

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS: LAW INTERVIEWS

1. Rationale for applying

- Why do you want to apply to this firm / department?
- Why did you leave your last firm?
- Which other firms have you applied to?
- What was your last drawn salary and expected remuneration?

Partners are well aware of the usual circumstances of leaving a previous firm. You can be candid in your answer but never bad-mouth a previous employer. Always be mindful that the legal fraternity is very small. A good answer shows that you have a clear strategy and long-term goals for your career path.

Do your due diligence on the firm, the partners, their vision and the nature of work. Show that you have done adequate research and are keen to join the firm with the right expectations.

2. The firm and job scope

- Tell me what you know about this firm and the position you applied for.
- What skills / experience makes you suitable for this role?
- What makes you a good fit for this firm?

This is to ascertain that your expectations of the role are in line with the firm's. Additionally, employers want to know that you are able to adapt to the position, especially where candidates transition from big to small firms (or vice versa) or from a different practice area or where you move up to a more senior role.

3. Your CV and work history

- Questions on any point on your CV including any past work experience.
- Questions on a bad grade or gap on your CV.

It is important to know your CV thoroughly so that you can elaborate on any specific point when questioned. Employers will also wish to be reassured about a bad grade, gap on your CV or job-hopping tendencies and you should prepare a persuasive answer ahead of time.

4. General skills

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Are you a team player?
- Are you able to work independently?
- What are your expectations as to reporting structure / hours / environment?

Be sure to keep the emphasis on why you are an asset to the firm and why they should hire you. Focus on your strengths and skill-sets and keep your expectations in line with industry norms.

5. Substantive Law

- Tell me about this area of law.
- How do you plan to deal with an unfamiliar area of practice?

Partners do test candidates on their knowledge of law. You should at least be aware of the leading cases and any new changes in the regulatory framework. If you are applying to a different area of practice, partners want to know how and what you will do to catch-up. You should demonstrate keen interest in developing expertise in the new area and highlight any transferable skills that you may have.

6. Parting Words

This is the time to demonstrate that you have researched the firm / role. Asking intelligent questions about industry trends / firm culture will leave a good impression.

Be sure to follow-up after the interview thanking your interviewers for their time.