



# LAW SCHOOL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



The applicant pool for selective law schools is filled with thousands of candidates who all look great on paper. They value many traits beyond what is on your application, including integrity, negotiating skills, sensitivity and good judgment. An interview is your opportunity to distinguish yourself from the pack and demonstrate your full potential.

The interview can be weighted as high as 20% in the formula used to rank applicants. The interview isn't about academic ability; it's about whether you have the temperamental and psychological strengths required to be a successful attorney. The interview is an opportunity for the school to question you about your application, your autobiographical sketch or any issues on your transcripts or LSAT scores. But it is primarily a tool for the schools to screen out psychological misfits who may not be well-suited for the legal profession. Your interviewer wants to learn what you are like as a person and how well you respond and communicate. They want to understand your values, how you think and how well you handle yourself under pressure.

## Undergraduate Education

1. How did you select your undergraduate university?
2. Think back on your undergraduate experience at Slippery Rock University. What would you change about it?
3. If you were in charge of Slippery Rock University, what would you change that would impact the undergraduate experience as it pertains to advancement to law school?
4. What undergraduate courses did you enjoy most? Least?
5. Why did you choose your undergraduate major?
6. What extracurricular activities were you involved in during your undergraduate years?
7. What was your toughest class? Why? What skills have you developed outside the classroom?
8. Describe your best college professor. What made them unique? What has been your favorite course and why?
9. How have you benefited from your undergraduate education?
10. How many hours a week did you study?
11. How has your undergraduate experience made you a better person?
12. What subjects are you now studying? Discuss.
13. Why did you drop, fail, or get a particular grade in a certain class?
14. Outline your study techniques.
15. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability?

## Law as a Profession

1. Why do you want to be a lawyer?
2. What stimulated your interest in law?
3. If you want to "help people", why not medicine? Social Work? Teaching?
4. What experience crystallized your decision to become a lawyer?
5. Which area of law are you most interested in?
6. What kind of experiences do you have in the law field?
7. How do you know you will make a good lawyer?
8. Why do you think so many people want to be lawyers?
9. What steps have you taken to familiarize yourself with the daily activities of a lawyer?
10. How did you investigate a career in law?
11. How do your parents and friends feel about your career decision? How have they influenced you in this decision?
12. What contribution to law can you make?
13. What type of lawyer would you like to be? Why?
14. Do you have family members who are lawyers? What do they think of the field? How have their lives changed over the past few years with the changes in law? Do you want to follow in their footsteps?
15. What are your specific goals in law?
16. What do you look for when choosing a lawyer?
17. What are the negative aspects of law from a professional standpoint?
18. What do you think are a lawyer's social responsibilities? How do you plan to personally contribute to society as a lawyer?
19. What experiences have you had in community involvement that demonstrates your commitment to law?

20. What negative things have you heard about the area you want to go into, and how do you feel about them?
21. How have your personal and volunteer experiences strengthened your goal to become a lawyer?
22. What are the most important rewards you expect from a legal career?
23. Would you prefer to work on one big case for an entire year, or 12 different cases during that same period of time?
24. How do you think the public views the legal profession?

### **Law School**

1. How did you select this school and why do you want to attend?
2. How did you decide to apply to our law school?
3. Why did you choose our specific program?
4. How are you a match for our law school?
5. What other law schools have you applied to?
6. Explain the poor grades on your transcript/low LSAT scores.
7. Would you go to our program if I gave you an acceptance letter right now?
8. What is your biggest concern about entering law school?
9. If you are accepted to multiple schools, how will you make your decision?
10. Why should we offer you a place?
11. How did you prepare for the LSAT? Are you satisfied with your scores?
12. How will you pay for your law school education?
13. Do you think college grades and LSAT scores are an accurate yardstick of your aptitude?
14. Do you consider yourself a competitive applicant to this school?
15. There are 1,000 applicants as qualified as you are. Why should we choose you?
16. What do you have to offer to our school?
17. What aspects of your life's experiences do you think make you a good candidate for law school?
18. What do you hope to gain during your law education?
19. What problems do you expect to arise during law school?

### **“Tell Me About Yourself” Personal Traits/Characteristics**

1. What are your positive qualities and what are your shortcomings?
2. What is your relationship with your family?
3. Describe your personality.
4. What is the best thing that has ever happened to you? The worst?
5. If your best friend were asked to describe you, what would they say?
6. What are three things that you would change about yourself?
7. Name something you are most proud of.
8. Which family member has influenced your life so far and why?
9. Describe yourself in terms of your greatest strengths and weaknesses.
10. When you need counseling for personal problems, with whom do you talk?
11. Describe your childhood.
12. Talk about your hobbies and what they mean to you.
13. Do you plan to continue your hobbies through law school?
14. Outside of your family, who is your biggest role model?
15. Do you like being alone? When you are alone, what do you think about?
16. Tell me about your family. How do they feel about your decision to attend law school?
17. If you had one day to do anything, what would you do?
18. Who knows you best in this world? How would that person describe you?
19. Who are your heroes?
20. Discuss your summer work experiences.
21. What additional activities have you pursued during the summer?
22. What is the funniest thing that has ever happened to you?

