

CALLBACK INTERVIEWS

Preparation

- I. The Invitation: phone, e-mail, letter. Respond immediately, even if you want to wait a few weeks to schedule the interview. If receive invitation to visit firm during screening interview, respond enthusiastically, although you need not commit to the callback then.

Can they find you? Make sure your contact info on your resume is correct AND professional. Listen to the message on your answering machine. Remove any extraneous info from your e-mail signature (including all cute, meaningful, inspiring, or otherwise-inspired aphorisms).

You must have an answering machine or voice mail. You must read and respond to your e-mail.

- II. Scheduling your interview. Call the recruiting coordinator, or whomever else the person issuing the invitation named. If you're trying to coordinate a number of callbacks in the same city, ask the recruiting coordinator for help. She/he works with the recruiters at all other firms in the city, and they can do easily what could be impossible for you to do.
- III. Get your itinerary. A day or two before the interviews, call or e-mail the recruiting coordinator to ask for a list of attorneys you'll be seeing. It helps you to be able to do some research about them before the day of the interviews. Don't be surprised if the list isn't available, or if the itinerary changes when you reach the firm. These are busy people.
- IV. Be prepared. Do research about the firm, the departments you're interested in, and the attorneys you'll be seeing. Use what you know to ask good questions of the interviewers, e.g., "I know that you recently successfully represented Waste Management, Inc. in its acquisition of Bottom Feeder, Inc. In what other matters do you represent Waste Management?".
- V. Travel expenses. Firms pay travel expenses. As the recruiter if you should make your own travel arrangements—that's a signal to her that you're asking about expense reimbursement. She'll probably tell you the firm will make your hotel reservations, and the firm will be billed directly by the hotel. Usually you'll be responsible for making your own airline reservations, although not always. Be scrupulous in your documentation of expenses, ask the recruiting coordinator for the reimbursement form that the firm would like you to use (we have copies of the NALP form if the firm uses that), and above all, do not waste the firm's money. Don't bill the firm for alcohol, movies, or new socks, even if you really needed them for your interview.

- VI. Read the newspaper. The evening before or the morning of the interview, be sure to read the local newspaper. Being well-informed is always good, and it could be vital if something big has happened in the world/country/city/firm.

The Day of the Interview

- I. Report to the reception area – AT LEAST 15 minutes EARLY! Ask for the recruiting coordinator, unless you've been instructed to ask for someone else. If you need to freshen up, ask for the men's/ladies room.
- II. If you know you're going to be late (because of auto accidents, electrical outages, earthquakes), call and tell the recruiting coordinator so he/she can re-arrange your schedule. If you just end up late, apologize profusely.
- If you have scheduled two callbacks on the same day and your morning interviews are running late, either
1. Ask the recruiting coordinator to call her counterpart at the other firm to advise them that you're running late, or
 2. Tell the recruiting coordinator that you are sorry to leave before seeing Attorney X, but that you have committed to begin interviews at Firm B at 2:30. It will help if you also told the recruiting coordinator about your schedule at the time you scheduled the interviews, and reminded her of it that morning. If you have any free time before you leave town, ask if it would be possible for you to see Attorney X "tomorrow morning before 11:00 a.m." or to call him/her the next day for a phone interview. Then, keep your callback at the second firm. Be sure to write a follow-up letter to Attorney X whether or not you actually see him/her. Just note that you regret that you were unable to meet with him/her, but that you're very excited about opportunities at the firm and hope that you have the chance to meet him/her at a later date.
- III. When the recruiting coordinator escorts you to your first interview, you might ask: "Is there anything in particular that you would have liked to know about this person before you met him/her for the first time?" You could get some interesting last minute information.
- IV. Interview duration. Each interview will last anywhere from 20 – 45 minutes. You'll see anywhere from 3 – 10 attorneys. Lunch will probably last about an hour, and could involve more than one attorney. You should expect to be escorted to the office of the next person on your itinerary.
- V. Lunch. Probably with associates, who will lie to you and say "Ask us anything you want. We won't tell anyone." And as soon as you're gone

they're in the hiring partner's office telling him/her that you seemed awfully interested in the billable hours target.

Remember, lunch, however pleasant, is part of the interview process.

Order from the middle of the menu in terms of price. Order something easy to eat, e.g., baked chicken breast with rice. Don't order alcohol or dessert at lunch and take the lead from your prospective colleagues in a dinner setting. Use moderation and remember to always be professional.

Be sure to include everyone in the conversation. When responding to one associate's question, make eye contact with others at the table.

- VI. Questions to ask & answer
See the website for questions you'll be asked, and appropriate ways to frame an answer; use your research to help develop good questions to ask.
- VII. **Don't:** carry drinks around the office with you; leave your belongings in someone's office, take copious notes during the interviews; say "like" as in "I want to, like, be a lawyer."
- VIII. **Do:** Take extra copies of your resume, transcript, writing sample & references; shake hands when introduced; make eye contact with the interviewers.

Follow-up

- I. Appreciation. Verbally thank each interviewer at the conclusion of the interview. Thank the recruiting coordinator for arranging your interview. Follow-up after the interviews (within 48 hours) with e-mail or business letters to each person to whom you spoke (if you really want this job) and the recruiting coordinator.
- II. Two weeks later. Still haven't heard, despite the fact that the recruiting coordinator told you you'd know something in two weeks? Shoot her an e-mail saying ONLY how excited you are about this opportunity, and asking if you can provide any additional information. Do not nag, whine, or stalk.