal research and writing, or emphasizing your oral advocacy abilities by mentioning your participation on a moot court or mock trial team. Then, when employers ask “What are your strengths” or “Why should we hire you” you will have an answer ready.

To come up with your infomercial, Kimm suggests the following steps. First, think about your background and pick out those accomplishments you are most proud of. Then, identify three to five job related strengths those accomplishments show you have, such as the ability to work under pressure or excellent writing and research skills, or working well as part of a team. Next, memorize an infomercial that cites your job-related skills and uses your accomplishments for support. For example, you might say “I work well under pressure. At my last job, I was able to step in for a co-worker who left our company and finish the year-end bookkeeping in one week.” Of course, everyone’s infomercial will be different, but this gives you the idea. Finally, you will tailor your infomercial to the particular employer with whom you are interviewing. Certain parts of your background will be of greater interest to some

employers than others. Use what you have learned about the employer through your research to emphasize qualities the employer values.

You will probably not use all of your infomercial in every interview. But having prepared the infomercial will ensure that you are ready to answer all of those tough interview questions like “Tell me about yourself.” You can then just highlight a few of the job-related skills and supporting examples that make up your infomercial, choosing those that are most relevant to the employer.

Most importantly, be yourself. You want what you say to be honest and comfortable, and you do not want to sound artificial or canned. When you are selling yourself, you are simply bringing out your own best qualities in the interview. There is no need to try to be something you’re not.

Practicing Answers to Questions - There are many questions that you will hear over and over in interviews. They include “Why do you want to work here?” “Why did you go to law school?” “What area of practice are you interested in?” and “What are your career goals?” Think about how you will respond to these questions and rehearse your answers. Make your answers positive and honest. Also, be very familiar with your resume and writing sample. Be prepared to answer any question about anything you have done in the past.

If you have any tricky areas to deal with, such as low grades, be prepared to answer questions in a positive manner without being defensive. Any tough questions interviewers ask are designed to assure the employer that you can do the job and see how you react under pressure. The way in which you answer is much more important than what you say. When confronted with a question like “Why are your grades low?” give a short answer (I was sick, I had family responsibilities) and then end on a positive note. Follow up with a statement like “I have done particularly well in ___ class,” or discuss a job experience where you excelled. You can also say “I don’t think my GPA is representative of my abilities because_____.” The key is to stay positive. For some great ways to answer typical “tough” questions, see Chapter 7 of *Guerilla Tactics* (available in Career Services).

You should also prepare some questions you will ask the interviewer. Intelligent questions help you learn about the employer, create personal rapport with the interviewer, and show off what you know about the employer through your research. You can ask various categories of questions, such as: 1) personalized questions for the interviewer, such as “How did you choose this job?” or “What kind of cases are you working on?” 2) questions that show what you know about the employer, such as “I read that you represent XYZ Company. Are they a typical client?” and 3) questions about what your job experience would be like, such as “What would a typical day be like?” or “What kind of feedback will I get?” Avoid questions about salaries and benefits, questions with a negative tone, and any questions you could have answered yourself through simple research, such as “How many lawyers do you have?” And most critically, avoid having no questions at all! This conveys the impression that you aren’t really interested in the job.

If you do all of this preparation, you will be confident and poised for your interview, and give the best possible impression.

Types of Interviews

Interviews take on many different forms depending on the style and experience of the interviewer. Be prepared for anything. In addition to the traditional one-on-one interview, you may also have interviews with more than one person at the same time. The interviews may follow one of these formats:

Directed Interviews - Very structured. Interviewer may just go down a list of questions.

Non-directed Interviews - Less structured with few pre-determined questions. Approach will be more discussion-oriented and involve more give-and-take.

Subject Oriented Interviews - Centered on the applicant and their qualifications, as opposed to the position and its requirements. Make sure to let the employer know how you will perform the job.

Descriptive Interviews - Focuses on the organization and the position, and less on the applicant. Emphasize how your skills have prepared you to do the job.