### **Intellectual Curiosity**

1. Discuss a book that you recently read for pleasure. Why does this book interest you?

2. What newspapers/journals do you read on a regular basis?
3. Describe any travels you have undertaken and exposure to other cultures. What have you learned from these experiences?
4. If you could invite three living persons to dinner on successive weeks, whom would you choose?
5. What was the last movie you saw? What did you think of it?
6. If you were stranded on an island, what three books would you have with you and why?
7. What current events were reported on last night's news?
8. What person, past or present, would you most like to meet?
9. If you could be any character in history, who would you be and why?
10. What do you do in your spare time?
11. What is your main interest outside of law?

## **Maturity**

1. How do you handle stress?
2. What has been your most stressful experience to date?
3. Is there anything you want to brag about?
4. What aspects of your life experiences will best contribute to your ability to relate to your clients?
5. Tell me about a major disappointment you have experienced in your life.
6. What was the most difficult problem you faced in your life? How did you solve it? What did you learn?
7. How do you think your personal background will affect your practice?
8. What is the biggest mistake you have ever made? What did you learn from it?
9. Have you always put forth your best effort in every situation?
10. Tell me about something you know a lot about.
11. What do you care about?
12. What accomplishments are you most proud of?
13. What motivates you to do your best? How do you motivate those around you to give their best effort?

## **Leadership**

1. Have you taken advantage of the opportunities available to you on campus to become involved in a community or people-oriented activity?
2. Have you taken a leadership role in such an activity? How involved were you? How did you help the organization?
3. Describe the most outstanding leader you have ever worked with and how you are similar to this person. How are you different?
4. What have you found to be the most significant obstacles in getting people to take action? How have you handled these obstacles? It is sometimes desirable to lead other people by setting a positive example. Describe a work situation when your example served as a model for others.
5. Describe a time when you had to take a leadership role in coaching or instructing someone. What were you providing instructions on? How did you assess the learner's comprehension of the problem? What feedback did you provide?
6. In your view, how does leadership fit into the role of a lawyer?
7. What is your strongest leadership skill and how will it assist you in this profession?

## **Communication Skills**

1. What would you do if a client didn't like you?
2. What experience have you had in working with others as part of a team?
3. Tell me about a time when you had to communicate under difficult circumstances.
4. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with an irate person/customer/client. How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?
5. Describe a face-to-face meeting in which you had to influence a highly emotional individual. What techniques did you use? What happened?
6. Sometimes it's important to disagree with others to keep a mistake from being made. Tell me about a time when you were willing to disagree with another person in order to build a positive outcome.
7. Give me a specific example of a time when your communication skills enabled you to influence the way others thought or acted.

8. Tell me what you have found to be the major obstacles to effective teamwork.
9. Tell me how you have attempted to build trust with your peers.
10. Tell me about a time when you found it necessary to tactfully but forcefully say things that others did not want to hear.
11. How do you handle yourself when you are having a conflict with someone?
12. Getting through college requires a lot of writing. Tell me about some of the writing you've done: topics, length, format, etc. What difficulties did you have with any of the written assignments or projects?
13. What factors influence the success of a presentation?
14. Describe a successful presentation you gave to a small or large group.

### **Decision Making Skills**

1. Give me an example of a situation where you sought out a problem to solve because it represented a challenge to you.
2. Tell me about a situation in which you felt you acted too quickly and later regretted it. What caused it?
3. Give me an example of a decision that you made that turned out to be a mistake. What did you learn as a result?
4. Describe a situation where you had to make a quick decision based on incomplete information.
5. Give an example that illustrates your ability to make a tough decision.
6. Your supervisor left an assignment in your "in" box, then left town for a week. Now, you can't reach him and don't understand the assignment. What would you do?
7. Describe a situation that illustrates your ability to analyze and solve a problem.
8. Tell me about a time when you acted as a mediator to solve a problem between two other people.

### **Goal Orientation/Motivation**

1. What are your specific goals in law?
2. What do you see yourself doing in law 10-15 years from now?
3. Do you have an alternative career plan? If the law field didn't exist, what would you do with your life?
4. Tell me about an important goal you set for yourself and your success in reaching it.
5. Getting the job done may necessitate unusual persistence or dedication to results, especially when faced with obstacles or distractions. Tell me about a time when you were very persistent in order to reach a goal.
6. Give an example of a time that you did more than what was expected of you. Why did you do this?
7. Tell me about a time when you had difficult goals associated with your work. Were you satisfied with those goals and their outcome?
8. Can you describe a time when your work was criticized? How did you handle the situation?
9. Tell me about a time that best illustrates your ability to stick things out in a tough situation.
10. How would you define success for a lawyer? For yourself?
11. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next ten years?
12. What is your energy level like? Describe a typical day.
13. Can you provide me with an example of a time when you were most satisfied with your work?
14. What is the greatest obstacle you have had to overcome?

### **Wrap-Up Questions**

1. What will you do if you are not accepted to law school this year?
2. What is success? What inspires you?
3. What is your "cause"? What are you passionate about?
4. Why study law when you have so many other talents?
5. If someone 15 years from now were to write a book about you, what would you want to have included in that book?
6. Since I have control of this interview, what have I not directed you to that you feel I should know about you?