

**Beacon
Legal**

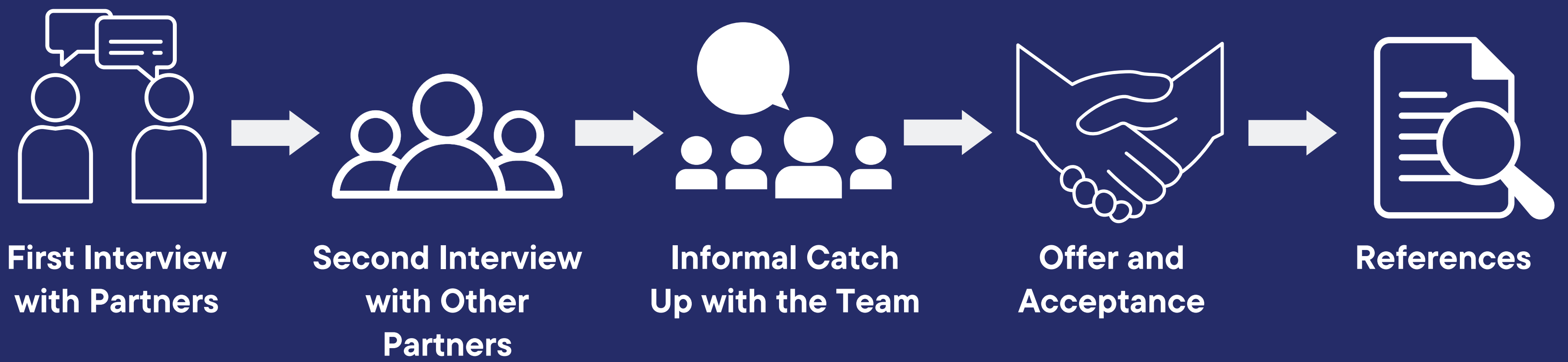
Interview Preparation Guide Private Practice

**How to get the best out of your legal
interview...**

What will this guide cover?

1	Standard Interview Process
2	What are interviewers looking for?
3	Suitability for the Role
5	Passion and Ambition
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Standard Interview Process



*Interview processes vary between firms. At the start of each interview process, we'll give you an overview of what you can expect.

What are interviewers looking for?



Suitability for the Role

Employers want to know if you have the right skills and technical experience for the position. They're likely to ask questions about how your profile and background matches their expectations for the role.



Passion and Ambition

Employers want to know that you're passionate about your work and have the willingness to grow within the firm. Employees who are motivated to learn as an individual, and within the firm are the most likely to succeed in an interview.



Alignment with values and cultural fit

Employers will be assessing whether you'd be a good fit within the firm and whether you align with their values. They'll also look at how you might fit with the team by seeing how you engage with them throughout the interview.

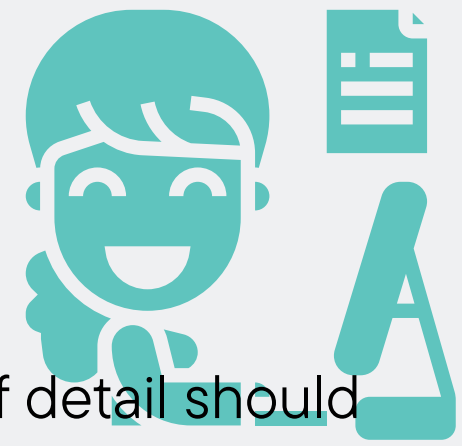


Communication and interpersonal skills

Employers will be paying attention to how you answer questions. Specifically, they'd pay attention to how clear and succinct your answers are and how you engage with them throughout the interview.



³ Suitability for the Role



Communicate Your Profile Effectively

- Know are the top 5 things that make you a strong candidate for the role?
- You should be able to discuss your CV in detail – provide examples and your specific role within each matter. The level of detail should include documents you have drafted, any heavily negotiated points and how you resolved these, stakeholder management skills and everything you contribute to a matter. It is key to be able to explain exactly what you do using specific detail and the result achieved.
- It is important to be able to explain your thought process for making decisions during matters and on your day-to-day contribution. If you take notes on this to prepare, it will be fresh in your mind during interview and is a powerful tool to demonstrate understanding.
- Know your key Unique Selling Points (USPs). For example, have you come from a lean team taking on responsibility beyond your level? Did you have to work directly with partners?
- What are your career aspirations? Think about progression to the next stage of your development. What does this look like at the firm you are interviewing for?

