MAKING YOUR CASE: ESSENTIALS OF INTERVIEWING FOR LEGAL POSITIONS
WHAT IS AN INTERVIEWER ACTUALLY TRYING TO LEARN ABOUT YOU?

- Can you do the work?
- Do they want you around?
- Are you genuinely enthusiastic about that specific employer?
SO...WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

 How has where you are from and where/how you grew up shaped your interests and goals?

 What deliberate steps have you taken to arrive at Duke Law?

 What is the thread tying your decisions together?
DO NOT TRY TO BE PERFECT!

Personal yet professional!

Perfect = Forgettable
THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Step 1: Screening Interviews

Step 2: Callbacks

- A series of consecutive 30-minute interviews, often including a meal with junior attorneys
- Each segment must be its own “complete sell”
Every line is fair game

- Add descriptions to any activities or experience that are not self-explanatory

- Use the Additional Information section wisely
KNOW THE EMPLOYER

- Interviewer Bio(s)
- Client Base and Relevant Sectors
- Major Practice Groups (Chambers)
- News Sources/Press Room
- LinkedIn Profiles and Employer updates
WHEN YOU WALK INTO THE ROOM...
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. How do you like Duke so far?
3. Why are you interested in working in .... (e.g., Kansas City)?
4. Why did you decide to go to law school?
5. Tell me something about yourself that is not on your resume.
6. Why do you want to work with us?
7. Where else are you interviewing?
Tell me about a time when....”

What is your greatest weakness?

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?

Teach me something.
OWN YOUR “SOFT SPOTS”

- A successful interview requires that you accept reality rather than ignore it.

- Spend time preparing *succinct responses* to all anticipated employer concerns.

- Avoid making excuses at all cost!

- Consider addressing the “elephant in the room”
No “yes” or “no” answers
No negative comments
No excuses
No “quality of life” questions
No salary questions
No questions about split summers
Pro bono: consider your audience
1. What do you enjoy most about working with this organization?
2. What are you working on right now and how could someone in my position help you?
3. How do you see the ______ practice (e.g., structured finance) evolving in the next few years?
4. What news sources do you read regularly to keep up on market trends?
Thank the interviewer and reaffirm your interest in working with them.

Highlight any strength you noted and indicate that you hope to put it to use for them.

Ask if they need anything else from you.

- Resume
- List of 3 references
- Transcript
- Writing sample (5-10 pages)

Ask when you might expect to hear back from them.
DURING A CALLBACK INTERVIEW

- You are “on” as soon as you enter the employer’s office space.
- Treat everyone with respect and courtesy.
- Be observant throughout the day.
  - What does the office space look like? Can you see yourself there?
  - Are office doors open? Are people talking in the hallways?
**AFTER THE INTERVIEW**

- Record your immediate impressions of your employer.
- Note any memorable conversations with specific interviewers.
THANK YOU NOTES

- After screening interviews, send a thank you to your interviewer(s) and reference specific topics of conversation, if possible.
- After callbacks, send one thank you note to the recruiting coordinator.
- Ask him/her to pass on your appreciation to everyone with whom you met that day.
- Proofread!!
Mock interviews are key to your interviewing success.

Opportunities for mock interviews:

- Alumni mock interview program in January/February
- On-site alumni mock interview program next summer
- Contact your Career Counselor for additional mock interviews at any time.