

10 Tips for Virtual Interviews

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1. Do your homework.

Before your interview, reach out to people you know who have worked at or are familiar with the firm. Go beyond classmates and 3Ls and talk to friends at other law schools as well as professors. Be sure to review the firm's website and social media feeds. Read articles written by lawyers at the firm in your area of interest.

2. A successful set-up.

Carefully choose the location from which you'll join the interview. Ensure that the background is work appropriate, such as a plain wall or bookshelf. Eliminate distractions both behind you and in your eye-line. If you opt to use a virtual background, choose one and stick with it throughout the duration of the interview. Any light source should be in front of you, i.e., behind your computer.

3. Prepare for the obvious question.

You will definitely be asked "Why this firm?" Your answer should show that you have done your research, and you have an interest in a specific aspect of the firm.

4. Keep the crickets quiet.

Have specific questions ready to go for every interview. Ask about the interviewer's experiences with an especially memorable case, transaction, training or mentor. Getting people to talk about themselves is a great way to get beyond the party line and start to understand a firm.

5. Listen well.

Focus on what the interviewer is saying and not just on getting ready for your next remark. To show your interviewers that you are speaking directly to them, make eye contact and move your computer so that the camera is at eye level. When others speak, allow them to complete their thoughts and ask questions to clarify and confirm your understanding.

6. Act the part.

You will find that most offices are business casual, though while working remotely, many lawyers will be more dressed-down. You should appear as you would if you were to interview in-person; wear proper professional attire and have your notebook on-hand. Be sure to turn off your cell phone before the interview starts and silence notifications on your computer.

7. Be authentic.

Introduce yourself at the start of each of your interviews with your name and school. As you meet with lawyers, be present to whether you can envision working with them and at the firm. Be yourself during the interviews, and don't be afraid to share more about your personal interests outside of law school.

8. Read the legal pubs.

The American Lawyer, National Law Journal, Above the Law, Corporate Counsel and ACC Docket are just a few publications whose articles about the firm may not show up in the first few results of your web search. These publications will also help you learn more about the business of law firms.

9. Be heard.

Use a good quality headset or your smartphone's ear buds. If you need a test-run before, reach out to the person who set-up your interview to troubleshoot your sound and connection quality. Also, review the video interview logistics beforehand to ensure your technical questions are answered and that no technical difficulties arise.

10. Be early and say thank you.

Login a few minutes early to make sure your internet connection is strong and you are in the interview headspace. Immediately reach out to your interview contact if at any point during your interview the line drops or an interviewer is behind schedule. When your interviews are over, send thank you emails to those with whom you met.
