

**Connecting Students with Lawyers: Three Ways to Connect Students
to Practicing Attorneys to Get Students “Practice-Ready”**
Marquette University Law School

Tips for Creating Brown Bag Presentations Using Practicing Attorneys

The following are tips for creating a successful “brown bag” presentation that involves practicing attorneys and allows for meaningful student-attorney interaction, while also conveying information that will help students become more “practice ready.”

Logistics

- ✓ Find the best time – look for semester lulls; depends on content and audience
- ✓ Keep it short – an hour is plenty
- ✓ Lunch is served!
- ✓ Timeline: set your topic (2 months out); set your presenters (1 month out); set your questions (3 weeks out); market, market, market (2 weeks out and on)

Topic Selection

- ✓ Select your audience first
- ✓ Keep it simple; keep it core
- ✓ Careful of overlap/conflict (opportunity to join forces?)
- ✓ Examples: “Successful Summer Clerkships: What to Expect and How to Succeed”; “Help Wanted: Drafting Writing Samples”; “Law Clerk Confidential: Experiences of a Law Clerk”; “Citation and Cite-Checking Refresher”, “Legal Writing in the Real World”

Format

- ✓ Goal is for practitioners to share experience and advice
- ✓ Moderator needed but let the “real” lawyers carry the water
- ✓ Establish the bona fides
- ✓ Options for substance: structured Q&A; simulations; review of student materials; student questions (planted questions Ok); hybrids
- ✓ ~~War stories~~

Choosing Practitioners

- ✓ Varied perspectives are best – firm size, practice area, government, clerkships, diversity
- ✓ Goldilocks rule → not too busy/bored; not too junior/senior; not too laid back/intense – need practitioners that are *just right*
- ✓ Get alumni in the mix

- ✓ Two or three practitioners is ideal; remember, the moderator (you) counts too!
- ✓ ~~War stories~~

Prepping Practitioners

- ✓ Give them guidance
- ✓ Give them time
- ✓ Give them freedom to connect, advise, inspire, and have fun

Content

- ✓ See examples (attached)
- ✓ Ask for input from the practitioners

Student Involvement

- ✓ Make time for student Q&A
- ✓ Review of student work/materials
- ✓ The upperclassman vouch

Marketing

- ✓ Email blasts
- ✓ Flyers (see attached)
- ✓ “Chalk” the boards
- ✓ Colleagues
- ✓ TAs and former students

Institutional Support

- ✓ Pizza is cheap
- ✓ Lunch for presenters is too (coffee is cheaper)
- ✓ Look for commonalities with administrative programming (*e.g.*, career services, alumni development)
- ✓ CLE credit?

Todd Haugh
5-Dec-13

Email correspondence re “Successful Summer Clerkships” Brown Bag

Initial email to practitioners:

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:55 PM, Carpenter, Jacob <JCARPEN3@depaul.edu> wrote:
Todd and Kathryn,

Thank you both for agreeing to serve as panelists on April 6, at DePaul Law School. The presentation will be 45 minutes long and will be open to any DePaul law students. Sometimes we get 30-40 students show up, and sometimes we only get about 10. We are providing pizza for this presentation, though, so we hope the numbers will be pretty good.

The focus of the presentation will be to help students who will be working as summer associates understand what the experience will be like; what the firms will be expecting of them; what they should do, and not do, to make a good impression; etc. Whatever tips, advice, or insights you can provide to the students will be great.

We typically structure these 45 minute lunchtime presentations by having two legal writing profs (Tom and I for this one) introduce the two of you and then ask you two questions for about 30 minutes. Then we open it up to student Q&A for the last 15 minutes. To make it as easy as possible for the four of us, we typically script the questions in advance so you both know what questions Tom and I will ask you, and so you can prepare in advance any responses you want to give. The presentation need not be overly formal or orchestrated: it's often more of just a conversation. Either of you can ad-lib however you want, add to each other's comments, etc. But, if we do a rough outline of the questions Tom and I will ask, then we can make sure we cover what we want to in the 30 minutes before we open it up to the students.

The above is just how we typically do it. If you would rather start by each just sharing whatever tips, advice, insights, etc., that you want to share, before Tom and I, or the students, ask any questions, that could work fine too. If you have a preference as to how you would like the presentation to be structured, just let us know. Whatever you are most comfortable with, we can do.

The presentation is only 3 weeks away, so I want to go ahead and get a rough outline of questions put together. Would you mind taking a few minutes to think about what you would want to share with the students, and then send me about 5 questions that you would want Tom and I to ask you. You certainly don't have to script out the answers and send those to me. Just the set-up questions you would want us to ask you would be fine. If you think of more than 5, feel free to send however many you think would be good. I just mentioned 5 to get us started. I will then set up a rough outline of questions to ask the two of you during the presentation. Once I hear back from both of you and get a rough outline of the presentation put together, I will send you both copies.

Thanks again for agreeing to help Tom and I put this together for the students. I think the students will benefit from hearing from the two of you what they should be doing, how they should act, treat others, dress, approach assignments, handle social situations, etc., during their first summer at a law firm. If you have any questions, just let me know. And, I know you two are busy, so if you don't have time to put together a list of questions you would want to respond to, just let me know. Tom and I already have some ideas, but we thought you two may have more, or better, ideas than we did. Thanks again! Attached is the flyer that we will be posting throughout the law school.

Jake C.

Professor Jacob Carpenter

Todd Haugh
5-Dec-13

Response from practitioners re content:

From: Kate Newman [kathryn.newman@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2009 2:41 PM
To: Carpenter, Jacob
Cc: toddhaugh@yahoo.com; Ruffner, