



MSU Law Career Services Office

Sample Interview Questions

Demonstrate enthusiasm and strong communication skills by preparing to answer commonly-asked questions. Match your responses to the position and the employer.

ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY AND FIT. FOR EXAMPLE:

- Tell us about yourself.
 - Provide a career-focused bio: one-minute prepared pitch; possible subjects include:
 - Geographic connections
 - Undergraduate or other degrees: major & why
 - Why law school/law?
 - Something interesting or memorable about yourself
 - Explain things not evident (e.g., resume gaps, locations, transitions)
- Why should we hire you? / What skills do you have that add value to the team?
 - Substantive legal skills like research, writing, problem-solving, advocacy
 - Competencies like work ethic, detail-oriented, communication, project management
 - Concrete examples of how these skills were developed
 - Communicate how your skillset would fit the employer's needs
- Why are you interested in our firm, agency, business, etc.?
- What type of law are you interested in?
- What has been your greatest achievement/strength? Greatest failure/weakness?
- Tell me about your goals (short-term and long-term).
- What do you think it takes to be successful in this field?
- Why did you choose to go to law school? Why did you choose MSU Law?
- If you could be anything other than a lawyer, what would it be and why?
- If you suspected a fellow employee of unethical practices, what would you do?

BE PREPARED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT EVERYTHING ON YOUR RESUME:

- Geographic preferences, ties to/interest in the area, etc.
- Legal issues you researched in previous positions
- Unique experiences or interests listed on your resume
 - If you're not involved in any extracurricular activities, be prepared to answer questions about why not
- Key responsibilities and accomplishments in previous positions
 - Include specific examples that demonstrate transferable legal skills (research, writing, oral advocacy), responsibility, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, etc.

BE PREPARED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING MENTIONED IN YOUR APPLICATION:

- Cover letter: anything not on your resume
- References or recommenders: what you think they would say, or did say, about you
- Writing sample: approach to research, the issue, your analysis, and the outcome
- Transcript: GPA, ranking, favorite and least favorite classes

SHOWCASE YOUR PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS WHEN RESPONDING TO SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS BY USING THE S.T.A.R. METHOD:

- **Situation:** Provide context by explaining the setting; where were you working, if you were working alone or with others, what was the timeframe, etc.
- **Task:** Explain the task or problem that needed to be solved.
- **Action:** Explain what you did to complete the task or solve the problem.
- **Result:** Explain what lessons were learned. This is the most important piece of your answer to any behavioral question. Any negative experience could be a positive one if you were able to learn from it.

USE THE S.T.A.R. METHOD WHEN ASKED TO TELL ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU...

- Balanced multiple tasks.
- Managed a project.
- Solved a conflict with a person.
- Worked on a team.
- Failed at something.
- Handled a stressful situation at work.

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK THE INTERVIEWER(S):

- What are you looking for in a (Summer Associate, Law Clerk, Associate Attorney, etc.)?
- What is the interview process from this point forward? / What are the next steps?
- What kinds of tasks are assigned to (Summer Associates, Law Clerks, Associate Attorneys, etc.)?
- Can you describe a typical day for a (Summer Associate, Law Clerk, Associate, etc.)?
- Based on your research, ask something that shows your knowledge of the employer, its clients, specialties, the person interviewing you, etc.
- Don't ask questions about salary, benefits, partnership track, etc., in the first interview, unless the employer raises the issue.