



**INTERVIEWING SKILLS  
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

THREE P's TO SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING ..... 2  
    PREPARATION ..... 2  
    PRACTICE ..... 2  
    PROMOTION ..... 3

PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWS ..... 3

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS ..... 4  
    Screening interviews ..... 4  
    Callback interviews ..... 4

TYPES OF INTERVIEWERS ..... 4

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: YOUR APPEARANCE AT AN INTERVIEW ..... 5  
    INTERVIEW APPEARANCE "DO'S" AND "DONT'S" ..... 6

ASSORTED QUESTIONS ..... 7  
    What Materials Should I Take to the Interview? ..... 7  
    Who Pays for Travel Expenses? ..... 8  
    What if I Have to go to Lunch as Part of the Interview Process? ..... 8  
    Do I Initiate a Handshake? ..... 8

QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED ..... 9  
    Sample Questions ..... 9  
    Situational Questions ..... 12  
        Public Defenders ..... 13  
        District Attorneys ..... 13

QUESTIONS YOU MAY ASK ..... 13  
    Sample questions for interviewee ..... 14

PRACTICE ..... 16

INTERVIEW "TURNOFFS" ..... 16

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ..... 18

## THE THREE “P”s TO SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING

- I. **PREPARATION:** Research the organization and the interviewers; be able to discuss in-depth your résumé -- regardless of how current or significant the activity.
- **Know the organization:** Research organizations and attorneys using the organization’s web site, martindale.com, other LEXIS/NEXIS career directories, case law, news resources, and OCPD employer files containing brochures, firm résumés, annual reports, and NALP forms. If it is a small firm, check www.lawyers.com also. Other ways to research include talking to Catholic alumni and students who worked at the organization and asking the OCPD counselors. Your knowledge of the organization will be apparent when you interview and will impress the employer.
  - **Know the interviewers:** Ask the recruiter with whom you will be meeting; usually, a schedule is available 1-2 days prior to the interview; research them using *Martindale-Hubbell*, *Directory of Corporate Counsel*, LEXIS/NEXIS, and their organization’s web site. Again, you should talk to alumni and students who have worked at the organization for information on the particular interviewers.
  - **Formulate questions** tailored to particular interviewers (different questions are asked of partners v. associates).
  - **Know your résumé:** Ensure it is ERROR-FREE; be prepared to discuss everything on it in-depth; everything on it is fair game; shape responses about your background to put your best foot forward. Also, reread your writing sample and be prepared to discuss it.
  - **Know Yourself:** Ask yourself anticipated questions---general in nature, but also specific. Have an answer prepared to “tell me about yourself.” Even if you do not get asked this specific question, formulating an answer will force you to reevaluate your skills and experience and help you answer some other common questions. Remember, the interviewer is not asking for biographical information. The answer to this question should be the most important information that you want to convey to the employer such as transferable skills that you have from your accomplishments. Be sure to tailor those skills to the specific employer and be prepared to demonstrate exactly what in your background provided those skills in a short and concise, yet interesting answer.
- II. **PRACTICE:** The more you practice with different “interviewers,” the more comfortable and confident you will appear during the interview.
- **Mock Interviews:** Participate in the fall and spring mock interview programs provided by OCPD at the beginning of each semester; make an appointment for a mock interview with OCPD counselors anytime during the year.

➤ **Practice** with friends, family, the mirror, tape recorder, etc.

➤ **Ask yourself** questions and formulate answers.

**III. PROMOTION:** An interview is an opportunity to present your best assets. Learn to sell yourself comfortably and with confidence, but not arrogance.

➤ **Be able to articulate** how your goals and skills match the organization's needs.

➤ Prepare as if structuring a legal argument: Choose 3-4 of the most important points you want to make about yourself and be sure you make them.

**IV. CONCLUSION:** An IDEAL interview contains the following elements:

➤ Good handshake

➤ Good conversation

➤ Intelligent questions from the interviewee

➤ Thank you letter sent within 24 hours; if you have multiple interviews within the same organization, avoid boiler plate letters because all letters may go to a central file; personalize all letters (see handout on thank you notes available in OCPD)

**Interviewing is both an art and a skill.** The key to success is simple: thorough **preparation** and **practice**. Although some people are more naturally comfortable "marketing" themselves, everyone can improve their skills and learn to interview well. This guide should answer many of the common questions about interviewing, as well as prepare you for interviews.