Stress Interview - Interviewer may act argumentative, curt, or impatient. Remain calm and patient. The interview will usually move on after the interviewer has gauged how you react under stress.

Loosely Structured Interview - Interview lacks structure or direction. Interviewer may spend much of the time discussing your interests or other seemingly unrelated information. Go with the flow, but also look for opportunities to sell yourself.

What do you do after the Interview?

Always send a thank you letter to the interviewer after the interview. It can be either a typed letter or a handwritten note if you have professional looking correspondence cards and good handwriting. Thank them for their time, refer to something you discussed during the interview, and reiterate your interest in the job. Be sure to spell the interviewer's name correctly.

At the end of your interview, ask the employer when they plan on contacting students for second interviews or offers, and ask whether you can contact them if you haven't heard back by that time. A few days after that deadline, call if you haven't heard anything. Just be polite and say something like "I am calling to follow up on an interview I had two weeks ago with Jan Doe." Lawyers are very busy people, and often don't respond as quickly as you would wish. Do not take this personally!

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED BY EMPLOYERS

As you continue to interview, you'll notice that certain questions occur frequently. The following is a list of questions, or variations of questions you will in one form or another be asked. Drafting truthful and positive replies to each of these questions will help prepare you for your interviews.

- . Tell me something about yourself? How would you describe yourself?
- . What do you know about our firm? Why do you want to work for us?
- . Why should I hire you? What qualities do you have that would make you a successful lawyer?
- . What are your grades? Do you think your grades are a good indication of your achievement? What is your class rank?
- . Why did you decide to go to law school in general/this school in particular? How has your law school education prepared you to work here? To be a successful lawyer?
- . What are your long range and short range goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them? What do you see yourself doing in five years?
- . I see from your resume that you.....(fill in each item on your resume).
- . What are your weaknesses? What are your strengths?
- . How would you solve this problem? (This is your hypothetical question)
- . What have you learned from your experience at the legal clinic/prosecutors/ public defenders office, etc.?
- . In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our firm/agency/company?
- . What areas of practice are you interested in?
- . What was the most difficult decision you had to make and why was it so difficult?
- . What was your most stressful experience in law school? Describe your most rewarding law school experience. Tell me an anecdote about you and the law.
- . Discuss a problem you solved creatively. What kind of experience do you have in (research, writing, real estate law, etc.)?
- . What things do you do best?
- . Are you willing to travel or relocate?
- . Which is more important to you, the money or the type of job? What motivates you?
- . What two or three things are most important to you in a job?
- . What did you like best about your last job? What did you dislike most about it?
- . What law school class/professor did you like best/least?
- . Do you have any questions? What else do you think I should know about you?
- . What salary do you hope to receive?

QUESTIONS TO ASK INTERVIEWERS

It is not only appropriate but expected that a candidate will ask pertinent, well-thought -out questions of the interviewer. Questions should be genuine and appropriately tailored to the specific employer. The following sample questions are to serve as a stimulus in formulating questions.

- . What type of work would I be doing in the beginning?
- . What type of supervision and responsibilities are given to a summer clerk? A new associate?
- . What is the firm's management style and structure?
- . Is there a formal mentor/mentee relationship?
- . Can you tell me more about your system of attorney/summer clerk training and supervision?
- . Will I systematically or informally be rotated through different departments?
- . What criteria will be used to gauge my progress and performance?
- . What is the time period before I could expect to have a caseload and be going to court? What is the average caseload?
- . Ideally, what are you looking for in an associate?
- . What is the expectation of billable hours?
- . Do any one or two clients constitute the major percentage of your firm's commissions?
- . From my research, I see that you are involved in the (e.g., personal injury area). Could you tell me how you got interested in this area and a little bit about what your practice is like?
- . When will I know of your decision?
- . What made you join the firm/company/agency?
What do you like most/least about your job?
- . What kind of exposure to your practice area would a summer/permanent associate have?
- . How many new associates does the firm anticipate hiring? How many associates has the firm hired in recent years? How many of those associates are still with the firm?

