How to Stick the Landing on Your Upcoming Job Interview

David Mohr

The hiring process can be a lot like dating; you keep meeting new people and answering the same questions, but you’re also on the horizon of something new and exciting. Still, the road to a new and fulfilling job can be long, and it’s easy to get burnt out during the interview process. That’s why I want to share some useful tips I’ve learned through my decades of experience in the legal placement field to help you nail your interviews and get that job of your dreams.

• **Research** - Do your homework and look into the company prior to the interview. It’s important to know details about your potential employer and how you may play a productive role in the company. This could give you a leg up among other candidates.

• **An Eye for Detail** - Make sure you know who you are asking for upon arrival, including proper spelling and pronunciation of your contact’s name and their title. This is a sign that you are both thorough and respectful.

• **Dress for Success** - Never show up underdressed, as that’s far worse than showing up overdressed. Do not wear heavy cologne or perfume, in case the interviewer has an allergy or sensitivity.

• **Allow Yourself Time** - Don’t just show up on time, show up early (but not too early). Make sure you have plenty of time to find the right location and parking. If you’re more than five or ten minutes early, you can always kill time nearby (in your car, a coffee shop, etc.). Respect the employer’s time/schedule.

• **No Chomping** - Do not chew gum – but a mint prior to the meeting may not be a bad idea.

• **Positive Attitude** - Make sure you are as presentable and pleasant as possible. Smile. Look the interviewer in the eye when meeting and shaking hands, during the interview as much as possible and when shaking hands again after the interview.

• **Listening is Key** - During the interview, listen intently and answer questions as directly as possible. If you ramble or speak off topic, you may come across as too chatty or someone who can’t stay focused. But be sure to give an example of how your knowledge or abilities can help when a question gives you that opportunity.

• **Show Your Personality** - Try to be as personable as possible without getting off topic. Employers like to have a sense that your personality will match the personalities within the office.

• **Again, No Bad Vibes** - Avoid using profanity during the interview, no matter how comfortable you may feel. Avoid talking badly about past employers. Stay positive.

• **Ask Questions** - You are interviewing your potential employer just as much as they are interviewing you. You’ll want to make sure the job fits your needs and desires as much as possible before accepting a position.

• **Follow Up** - If interested in the position, send a follow up email or letter thanking them for their time and express your interest one more time. Be sure to spell the person’s name and company name correctly, and make sure your letter is laid out properly with no errors or typos. A poorly written follow-up letter can take you out of contention for hire.

• **Regulate Your Social Media** - Last, but by no means least, make sure your public social media presence is not offensive or controversial. Potential interviews can be short-circuited by questionable social media before they are even requested.

Ready to put all this great advice to the test by looking for a new position? The LBA’s Placement Service matches area law offices seeking qualified attorneys and legal support staff with highly-skilled candidates. We refer attorneys, legal secretaries, paralegals, receptionists and other legal support staff for full and part-time employment.

If you are interested in finding a new career or are in need of a lawyer or legal support candidate, we can help! Visit www.loubar.org/jobs for information about available job opportunities and details on how we can help you through your next candidate search.

David Mohr is the LBA’s Placement Services Director.