#### **PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWS**

For the applicant, the purpose of the interview is to 1) get an offer, and 2) gain sufficient information about the position and employer to make an informed decision regarding an offer. For the employer, the goal is to 1) evaluate the candidate in order to make an informed decision about whether to make an offer, and 2) to "sell" the position well enough so that the applicant will accept an offer if one is made.

It is important for job hunters to remember that **an interview is a two-way street** -- both the interviewer and interviewee are evaluating and "selling." Interviewees often feel at a disadvantage when interviewing because they picture themselves "beneath" the interviewer - the person who has something (a job) that he/she wants. This assumption prevents some applicants from putting their best foot forward because they are or seem less assured or professional than they are in reality. Approaching the process as a two-way street, allows you to appear as a confident and professional colleague, not an applicant desperate for a job. Also, studies have shown that employers perceive the most successful interviews as

those where the interviewer and candidate speak for an equal amount of time.

## **TYPES OF INTERVIEWS**

There are two basic types of interviews, commonly known as screening and callback interviews. Most law firms conduct both screening and callback interviews. However, some employers such as those in the government and public sector may make their decision based solely on the first interview. Therefore, you should be prepared to shine at the first meeting and reveal all your pertinent information.

**1. Screening interviews** (first interviews): These are typically interviews during which you meet with one or two people who are evaluating whether you should be invited back for more in-depth interviews. The interviewer's task is to weed out those candidates whose background, experiences, future plans or personality are not well matched with the needs of the organization. For example, screening interviews are those conducted during the On-Campus Interviewing (OCI) program. Most interviewers will meet with 20 candidates, but will invite only a few people back to the office for further interviews. It is difficult to stand out in a 20 minute interview when you are one of 20 candidates during the course of the day. Your challenge is to prepare for each interview and make certain you shine!

**2. Callback interviews** (second interviews) have a slightly different purpose for both the interviewer and the candidate. The interviewer is still evaluating you, but he/she is also trying to acquaint you with the organization. The candidate is still "selling" but he/she is also trying to gather sufficient information to make an informed decision. With callbacks, you can usually expect to meet with a number of people and perhaps go to lunch. Most law firms that participate in the OCI program will want you to spend a full morning or afternoon at the firm where you will probably meet with a mix of partners and associates (anywhere from 4 to 12 people) and have lunch. Occasionally, a panel of 3-5 attorneys will conduct the interview. With permanent hires, many employers schedule more than one round of callback interviews.

## **TYPES OF INTERVIEWERS**

There are some general points to remember regarding the differences between more senior and less senior interviewers. More senior people are likely to be evaluating you less on how you will fit in and more on how capable you are -- would they be comfortable having you produce work for them. More junior people, your peers, tend to look more at whether they would like to have you as a colleague and whether you would fit in with the organization. When responding to questions, keep in mind that different people will be looking for different information even though all of them are evaluating you as a candidate. Also, keep this in mind when you are formulating questions. More senior people can give you information on the plans for the organization (future growth, culture of the organization, work of various departments -- the big picture). Save the quality of life questions and what you might expect during the summer or your first year of

work for the less senior interviewers.

### **FIRST IMPRESSIONS: YOUR APPEARANCE AT AN INTERVIEW**

First impressions are very important and, although clothes do not make the person, what you wear matters. Communications studies have shown that during an initial encounter between two people, more than 70 percent of the message is communicated by appearance alone. (*The 110 Biggest Mistakes Job Hunters Make and How To Avoid Them*, R. Hermann & L. Sutherland). Thus, a first impression is critical to your interviewing success. You want to be remembered for you, not for what you wore. The following guidelines may be helpful as you prepare for the upcoming on-campus interviewing season.

The rule of thumb with respect to interview attire is to **always err in favor of the conservative**. The conservative look is always “in” and a safe choice. You do not have to wear black or navy, but darker colors are generally preferable. Find a color and style that look and feel good on you. Clothes should always appear freshly laundered and shoes should be well-maintained and unscuffed. Before your interview, try on your interview outfit and make sure that everything fits well. You don’t want to find out on the day of your interview that your clothes have “shrunk!” Most importantly, you need to feel comfortable in your interview outfit. Don’t wear clothes that will cause you to fidget or distract you from the discussion.

Men should wear dark suits with a long-sleeved white shirt and tie. While splashy ties with funky or comical motifs may be in style, they are generally not appropriate for an interview. The darker blue dress shirt is also currently considered “en vogue;” however, more conservative attorneys may frown upon this type of, albeit stylish, attire. Interestingly, attorneys in plaintiffs’ practices are often seen in the more trendy attire mentioned above, as opposed to attorneys in the generally more conservative defense bar. Again, with respect to interview attire, you cannot go wrong by dressing conservatively.