STRATEGIES FOR ANSWERING THE DIRTY DOZEN QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself:

This is not an invitation to ramble on. Qualify the question first. Ask something like, “What area of my background would be most relevant to you?” That enables the interviewer to help you with the appropriate focus, so you can avoid discussing irrelevancies. Never answer this question without qualifying whether the interviewer wishes to hear about your business or personal life.

2. What is your greatest strength/weakness?

Strength: Isolate high points from your background and build in a couple of the key value profiles from different categories. You will want to demonstrate pride, reliability, and the ability to stick with a difficult task yet change course rapidly when required. You can rearrange the previous answer here. Your answer in part might be: “I believe in planning and proper management of my time. And yet I can still work under pressure.”

Weakness: This is a direct invitation to put your head in a noose. Decline the invitation. If there is a minor part of the job at hand where you lack knowledge but knowledge you will obviously pick up quickly use that. For instance: “I haven’t worked with this type of spreadsheet program before, but given my experience with six other types, I don’t think it should take me more than a couple of days to pick it up.” Here you remove the emphasis from weakness and put it onto a developmental problem that is easily overcome. Be careful, however: This very effective ploy must be used with discretion.

Another good option is to give a generalized answer that takes advantage of value keys. Design the answer so that your weakness is ultimately a positive characteristic. For example: “I enjoy my work and always give each project my best shot. So when sometimes I don’t feel others are pulling their weight, I find it a little frustrating. I am aware of that weakness, and in those situations I try to overcome it with a positive attitude that I hope will catch on.”

Also consider the technique of putting it in the past. Here you take a weakness from way back when, and show how you overcome it. It answers the question but ends on a positive note. An illustration: “When I first got into this field, I always had problems with my paperwork C you know, leaving an adequate paper trail. And to be honest, I let it slip once or twice. My manager sat me down and explained the potential troubles such behavior could cause. I really took it to heart, and I think you will find my paper trails some of the best around today. You only have to tell me something once.” With that kind of answer, you also get the added bonus of showing that you accept and act on criticism.

Congratulations! You have just turned a bear of questions into an opportunity to sell yourself with your professional profile. In deciding on the particular answer you will give, remember that the interviewer isn’t really concerned about your general weaknesses - none of us are saints outside of

the interview room. He or she is simply concerned about any red flags that might signal your inability to perform the job or be manageable in the performance of your duties.

3. Why did you leave your old job?

This is a common trick question. You should have an acceptable reason for leaving every job you have held, but if you don't, pick one of the six acceptable reasons from the employment industry formula, the acronym for which is CLAMPS:

Challenge: You weren't able to grow professionally in that position.

Location: The commute was unreasonably long.

Advancement: There was nowhere for you to go. You had the talent, but there were too many people ahead of you.

Money: You were underpaid for your skills and contributions. (Be careful how you answer this.)

Pride or prestige: You wanted to be with a better company.

Security: The company was not stable. For example, "My last company was a family-owned affair. I had gone as far as I was able. It just seemed time for me to join a more prestigious company and accept greater challenges."

4. Why do you want to work for us?

To answer this question, you must have researched the company and built a dossier. Reply with the company's attributes as you see them. (You must have done your homework on the company.) Cap your answer with reference to your belief that the company can provide you with a stable and happy work environment C the company has that reputation C and that such an atmosphere would encourage your best work.

"I'm not looking for just another paycheck. I enjoy my work and am proud of my profession. Your company produces a superior product/provides a superior service. I share the values that make this possible, which should enable me to fit in and complement the team."

5. Why did you like your old job?

Always answer positively. Keep your real feelings to yourself, if they're negative. There is a strong belief among the management fraternity that people who complain about past employers will cause

problems for new ones. Your answer is, “Very good” or, “Excellent.” Then smile and wait for the next question.

