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Voices of Experience

Here are some thoughts on student recruitment from some of our lawyers with experience in this process:



Carrie Baker – University of Calgary, 2017 Call

One of the best things you can do early in law school is network, and keep an open mind. If you are not sure of what area of law you want to practise, that is normal. Meet lawyers from different practice areas, ask questions and learn about available career paths. The recruitment process is an opportunity to learn about prospective employers and determine whether they align with your goals, interests and values. You will spend a lot of time with your colleagues, so look for a place where you feel supported, comfortable and excited to learn and grow. There are many great opportunities, and finding a place where you enjoy the people, work and culture makes all the difference. When you find a firm or other employer which interests you, communicate that clearly. Employers want to know you are enthusiastic about joining their team.



Andrew Burt – University of Calgary, 2015 Call

As much as you can, have fun with the process. If you are relaxed, your natural personality will shine through and you will be more engaging. Be prepared to share interesting and unique stories about yourself and your experiences. Whether it is a sport you play, something you have accomplished, or a trip you have taken, these stories help you connect with people on a different level.



Jessica Cameron – University of Alberta, 2013 Call

When going through the interview process, remember that authenticity matters as much as credentials. Be yourself - don't try to fit into a mold you think firms expect, because there is typically no "one size fits all". Instead, focus on highlighting your unique background and finding a firm where your values, interests, and personality align with the culture. Interviews are a two-way street: while firms assess your potential, you're also evaluating whether this is a place where you can thrive long-term. Ask thoughtful questions to gauge whether the environment feels right for you. Confidence and genuine curiosity will help you stand out through this process.

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Perry Feldman – University of Calgary, 2012 Call

More than any other factor, mentorship can make the biggest difference as you learn and grow as a young lawyer – we all need some guidance every now and then. So while there might be a lot of great firms with a lot of great lawyers, if you want a great job then you will need to find a mentor. This might be one or two people that you meet through the recruitment process that are going to invest in you as a teammate. If you find those people, and invest in them as well, your career will be off to a great start.



Sarah Gingrich – Dalhousie University, 2005 Call

You never know what aspect of your resumé your interviewer will focus on so be yourself - in your application and during the interview. Go through your resumé and cover letter and determine how your experiences relate to the practice of law. Be prepared to tell a “story” about those experiences to let your interviewers know that you have considered such. Many firms interview conversationally. Don’t be thrown off by this.



Claire Himsi – University of Calgary, 2016 Call

Fit is often touted as the defining quality of a successful candidate and while this term might seem infuriatingly vague right now, it is important to do some introspection and decide what kind of environment you want to work in. Fit is as much about you as it is about the firms doing the hiring. Think about what you value – as a person and as an up-and-coming-lawyer – and find a firm that fits that criteria, whether it’s the desire to have great mentors, to be involved in big deals with big clients, or to work with people who you consider your friends.

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Matthew Wilkins – University of British Columbia, 2018 Call

If you want to work at a particular firm make it clear that you're interested. Firms want to hire candidates with strong skills, but they also want to offer positions to people that are enthusiastic about working with them in the future. If members of a firm know that you are serious about joining them, you will be more likely to be considered. Also, pay attention to the interests section of your resumé. Although your grades and other qualifications are important, this is an opportunity to give interviewers an idea of who you are before you meet. A strong interests section piques the curiosity of your interviewers and can help build a rapport with members of the firm.