Although women have more options for professional attire, such as a suit or a tailored business dress, suits are preferable especially for law firm interviews. Although pantsuits are “in” and perfectly acceptable attire for females within the vast majority of law firms today, it is safest to go with the traditional skirt suit when interviewing with a potentially conservative future employer. With respect to color, women may want to avoid exceptionally bright or off-beat hues. Women should be careful about make-up applications and avoid make-up colors that attract attention. While bizarre nail color may currently be the rage, showing up for an interview with green nail polish may be looked upon with disfavor. Simple accessories are also recommended, such as a string of pearls or a single-strand chain. Too much jewelry could draw more attention to your outfit than to your

qualifications. Regarding footwear, again it is best to wear more conservative shoes, such as a standard pump in a dark color. Always wear nylons to an interview.

Obviously, personal hygiene plays a major factor in any interview setting. Studies have confirmed that you will make a better impression at an interview if your hair (including facial hair) is neatly brushed and trimmed, you have obviously freshly bathed, you have clean, well-manicured fingernails, and you have neatly-pressed clothes on. (*The 1996 What Color is Your Parachute?*, R. Bolles). Women should make sure that their hair is neatly styled, so that it is not a distraction while interviewing. If your hair keeps falling in your face, it will divert attention for both you and the interviewer. Also be careful with overzealous perfume or cologne application. Studies show that over-perfumed candidates usually make poor impressions on interviewers. See Bolles, supra.

Cost may be a concern for many law students. Fortunately, two interview suits and a presentable pair of shoes should get you through law school interviews. You may want to try local thrift shops or a discount warehouse store like Marshalls. Your clothes should fit you well and be comfortable, no matter what interview apparel you choose. Interviewing can be a tiring process, with long days and meeting new people one after the other. Make sure that your attire can get you through the day with a smile. If you are unsure whether interview attire is appropriate, ask a career advisor in OCPD.

### **INTERVIEW APPEARANCE “DO’S” AND “DON’TS”**

#### **DON’T:**

- Fall prey to the latest trends; you will never go wrong in a crisp white shirt and dark conservative suit
- Wear any garish or off-beat colors or patterns
- For men, wear ties with splashy or comical motifs
- Wear shoes that are scuffed or otherwise poorly maintained
- Over-accessorize; don’t wear too much jewelry
- Wear off-beat nail color or make-up
- Drench yourself with perfume or cologne; don’t wear it at all

- Wear open-toed shoes, slingbacks or sandals
- Wear hair clips; barrettes, on the other hand, are acceptable

**DO:**

- Be well-groomed: make sure your fingernails are clean and neatly manicured
- Neatly comb, brush, and/or style your hair, including any facial hair
- Freshly launder and press your apparel
- Try on your interview outfit ahead of time to make sure that everything fits, no missing buttons, no spots, etc.
- Polish your shoes
- Wear a conservative suit and shoes in a dark or muted color
- For women: wear nylons!
- If pulling hair back, tie with a barrette or scarf; never a hair clip

**ASSORTED QUESTIONS**

What Materials Should I Take to the Interview? Always take extra copies of your résumé, your list of references, one or two writing samples, and your transcript. Do not offer your writing sample unless it is requested. It is good to be prepared, but not necessary to provide one more item on which you may be eliminated.

Who Pays for Travel Expenses?

Many firms will pay for travel expenses associated with an out-of-town callback interview. When you make arrangements to go for an interview ask if the firm has a written travel policy or if someone can explain it to you over the telephone. For public sector interviews, travel expenses are rarely covered.

What if I Have to go to Lunch as Part of the Interview Process?

Many organizations, particularly the larger firms, include lunch or dinner as part of their interview process. Few aspects of the interviewing process, however, cause as much trepidation. On the positive side, lunch will give you the opportunity to explore many areas you might otherwise not be able to investigate.

For instance, if you go to lunch with junior associates you can ask why they joined the firm, what they like most about their work, what they think of the area as a place to live and work, etc. Remember though, that even though this more social, **you are always interviewing.**

#### Do I Initiate a Handshake?

Although it sounds simple enough, your handshake can cause you to make a negative impression! Always begin and end an interview with a firm handshake and a smile. Do not distinguish your handshake based on the gender of the interviewer.

