

INTERVIEW SKILLS



An employer reviewed your application materials and offered you an interview. Congratulations! Now you must impress them in person – here’s how.

Be Prepared.

Interviews seem intimidating because you don’t know what to expect. When you prepare, you feel more in control, confident and – better still – the employer can tell you put in work.

- **Know your application materials front and back.** It seems obvious, but you must review your resume, cover letter, and writing sample so the contents are fresh in your mind.
- **Research the employer and the individual interviewers.** Check the firm’s website, the NALP Legal Directory, Robert Half Legal, LinkedIn, or Google.
 - What are their practice areas? What do they say about themselves on their website? What is their background?
- **Score the easy points.** You WILL be asked these questions, so prepare strong answers.
 - “Tell me about yourself.”
 - “What questions do you have for us?” Usually 3-5 is a good amount to prepare, but employers sometimes interview simply by asking, “What do you want to know?”
 - “Do you have anything else for me?” / “Looks like our time is up.” Make a last pitch: why should they hire you? what about you do you want to leave them with?

Control Your Answers.

Behavioral interview questions (“Tell me about a time you...”) can be tricky. Include important details and avoid rambling by utilizing the STAR method to frame your answers.

- **Situation:** Orient the interviewer and give relevant details.
- **Task:** Share what your responsibility was.
- **Action:** Tell the interviewer what steps you took.
- **Result:** Share the outcome of your actions.

Anticipate Hard Questions.

Practice your responses to questions that might trip you up.

- **Grades.** “Talk to me about your performance in law school.” “What is your GPA?”
- **Details about the employer.** “Tell me about one of our recent cases you found interesting.” “Why are you interested in our firm instead of other firms that do similar work?”
- **Client hypotheticals.** “What would you do if a client...?” “A case comes across your desk with this fact pattern...”
- **Redirection.** If all else fails and you can’t think of an answer: “Nothing is coming to mind right now, but one thing I do want to share that impressed me about your office is / that shows my leadership skills is / etc.”

The CSO conducts mock interviews and offers additional interview resources. Come see us!