

Doing Your Homework – Law Firm Websites

This may seem very obvious, but it always bears repeating because of how greatly it increases your chances of a successful job search and/or interview: always do your homework. Your recruiter will be able to alert you to opportunities in your desired location, help market you to law firms, and ideally provide you information about how and why particular firms would be a good match for your background and experience, but at the end of the day, it is your own personal research and preparation that will be the driver of your job search and interview success.

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One of the best things you can do in researching a firm, whether in making your initial decision to apply or in prepping for an interview, is to make extensive use of the law firm's website. Again, obvious right? But depending on how the firm has organized their site, it can sometimes be difficult to find the relevant information, even for me, so here are a few helpful tips that can get you started:

1) Size of the office you are applying to - you may be looking at an AmLaw Top 50 firm, but depending on your market, the firm's office there might be on the smaller, bigger, newer or older size. Most firms now have features where you can search attorneys by office and get an accurate tally. Many of my candidates have often been surprised that they are able to find a more intimate, personal experience at a "big" law firm if the firm's office in their city happens to be on the small side versus a mid-sized regional firm with an office of 50-100 attorneys that still feels big. If you are looking for a particular feel or dynamic, this is a great way to sort that out.

See [Top Ten Interview Questions](#) for more information

2) Who you would be working with - oftentimes more helpful than a search by office to determine the size, some firms will let you narrow your search of the firm's attorneys by practice group as well. Running a search by office and practice group is an excellent way to be able to quickly browse the profiles of the people you would potentially be working with, and can sometimes be the fastest way to determine whether a firm might be a good fit for you.

3) What type of work you would be doing - following up on the last point, once you know who is in the practice group in a given office, you can browse the profiles of those attorneys to figure out the type of work they do and see if it matches up with your background and interests. "Litigation" covers a lot of territory, as does "corporate." If all the attorneys in a given practice group do insurance coverage, and you are looking for broad commercial litigation, it might not be a good fit. The more helpful profiles will be those of the partners - they will be more likely to have a list of representative matters and clients than junior associates, and they will also be the ones assigning you the work if you are an associate candidate. If you are a partner, browsing the profiles will help you determine how much complementary experience and potential for collaboration and cross-marketing a particular firm might offer you, which can be of utmost importance in maintaining and growing your client base.

4) Is the firm growing in your practice group - even candidates inclined to do their own research oftentimes fail to explore one of the more helpful resources on a law firm's website: the press releases. More specifically, the press releases specific to your practice group that discuss lateral partner moves and/or practice group expansion. For instance, I recently had an IP candidate who was seeking to join a firm with a growing IP

practice, as the one at his current firm was stagnating with a lack of overall support. I knew from looking at press releases that a particular firm's Silicon Valley office had recently brought over a couple IP partners, and that the firm as a whole had been hiring new IP attorneys regularly over the past year in order to build that practice group globally (in their D.C. and China-based office particularly). This not only confirmed the potential fit for my candidate, but when he mentioned this during his interview with the firm, the partners were impressed that he was aware of this information.

There is obviously more information to be had the deeper you dig, but hopefully this will give you a good start in knowing how to research a firm and what to look for in determining a potential fit with your interests and preparing yourself for a more successful interview.

Learn why attorneys usually fail law firm phone-screening interviews in this article:

[Why Most Attorneys Fail Telephone-Screening Interviews](#)