#### Other tips:

- Do not drink alcohol or smoke, even if the interviewer does. The interviewer may not need to be alert and sharp, but you do.
- Think before you order lunch. How easy (i.e. not messy) will this be to eat? Remember, you will need to ask and respond to questions while eating so stay with something easy to eat with a knife and fork! Other than alcohol, try to order only the courses, i.e. appetizer, dessert, that the interviewer does.
- Although a luncheon interview may seem less formal than an interview across a desk, it is still a place where the employer will be evaluating you as a potential employee. He/She will return to his/her office after lunch and complete the same evaluation form that every other interviewer completes. Stay focused.
- Treat everyone in the office, including the administrative staff, with respect. You do not know who has the power to deny you an offer.
- Think of your interview as starting when you get out of your car/off the metro. You never know who may be riding in the elevator.

#### **QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED**

As you read through this list of possible interview questions, take time to **answer out loud** to a video or tape recorder or to a friend. Don't skip over seemingly simple questions assuming you will know how to answer them. Sometimes the simple questions can be the trickiest. For example, do you honestly have a good response to "Tell me about yourself?"

#### **Sample Questions**

The interview questions below may be divided into "standard" questions, "difficult"

questions and “philosophy” questions. Each question presents its own challenges. You should practice your answers to all of these questions before any interview – we guarantee you will be ultra-prepared. For hints on how to answer many of these questions, see Kim Alayne Walton’s *Guerrilla Tactics For Getting The Legal Job of Your Dreams* (OCPD Career Planning shelf). Speak with an OCPD career advisor if you are stumped!

#### Standard Questions:

- Why are you interested in our organization?
- Why did you go to law school? Why CUA?
- What classes have you enjoyed in law school? college?
- What do you want to do with your law degree?
- Why did you major in \_\_\_ in college?
- What accomplishments have given you the greatest satisfaction?
- What type of law do you plan to pursue? Why?
- Why do you want to work in a small/big firm/for this organization?
- What do you want from your career?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you?
- What are some of your life's goals?
- Why do you think you will make a good attorney?
- What two or three things are most important to you in a job?
- Tell me about your involvement with law review/the journal?
- Tell me about your clinical experience/internship/research with Professor \_\_\_\_\_.
- Describe your work at Betty Smith's Law Offices.

- What did you like/dislike about your work there? Why did you leave?
- Why did you decide to go to evening school?
- How do you manage to juggle a full-time job and school?
- Do you have a geographical preference? Are you looking at organizations in other areas?
- What ties do you have to this area?
- What makes you think you'll like living here and not want to go back West soon?
- Are you holding any outstanding offers?
- What factors will influence your decision?
- How do you distinguish us from similar employers?
- What do you think it would take to be successful in our firm?
- What have you learned from others you have met with today?
- What are your salary expectations? (Put this off as long as possible.)
- Do you have any questions for me? (Always have questions! Prepare a few before going to the interview.)
- Who or what has had the greatest influence on the development of your career interests?
- What kind of work do you want to do?
- What are your expectations of your future employer?
- How would you handle an irate/irrational client?
- Does your present employer know you're interviewing for another job?
- Why do you want to change jobs?
- What work experience has been the most valuable to you and why?

- What was the most useful criticism you ever received, and who was it from?
- Give an example of a problem you have solved and the process you used.
- Describe the project or situation that best demonstrated your analytical skills.
- What has been your greatest challenge?
- What characteristics do you think are important for this position?
- How have your educational and work experience prepared you for this position?
- How do you think you have changed personally since you started law school?
- Why did you choose the extracurricular activities you did? What did you gain? What did you contribute?
- Tell me about a difficult decision you have made.
- Tell me about a situation when you had to persuade another person to your point of view.
- What frustrates you the most?
- How would you react to having your credibility questioned?
- What is the most important lesson you learned in or out of school?
- Describe a situation where you had to work with someone who was difficult. How was the person difficult and how did you handle it?
- We are looking at a lot of great candidates; why are you the best person for this position?
- How would your professors describe you? Your last employer/supervisor?

Difficult Questions:

- Tell me about yourself. [NOTE: Do not repeat your résumé or tell the interviewer where you were born. Instead, use this opportunity to describe some admirable characteristics (use examples) or to relate a quick story that demonstrates something positive about yourself].
- Why should we hire you?
- What makes you different from all the other applicants?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? in 10 years?
- What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- What would your past/present employer(s) say are your strengths/weaknesses?
- Tell me about your grades. How have you fared compared to other students?
- Did you get an offer from your summer employer? Why not?
- Explain this gap on your résumé.
- Where else are you interviewing? (Some ask this to see if you are looking at a wide variety of employer types; others ask this to see who their competition might be.)
- What is your GPA? How do you feel about it? Does it reflect your abilities?
- What else should I know about you?

