Tough Questions to Expect in an Interview

- Tell me about yourself
- What are your weaknesses?
- What are your strengths?
- Why should we hire you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 to 10 years?
- Are your grades indicative of your ability?
- Why aren’t your grades better?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why did you go to law school?
- Why did you choose UD?
- Why did you go to school in Dayton, OH if you wanted to work in “X” city?
- Why is there a gap in your employment history?
- Why do you want to work in this city?
- Why didn’t you get an offer from your last employer?
- What’s the biggest mistake you ever made?
- What kind of salary are you looking for?
- How do you like law school?
Sample Questions You Might Ask in an Interview

- You seem to like your job. How did you choose it?
- What kinds of cases are you working on?
- Did you clerk here?
- How is your job different than what you expected it to be?
- What do you like about your job?
- What’s the best thing that’s happened to you while working here?
- If you could change anything about your job, would you? If so, what would it be? (Be careful- you don’t want this to come across as a negative question.)
- What’s the most interesting case you’ve worked on?
- What have you learned as a result of working here?
- How long were you at the firm before you had significant client contact?
- Did you start off in your current practice area? If not, why did you switch?
- What do you find most challenging about being a lawyer?
- Who’ll assign my work? (If that’s not obvious from the firm’s literature.)
- Will I get feedback on my work?
- What kinds of cases will I work on?
- How does someone become a star-what makes them stand out?
- Do you work mostly on your own or do you work on projects with other attorneys at the firm?
- Do you have a formal mentor or training program for law clerks and new associates?
Questions You Should Avoid Asking in an Interview

A. Any Questions That Have a “What’s-In-It-For-Me?” Flavor
   - How many hours do I need to work?
   - What’s expected of me?
   - What billable hours do you expect from new associates?
   - What does the benefits package entail?
   - How much paid time off will I get?
   - What’s the salary?
   - What kind of support staff will I have?
   - How many people besides me are you hiring (or interviewing)?
   - How long is the partnership track here?

B. Questions With a Negative Tone
   - I’ve heard negative rumors about your firm. How’s business really going?
   - What don’t you like about the firm?
   - How does your firm compare to “X” firm?

C. “Imponderables”
   - What’s the culture of the firm?

D. Any Question You Could Have Answered Yourself Through Simple Research
   - How many attorneys do you have?
   - What are your practice areas?
   - In which cities do you have offices?

E. Any Question Showing You’re Clueless About What You’ve Already Covered in the Interview
F. The Worst Possible Mistake: Not Having Any Questions at All!

“Tell Me About Yourself” Model

(1-2 Minutes)

1. Your Objective:

   ("I’m interested in practicing in the area of (practice area)" or “I’m hoping to find an associate/summer clerkship position in (geographic area).”)

2. Three Major Transferable Skills:

   ("I’ve been very effective in the areas of (1), (2), (3)"

   ✦ Organization
   ✦ Leadership
   ✦ Problem solving
   ✦ Quick learning
   ✦ Taking initiative

   ✦ Oral written communication
3. Relevant Experience:

(“I’ve developed these skills in a variety of positions, including…”)

4. Examples to Prove Skills:

(“In my second year of law school I competed in a National Mott Court competition where I received awards for best brief and best oralist.”)

(“In my last position as a law clerk at Dinsmore & Shohl, I consistently received highest marks on my evaluations for taking initiative. One specific example of that would be the data base I developed for organizing exhibits for a multi-million dollar trial.”)

5. Summation:

Why my experience, education effectiveness and attitude make me a good candidate for a clerkship/associate position.