6. What kind of salary are you looking for?

You are being asked to name a figure here. Give the wrong answer and you can get eliminated. It is always a temptation to ask for the moon, knowing you can come down later, but there are better approaches. It is wise to confirm your understanding of the job and its importance before you start throwing numbers around, because you will have to live with the consequences. You need the best possible offer without pricing yourself out of the market, so it’s time to dance with one of the following responses:

“Well, let’s see if I understand the responsibilities fully...” You then proceed to itemize exactly what you will be doing on a daily basis and the parameters of your responsibilities and authority. Once that is done you will seek agreement: “Is this the job as I see it or have I missed anything?”

Remember to describe the job in its most flattering and challenging light, paying special attention to the way you see it fitting into the overall picture and contributing to the success of the department, workgroup, and company. You can then finish your response with a question of your own: “What figure did you have in mind for someone with my track record?” or, “What range has been authorized for this position?” Your answer will include, in part, something along the lines of, “I believe my skills and experience will warrant a starting salary between _____ and _____.”

You could also ask, “What would be the salary range for someone with my experience and skills?” or, “I naturally want to make as much as my background and skills will allow. If I am right for the job, and I think my credentials demonstrate that I am, I am sure you will make me a fair offer. What figure do you have in mind?”

Another good response is: “I would expect a salary appropriate to my experience and ability to do the job successfully. What range do you have in mind?”

Such questions will get the interviewer to reveal the salary range, and concentrate his or her attention on the challenges of the job and your ability to accept and work with those challenges.

When you are given a range, you can adjust your money requirements appropriately, latching on to the upper part of the range. For example, if the range is \$30,000-\$35,000 a year, you can come back with a range of \$34,000-\$37,000.

Consequently, your response will include: “That certainly means we have something to talk about. While your range is \$30,000 to \$35,000, I am looking for a minimum of \$34,000 with an ideal of \$37,000. Tell me, what flexibility is there at the top of your salary range?” You need to know how to put yourself in the strongest negotiating position, and this is the perfect time and opportunity to gain the information and the advantage.

All this fencing is aimed at getting the interviewer to show his or her hand first. Ask for too much, and it's "Oh, dear, I'm afraid you're overqualified", to which you can reply, "So overpay me." (Actually, that works when you can carry it off with an ingratiating smile.) If your request is too low, you are likely to be ruled out as lacking the appropriate experience.

When you have tried to get the interviewer to name a range and failed, you must come up with specific dollars and cents. At this point, the key is to understand that all jobs have salary ranges attached to them. Consequently, the last thing you will ever do is come back with a specific dollar figure that traps you. Instead, you will mention your own range, which will not be from your minimum to your maximum but rather from your midpoint to your maximum. Remember, you can always negotiate down, but can rarely negotiate up.

7. What do you know about our company/firm?

You can't answer this question unless you have enough interest to research the company/firm thoroughly. If you don't have the interest, you should expect someone who has made the effort to get the job.

8. Why should we hire you?

Your answer will be short and to the point. It will highlight areas from your background that relate to current needs and problems. Recap your interviewer's description of the job, meeting it point by point with your skills. Finish your answer with: "I have the qualifications you need (itemize them), I'm a team player, I take direction, and I have the desire to be a complete success."

9. What did you think of your old boss?

Be short, sweet, and then don't say anything else. People who complain about their employers are recognized to be the same people who cause the most disruption in a department. This question means the interviewer has no desire to hire trouble. "I liked her as a person, respected her professionally, and appreciated her guidance."

10. What are your long-range goals?

The safest answer contains a desire to be regarded as a true professional and team player. As far as promotion, that depends on finding a manager with whom you can grow. Of course, you will ask what opportunities exist within the company before being any more specific: "From my research and what you have told me about the growth here, it seems operations is where the heavy emphasis is going to be. It seems that's where you need the effort and where I could contribute toward the company's goal." Or, "I have always felt that first-hand knowledge and experience open up opportunities that one might never have considered, so while at this point in time I plan to be a part of (e.g.) operations, it is reasonable to expect that other exciting opportunities will crop up in the meantime."

11. Do you like to work overtime?

You'll want to stress that you pride yourself on your ability to manage your time and that you believe one should usually be able to get the job done within an 8 our day schedule. However, you will do whatever it takes to meet a deadline.