“Philosophy” Questions:

- What was the last book you read? Who is your favorite author?
- What makes a good attorney?
- Who’s your hero?
- Who in history would you like to talk with?
- If you were a tree/animal, what kind of tree/animal would you be?

- What would you do if you won the lottery?

### **Situational Questions**

Some employers, particularly Public Defenders (PDs) and District Attorneys (DAs), like to ask situational questions often involving criminal procedure, evidence and ethics issues to see how you think, how well you defend your ideas, etc. Frequently, the interviewer will challenge your first answer or add facts to try to see how well you can come up with alternatives and/or defend your opinion. In general, PDs are likely to ask more ethics questions while DAs tend to ask more questions about the rules of evidence or procedure or off-duty ethics. You do not need the right answer, the interviewer is evaluating your thought process. For example:

#### For the Public Defender's Office:

- If you gave a client your best legal advice after thorough review of the facts and the client refused your advice, what would you do?
- A policewoman/man disguised as a cable company repairwoman/man gains entrance to an apartment and sees a bag of cocaine on the kitchen table. Is the evidence admissible?
- Your client has stolen several pieces of equipment. She has five people who will supply her with an alibi, but you know they are lying. Do you put these people on the stand?
- How do you feel about defending a man who admits to you his guilt on child molestation charges yet wants to plead not guilty? Would you be willing to try to impeach the child's testimony on the stand even though you know that the child is telling the truth and that by doing so, you are likely to get a favorable result for your client while probably traumatizing the child further?

#### For the District Attorney's Office:

- At a party, you see several people doing cocaine, including another DA. What do you do?
- The facts of this case are A, B and C. Could you win this case?
- Based on your experience, what is your analysis of this situation?

For more information about interviewing with a prosecutor's or public defender's office as well as additional practice interview questions, see OCPD's *Prosecutor and*

### **QUESTIONS YOU MAY ASK**

It is always best to have a few questions that relate specifically to a substantive area relevant to the interviewer in addition to questions that focus on the mechanics of the organization. For instance, if you are talking to a partner who practices in the health care area, try developing a list of questions that focus on specific issues/concerns that may be facing health care law practitioners. If you have seen an article/editorial/case decision in the paper that may relate, ask how he/she expects it to affect the firm's clients but do not challenge the interviewer with a difficult topic or ask about a negative subject. Demonstrate that you have seriously thought about the field, organization, and clients by asking thoughtful questions.

**Be observant:** A partner or associate's office will provide information about the person and the firm. Does the office contain any personal items? If so, what are the person's interests outside of the law? In addition to providing background information, what you observe may enable you to keep the conversation going and generate questions. If a person has a framed pen and legislation, did he/she author it?

### **Sample questions for interviewee:**

- As a new associate, will I be rotated throughout the first year or will I be assigned to a specific area? If assigned, how is that decision made?
- In your opinion, what does it take to be successful in this organization?
- What is unique about this organization?
- How would you describe the organization's culture?
- What qualities/skills does a person need to succeed as a law clerk/attorney?
- Can you tell me what yesterday was like for you? What did you work on? (This is much better than "describe a typical day.")
- How would you describe the relationships among attorneys? attorneys and staff? (Another good way to get this information is to look around at the atmosphere of the office. Does it seem active and friendly? Do people pass in the hallway without speaking? Have people been allowed to personalize their work space?)

- What is the most interesting case you are involved in currently? Is that typical of the work you receive/do?
- What did you do as a first-year attorney? (Do not ask of senior people.) Could someone in my class expect to have a similar experience?
- How much client contact does an associate have during the first few years? What was your experience?
- What is the firm's system of management? Are associates selected or do they volunteer for committee assignments?
- How is associate work distributed, supervised and evaluated?
- Why did you decide to join this agency? Has your government experience been what you expected?
- What emphasis, if any, is placed on bringing in new business and marketing?
- I've been reading about the new regulations Congress has proposed to limit the consolidation of the big companies that produce widgets in the Midwest. Since you represent several of those companies, do you think the regulations will be passed and, if so, what effect will they have on your clients?
- I see that your Telecommunications Group has several Eastern European clients. Does the firm have any plans to expand into the growing Latin American market? (only ask a question like this and the preceding one if you have the knowledge to answer a follow-up question on the subject addressed).
- In reviewing your firm's brochure, I noticed that the number of litigators was more than double the number of any other department. If you join the litigation group, are you able to work with the various other departments on a variety of cases or do you work more closely with one subject area?
- Based on trends you see happening in the corporate world, does the firm expect to add/change any of its practice areas?
- What is the next step in the interview process? (after you have finished asking the substantive questions)

