

How to Succeed in Your Summer Job

Before You Start

- Do your research about the office and the attorneys
- Brush up on legal research (Lexis vs. Westlaw)
- Establish your start date
- Talk to upper-division students
- Appropriate attire
- Always carry a pen and paper!

Be friendly and polite!

- Be friendly and polite to all members of your office – staff, receptionists, paralegals, etc.
- They will know more than you do about court filings, office procedures, office supplies, etc.
- You will learn inside scoop from them.
- They may be asked to evaluate you.
- Never disparage any of your colleagues – even if provoked.

Go to lunch and coffee often!

- Employers want to hire and retain people they like to hang out with!
- Airport layover test
- Try to get to know all of the attorneys you work with and let them know YOU
- Professional and/or Social events may be part of your summer

Be a Human Being

- Have confidence in your skill set!
- Avoid criticizing yourself and others.
- Be kind and professional in all settings.

Always be building up your stock

- There is always going to be a learning curve
- Hit the ground running and work hard – make yourself indispensable
- Ask for work if you do not have enough assignments – take initiative
- You will make mistakes this summer – this is OK – learn from them
 - Ex: save an attorney time by staying an extra hour

Don't be "that law student"

- NEVER be the last to arrive or the first to leave the office.
- While at work, be working! Avoid too much socialization at the office.
- At social events, be professional while showing your personality and getting to know the attorneys.

- Be responsible around alcohol.
- Always dress professionally (business, business casual).

Do Exceptional Work

- Take each assignment seriously
- Prioritize your work and know deadlines
- Communicate with your supervisors
- Ask about expectations regarding hours spent on a project, urgency, how to balance your workload
- NO first drafts – everything in polished form
- Let your supervisor know if you are overwhelmed by your workload
- Protect client/firm confidences

Learn as much as you can

- Go beyond your assigned projects
- Learn the nuts and bolts of the firm/office
- Find a mentor.
- How is billing done? How are cases assigned?
- Interested in a case another attorney is working on? Ask to observe or sit in on proceedings.
- Try to work with a variety of attorneys when possible. They will go to bat for you when hiring!

Communicate!

- When given your first assignment, make sure you understand the assignment and the deadline.
- Does the attorney want a written research memo? A stack of cases?
- If you have questions, ask! Don't spin your wheels.
- Know HOW to communicate – does your supervisor like email, in-person meetings, scheduling a time?

Seek Feedback

- May have built in performance reviews.
- If not, do not hesitate to seek feedback.
- Approach your supervisor to inquire about your performance.
- Take criticism gracefully and learn and grow from it.
- That's a WRAP!

Don't forget you are interviewing too!

- Do you like working here?
- Do you fit in?
- Are the attorneys happy here?
- Do you have concerns?
- You can always come to us with concerns.