

## Third Year Litigation Associate Wants to Make a Lateral Move

### Question:

I am a third year litigation associate with a strong academic record, and a solid work history at an American Law top 200 law firm. I am working with a great recruiter, who has submitted me to over 20 law firms, but have only been able to secure 2 initial screening interviews in the last year. What can I do to open up more possibilities to make a lateral move?

### Answer:

Firstly, I want to applaud you for working with a recruiter who you have obviously developed a nice relationship with. It is so advantageous to work with a good recruiter who will act on your behalf, inform you of all relevant opportunities, and even act proactively to find out about appropriate openings to submit you for.

If you are an associate with experience in a **practice area** that is not particularly "hot", such as litigation, and you are able to get an interview, you have to be really, really prepared for that interview. Although it is very helpful and sometimes necessary, it is not enough in the current market to rely on strong academics and work history.

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One of the litigation associate candidates that I placed within the last year gave me some insight into what she felt helped her get a second interview and an offer within a week of her first interview. She relayed that her goal was to "have some control over the interview herself" and to achieve this she actually brought in a list of ten questions on a piece of paper into her interview. She explained that this way she could control the conversation and interject with a question if there should be a lull or pause in dialogue. Of course, to do this effectively she had to research the firm thoroughly and gather enough information to ask intelligent questions.

While this might not be everyone's style, I found it interesting that being prepared was the first thing she spoke of. Next, I asked her how she conveyed to her prospective employers that she would do a good job, how did she exude the confidence? Her answer was to let her experience work for her, and to relate her own specific experiences into the responses to the questions asked. Again, to exude confidence, she stressed that you have to be prepared and familiar with all aspects of your resume and experiences to draw upon them and relate them to new questions.

Finally, this candidate spoke of having a "nothing to lose" attitude. She said that she never hides who she is on an interview, alternatively she "lets her personality shine through". Her thinking is that in the end, if there is a personality clash on an interview, she probably wouldn't be able to work with that partner anyhow. While the goal is always to turn every interview into an offer, to do this, you should always be yourself.

Please see this article to find out if litigation is right for you: *Why*

*Most Attorneys Have No Business*

# *Being Litigators: Fifteen Reasons Why You Should Not Be a Litigator*

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