



**MY 10 BEST
INTERVIEW TIPS
for 1Ls**

#1

**PREP YOUR
STORIES**

Approach interviews on YOUR terms by planning what you want to discuss in advance.

Identify 3–4 stories to tell that *demonstrate* your skills, traits, experiences, expertise, temperament, etc.

Stories are what interviewers remember.

Tales from college, sports, work
(even waitressing or
lifeguarding) can make for
fantastic interview stories!

#2

**RESEARCH
COMMON
QUESTIONS**

The more questions you've seen in advance, the better prepared you will be. Let's review a few:

a/ "Tell me about yourself."

Don't give a generic answer:

✗ "I'm a law student interested in gaining practical experience."

✗ "I want to use the law to make a difference."

✓ “When I worked as a paralegal at a big firm, the lawyers in Labor & Employment always seemed happiest. I asked a few why, and they explained the types of cases they worked on—they were all about PEOPLE and how they interact at work. I found that really appealing, and everything I’ve learned since then has confirmed that I, too wanted to work on L&E cases.”

b/ “What are your weaknesses?”

Don't divulge a trait that will disqualify you.

✗ I have trouble meeting deadlines.

Don't downplay the significance of a weakness by trying to cast it as the flip side of a good trait.

✗ “I've lacked attention to detail my whole life; I'm fine with it at this point; my forté is big-picture thinking.”

DO:

- Pick an actual, specific weakness;
- describe the minor consequences it has had;
- stress how you're actively working to improve (or have already improved) it.

#3

**RESEARCH,
RESEARCH,
RESEARCH**

Know everything about the firm and its key people.

Read up on the firm's work, recent cases, clients, and culture—then dig into your specific interviewers.

Check associate website bios and LinkedIn profiles, as many list what people actually do in that office; that can show you what opportunities junior lawyers really get.

#4

**PREPARE TO ASK
QUESTIONS
THEY WILL
ENJOY
ANSWERING**

Get them talking about themselves & be an ACTIVE listener.

Your goal isn't just to "impress"; it's to make them think you'd be enjoyable to work with at 11:30 p.m. on a Wednesday.

Ask about their practice, path, and favorite parts of the job.

If they enjoy the conversation, they'll remember you fondly.

Simply being "likeable" can go an awfully long way—

#5

**DO SOME
DIGGING ON
FIRM CULTURE**

Is This Somewhere You'd Actually Want to Work?

Dig into attrition, pandemic and recession behavior, non-billable credit, and how associates describe the culture.

Use tools like Chambers Associate, Fishbowl, Firm Prospects, and Summer Associate Hub to reality-check the website.

#6

**LOOK & SOUND
PROFESSIONAL**

Curb any filler words like “like”
and “you know”;

don't twirl your hair in your
finger;

keep eye contact while
speaking and listening;

don't fidget, etc.

**Be someone they'd trust
talking to clients.**

#7

**BE YOURSELF
(REALLY)**

You're Not Too "Inexperienced"

Interviewers don't need you to have done everything; they need to see how you think, communicate, and learn.

Don't downplay "small" roles—frame them clearly and confidently as evidence of leadership, grit, or initiative.

#8

**DON'T
DOWNPLAY**

Remember my disastrous
associate lunch & don't
make the same mistake!

#9

**DON'T BE
WISHY-WASHY**

In This Interview, This Is the Job

You may be open to everything, but in each interview, talk as if this job is the one you most want.

Avoid lukewarm “I like litigation and transactional and maybe government” answers that sound like you’re afraid to commit.

#10

**CLOSE STRONG
& FOLLOW UP**

Last Impressions Matter Too

End with positive energy and a forward-looking question like: "If at the end of the summer you think I've been successful, what will I have accomplished?"

Send a short, specific thank-you email within 24 hours while the conversation is still fresh in both your minds.



Amanda