12. You seem over-qualified (or under-qualified).

Ask what they mean in order to better understand the objection. Then state your reasons for wanting to work there (with enthusiasm) and show how you will be a valuable employee. For under-qualified, stress the personality characteristics you have that will make you a valuable employee and meet the job requirements point-by-point with the qualifications you do have.

Taken from *Knock 'Em Dead*.

STICKY ISSUES

You need to be prepared to answer what we call the “sticky issues” questions. These types of questions generally fall into several areas: academic record, current unemployment, time gaps, lack of relevant experience, discrimination, salary, and long-term goals. The following questions are a sample of what you might expect to be asked in an interview:

What kind of salary do you expect?

Discrimination question (female): Are you planning to continue working after you have your family? What does your husband do?

What do you do when you have an offer from your second choice position and you need to buy time until you hear from your first choice position?

What is your ability to bring clients into the firm?

What are your geographic ties to the area?

Why are you still in the job market?

Why are you interested in working for our firm/agency/organization?

Why haven't you done better in law school? (considering that you had such a strong undergraduate record--if that's applicable)

What kind of time are you prepared to put into this job?

Did you get an offer from the firm/agency/organization you worked for last summer?
If not, why not?

What are your long-term career objectives?

Why did you choose law as a career?

What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful in law?

How has your law school experience prepared you for the actual practice of law?

What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?

Why did you select Gonzaga University School of Law?

In which part-time and/or summer jobs have you been most interested? Why?

What two or three things are most important to you in a job?

What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT/MATURITY

Tell me about yourself.

What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?

How do you think a friend or professor would describe you?

How do you determine or evaluate success?

What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?

How do you work under pressure?

What motivates you to put forth your greatest efforts?

JOB MATCH

In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our firm/agency/company?

Why did you decide to seek a position with our firm/agency/company?

What criteria are you using to evaluate the firm/agency/company for which you hope to work?

Describe the ideal job.

JOB MOTIVATION/SATISFACTION

What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives? How have you prepared yourself to achieve them?

What are the most important rewards you expect from your business career?

Why did you choose law as a career?

What qualifications do you think you have that will make you successful in law?

Describe the ideal relationship that should exist between an associate and a partner (or supervisor/supervisee).

Why are you still in the job market?

How do you feel about overtime?

How would you feel about having the responsibility for bringing in clients?

What are your salary expectations?

EXPERIENCE

What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?

Give me an example of a project or area for which you had primary responsibility.

In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?

Which part-time and/or summer jobs have you enjoyed the most?

What have you gained from moot court/clinical/journal/writing experience?

Tell me about your volunteer experience.

How did you obtain each of your jobs?

What two or three things are most important to you in a job?

EDUCATION

Describe your most rewarding law school experience.

What do you think of Gonzaga University?

What courses did you like best/least? Why?

What courses have you taken this year?

Tell me about your undergraduate experiences.

How has your law school experience prepared you for the actual practice of law?

What do you do in your free time?

Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?

Interview Summary

Interviewers: Name _____
Name _____
Title _____
Organization _____
Division/Department _____
Address _____

Groundwork: Type of organization, size, etc. _____

Interviewer background, personal interests, etc. _____

Appointment: Date _____ Time _____ Length _____
Location _____ Type: Networking/, Screening/, In-Office/ Call-
back/ Other
How I got this interview _____

S/he said (advice, needs, problems, plans, special interests, criticisms, etc.) _____

Reactions to what I said _____

Anything else I should remember about this interview _____

Critique: What did I do well? _____

What did I leave out and/or confused? _____

What should I do differently next time? _____

Thank you letter sent (date): _____

Next Step: _____

JOB SEARCH DEVELOPMENT EXERCISES

The following are exercises which have been designed to assist you in defining and focusing your job search.

SKILLS IDENTIFICATION

It is difficult for an individual to identify his or her skills. We are conditioned to focus on our weaknesses rather than our strengths. For law students and new law graduates, this is particularly true. You are keenly aware of each grade that could have been higher and each response in class that could have been sharper. Consequently, you overlook the many fine abilities that you bring to the practice of law.