## **QUESTIONS TO AVOID**

- Don't ask questions that were answered in the interview – pay attention
- Don't ask questions that you could or should have found out yourself – from NALP, the firm's brochure, etc. . . Examples of this include questions about type of law practiced by firm, branch offices, number of attorneys.
- Don't ask questions about hours, billables, salary, vacation time, pro bono, etc. You will have ample opportunity to get the answers to these questions if you receive an offer.
- Don't ask negative questions like what is the worst thing about working here, rather phrase the question in a positive light: what is the best thing about working here?
- Don't ask questions about specific areas of law or specific cases unless you have the knowledge to have an intelligent conversation about the topic – you never know when you are going to get a follow-up question.

## **PRACTICE**

There are several ways for you to improve your interviewing skills. OCPD counselors conduct mock interviews for students year round. The counselor role-plays the interviewer then critiques your performance. OCPD also offers a formal mock interview program prior to the fall recruiting season and in the spring.

Another excellent way to practice and perfect your interviewing skills is to conduct as many informational interviews as possible. You can ask and answer work/career-related questions in a non-stressful setting. Sometimes you can even gain some valuable insight into your presentation style from your informational interviewees.

## **INTERVIEW “TURNOFFS”**

- Arrogance/cockiness/egotism/overconfidence
- Poor oral communication/presentation skills
- Lack of interest
- Tardiness, arrive 5 – 10 minutes early, but no earlier
- Poor eye contact
- No career direction/not knowing self
- Shallow/inappropriate questions or answers
- Failure to communicate qualifications effectively/no elaboration or examples

- Deficient social skills/lack of interpersonal skills/poor conversational skills
- Lack of professionalism and poise
- Inability of candidate to show their interest and why qualified
- Negative comments regarding supervisors, co-workers, or faculty
- “Shopping the market”/practice interviewing
- Treating personnel professional as a “trial to be endured”
- Canned responses

### **FINAL POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- Know your weaknesses, i.e., bad grades, résumé gaps, etc . . . and have an answer that you feel comfortable saying that puts a positive spin on the weakness. This will prove to the employer that, despite it, you will still be an ideal employee.
- Remember that the interview starts as soon as you meet the receptionist.
- Be likeable, you can be the most qualified person, but if the interviewer doesn't think that you might be someone with whom he/she would like to work, you most likely will not get an offer.
- Show enthusiasm about the job; don't speak in a monotonous tone; sound excited; use positive body language.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions during the interview before the interviewer formally asks you to – remember, the interview is a conversation between two or more people.
- Always have a list of questions to ask the interviewer – if you remember that the interview is not only to determine if the firm wants you but also whether you want the firm, you will realize that you have several questions.
- Most questions can and should be answered in a clear, concise manner. The longer you respond to a question, the more likely you are to say something you didn't intend.
- Try to avoid answering questions with a list; rather think of the answer in paragraph form. For example, instead of citing a list of your strengths, pick your strongest and most relevant ones and have an example of how you have exhibited them.
- Bring an extra copy of everything to the interview including résumé, writing sample, transcript, and reference list.

- Briefly reassert your interest in the employer before you leave the room – ideally, while you are standing up and shaking hands.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Finally, you may want to read H. Anthony Medley's *Sweaty Palms, The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed*, available in OCPD and most bookstores. A quick read, it covers everything you can imagine and is widely considered the best book on the topic.

The following helpful resources are also available in OCPD on the Career Planning & Strategy Shelf:

- *The Smart Woman's Guide to Interviewing and Salary Negotiation* by Julie A. King
- *Guerrilla Tactics For Getting The Legal Job Of Your Dreams* by Kim Alayne Walton
- *The Interview Rehearsal Book: Seven Steps to Job Winning Interviews* by Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro

©2001, The Catholic University of America. All Rights Reserved.  
Updated Feb. 2009

G:\LCS\HANDOUTS\INTERV SKILLS.DOC