

Six Interview Tips for First-Year Law Students

January 20, 2022

by Megan J. Houdeshel, Kirsten Schubert, and Lawrence Ward

As the new year kicks off in full force with summer associate applications and interviews, we decided to ask Dorsey recruiting committee members Megan Houdeshel, Kirsten Schubert and Larry Ward to share interviewing tips they have for first-year law students. We hope these refreshers help as you work towards securing a summer associate opportunity.

Related People

- Megan J. Houdeshel
- Kirsten Schubert
- Lawrence Ward

1. Do your research. Although much of the work that law firms do is similar to their competitors, not all firms are alike. Before your interview, do your research on the firm to understand its practices, clients, and geographic footprint. It's not possible to know a firm based solely on its website, but do try to get a sense of why the firm seems to be a good fit for you to start your career.

2. Network to learn. Don't be afraid to reach out to 2Ls and 3Ls at your school that summered at the firm you are interested in or alumni from your school that work there to get an even better understanding of the firm and its culture.

3. Know your interviewer. Before your interview, take a look at the bio of your interviewers. Think of questions about their practice or about their work life balance, etc. Attorneys like to talk, so let them tell you about their practice or interests, which will also give you an idea of the kind of people you might be working with.

4. Think through your interests. One question that invariably comes up in an interview is what kind of law you are interested in practicing. You don't have to know this answer exactly, but give some thought to a meaningful response. Being open to different areas is a fine position, and having thought about this ahead of time will show you are prepared.

5. Don't let Zoom get in the way. Make the best of your remote interviews. Set yourself up in a quiet room, put your computer on a hard surface so it's stable, and angle the camera to capture your face. Your school may use an interview platform you haven't seen before, so take some time to familiarize yourself with the technology, and plan to log in early in case the unexpected happens. Then just be yourself!

6. Stay positive. Interviewing is hard stuff, and this experience may be totally new for you. Try not to get overwhelmed by the process, and don't get caught up worrying about what your friends are doing. Do your homework, focus on your own path, and don't doubt yourself. You'll get there.