Purpose

The main purpose of this exercise is to help you identify the many strengths you bring to the practice of law. During an interview, it is important to share with a prospective employer what you can contribute to his or her practice. It is also critical to validate the skills you say you have by indicating how you have successfully used these skills.

Directions:

The following is a list of 24 skills that you may be able to bring to the practice of law. Circle five skills that you feel are your strongest assets. Now underline 5 skills that you believe to be your secondary abilities. In the space beside each, briefly write at least two or three experiences where you have used these skills. Begin with your strongest assets.

ABILITY	WHERE I HAVE USED THE ABILITY (Include personal, educational, volunteer or work experience)
1. Writing	
2. Special Training (expertise gained through courses)	
3. Oral Advocacy	
4. Flexibility	
5. Interpersonal	
6. Negotiating	
7. Special Skills (i.e. languages or computers)	
8. Contacts (ability to attract clients)	
9. Academic Success	

ABILITY	WHERE I HAVE USED THE ABILITY (Include personal, educational, volunteer, or work experience)
10. Proven record of success in work	
11. Investigating	
12. Previous experience in substantive area	
13. Community involvement	
14. Ability to work under pressure	
15. Learn new things easily	
16. Course work in substantive area	

17. Organizational	
18. Efficient	
ABILITY	WHERE I HAVE USED THE ABILITY (Include personal, educational, volunteer or work experience)
19. Complete assignments quickly	
20. Apply creative solutions	
21. Tenacious/ plugger	
22. Problem solving	
23. Hard working	
24. High energy	

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

All of us have certain criteria that are basic to our satisfaction in the workplace. For some of us it is very important to work with a congenial group of colleagues, while for others the top item of the list of priorities would be future career opportunities. We must all make some choices when we select a position. This exercise is designed to help you identify your uppermost priorities so as to insure that the position you accept includes your most important requirements.

Directions:

The following is a list of 21 possible job priorities. Review the list several times.

- a. If you cannot have all of the following, which 6 items are you willing to give up? Place “xxx” before them.
- b. Now select another 5 items you are willing to give up. Place “xxx” before them.
- c. Eliminate another 5 items. Put “x” before those.
- d. You have 5 items left. Choose the least important criteria of these remaining 5 items and place a “5” before it. Now choose the next least important criteria and place a “4” before it. Repeat until you find your number “1” criteria.

* This exercise is more appropriate for attorney positions rather than internships.

X	PRIORITY	DEFINITION
	1. Potential	Vehicle for career advancement.
	2. Challenge	Assignments in a substantive legal area that offer a continual legal challenge.
	3. Impact	Opportunity to make a substantial contribution to and impact on the practice.
	4. Identity	An environment that allows me to become a known entity and not one of many.
	5. Cooperation	Work with cooperative, friendly people.
	6. Pressure	To have a limited amount of pressure relative to both time worked & projects assigned & completed.
	7. Prestige	An employer who is considered to be prominent by peers and family.
	8. Autonomy	To work with little or no supervision or guidelines unless requested.
	9. Professional Growth	Opportunity to learn from colleagues, supervisors, and/or assignments.

	10. Geography	In the geographic area of my choice.
	11. Partnership/Management	A position that leads to either law firm partnership or corporate general counsel.
	12. Money	Earning a substantial amount of money is very important to me.
	13. Personal Time	Work hours that leave sufficient time for family, friends, and/or outside interests.
	14. Security	Being in a position that will be stable for approximately five years.
	15. Contribute to society	Work for social change, the public benefit, or general "good works."
	16. Maximum utilization of legal education & skills	Opportunity to use substantial legal knowledge and/or legal education & experiential base.
	17. Specialty	Ability to specialize in my chosen field of law.
	18. Client Contact	Early & frequent direct involvement with clients.
	19. Total Involvement	Working on complete projects rather than varied individual assignments.
	20. Training	Opportunity to receive substantial training.
	21. Communication	Consistent flow of information relative to my status in the practice.