Firm Preparation

- It is important to have an understanding of the firm, including:
 - Their USPs
 - What they look for in lawyers
- It is also important to understand the background of the practice and Partners. To find further information on this, check out:
 - Legal 500
 - Chambers
 - The firm's website (including details around the practice group specifically)
 - Google
 - Partner backgrounds

Consider- Why this firm? What is it you find appealing?

Suitability for the Role



Question Preparation

- Some generic questions you may be asked:
 - Tell us about yourself and why you're interested in this role?
 - Please talk us through your motivations for leaving your current role?
 - What is most important to you in your next role?
 - What are your career aspirations?
 - What do you think the key challenges of this role will be for you?
- Of course you cannot predict every question, but having a strong set of answers that you can mould to a range of questions can be really helpful.

Technical Capability

- You may be asked to describe a complex matter or transaction you dealt with. Consider:. Consider:
 - What were the technical and commercial issues you faced?
 - How did you approach and resolve these issues?
 - How did you ensure the team delivered?
- Your interviewer may create a practical scenario to discuss with you to explore your knowledge of key areas of the your knowledge of key areas of the law law
- They may also ask you to describe a situation where you had to explain a complex legal issue to a colleague or client- what problems did you encounter?

TIP: Structure the answer as a Beginning (e.g. parties, value of matter etc.), Middle (your involvement, in the first person), and Ending (outcome of the matter, including how you may have dealt with any complex/novel issues).

Passion and Ambition

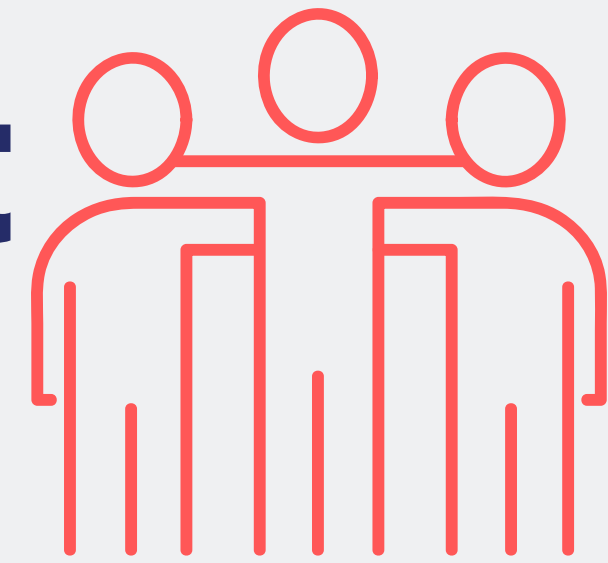


Your ability to collaborate may be considered in your interview.

Questions to consider:

- How would you manage competing objectives and time pressures?
- Think of a time your team has had to work under significant client pressure? How did you support them during this time?
- Think of a team you have built and managed. What did you consider when pulling the team together? What have you learnt from the experience?
- Can you think of a time when you led on a transaction or case and had to deal with a challenging team member? How did you go about the situation to ensure client needs were met?
- What is your five-year plan?

Value Alignment & Cultural Fit



Leadership

Some questions you may be asked:

- Please tell us about a time when you have had to go above and beyond to deliver a positive outcome.
- Please provide an example of where you have faced significant client pressure. What did you do to maintain quality of work?
- Can you tell us about a time when you have been less busy/under-utilised? How did you deal with this?
- Can you tell us about a time when you made a mistake? How did you deal with this?
- Can you tell us about a time when you had some negative feedback on your work? How did it affect your behaviour and work?

Business Development

- Can you provide an example of how you have further developed client relationships or promoted your current firm (e.g. to gain business through referral or refer work internally)?
- Can you think of a time when you have improved or modified a current process or practice to the benefit of your organisation?

Diversity & Inclusion

- Think about the steps you have taken to create a work environment where differences are valued and supported.
- What does diversity & inclusion mean to you?

Communication & Interpersonal Skills



Delegation and Management

You may be asked to...

- Describe a challenging project you have led on. What challenges did you and your team face? What did you do to ensure the team delivered?
- Provide an example of a time when you had to delegate work to team members. How did you decide which piece of work to delegate to which team member? How did you support them to be successful?

Enhancing The Client Experience

- Think of a time when you led on a particularly complex piece of work for a client.
 - What steps did you take to understand the client's commercial and legal needs?
 - How did you communicate complex technical issues to the client?
- Can you provide an example of when you think you provided particularly practical and commercial advice to a client?



Questions you should ask



Asking questions ensures that you have all the information you need to assess the firm and opportunity. It also demonstrates that you are inquisitive, you've done your research, and you're *genuinely* interested in the role.

"If I was working with you on X matter, what you expect my role to be day-to-date to advance this matter?"

"What's the structure of the current team?"

"Please can you explain the process for promotion?"

"As a Senior Associate, would I be encouraged to contribute to business development? initiatives?"

"For someone coming in at my level, what would the expectation be in terms of matter involvement?"

"What are your management styles? How do you manage your team in terms of matter involvement- do you tend to find a Senior Associate would lead on all matters with Partner oversight and junior support?"

"Where do you see growth of practice? Are you focusing on any specific sectors, seeing growth in particular sectors, or seeing any increase in instructions coming through from particular sectors?"

Virtual Interviews



- **Internet connection:** Test your connection by making some small-talk at the start of the interview.
- **Location:** Ensure you're set up in a quiet spot with minimal distractions. Make sure there's some natural light nearby or a bright light so you can be seen well on camera.
- **Visuals:** If you can't find a plain backdrop, consider blurring your background or putting up a plain image as your background.
- **Technology:** Check that your zoom / teams app has been updated and that your video and microphone are working.
- **Eye-contact:** Look at the camera to show you're engaged when speaking, as if you would in-person.
- **Engagement:** Pay attention to when your interviewer is ready to ask a question or respond to something you've said. Use body language such as nodding and sit up straight to show you're engaging with the conversation.
- **Enthusiasm:** Over a video call, it can sometimes be hard to show emotion, which can often be misinterpreted. Show your interviewers that you're enthusiastic about the role through your tone of voice and facial expressions.
- **Awareness of others:** Speak slowly, clearly and smile to ensure your interviewer can understand what you're saying. Make sure you pause between answers and be conscious of multiple voices on the call. Wait a couple of seconds for the interviewer to conclude their sentence to allow for any time delay.
- **Dress the part:** Just because your interview is over video, doesn't mean you shouldn't dress formally.

Debriefing post interview

After each interview, we'll have a chat with you about how everything went

It's important that you give us a call after the interview so we can help you process what was said and get an understanding of:

- How you feel about the role / whether your opinion has changed;
- How you feel about the firm and the interviewers you spoke with;
- What feedback you received from the interviewers;
- The best way to approach the next interview you have with the firm for best chances of success; and
- Any unanswered questions or concerns at this stage?

Summary – 5 Top Tips



Know your experience

Be prepared to articulate why your experience is relevant for the role. Ensure you have examples of matters you've worked on and how these match up to the job description.



Know who you're meeting with

Do some research on your interviewers. What's their background? What's their role in the firm? What matters have they recently worked on?



Be clear about the firm and role

Interviewers want to know that you've done your research on the firm and are genuinely interested in the role. Be clear before you go into the interview about how you align with the role and firm..



Prepare questions to ask

Interviewers want you to ask questions because it shows you're interested in the firm and role. Have an idea of what you want to know by the end of the interview. It will also help to clarify whether the role will be the right fit. Ask questions *throughout* the interview (i.e. don't wait till the end) to make it more conversational.



Be detail orientated

Be sure to provide adequate depth in your answers. Partners will want a detailed run down of your matter involvement, technical skills and team management capabilities.

Think about a 3 step answer with a beginning, middle and end.

If you're unsure if you've said enough, simply ask if more information is needed.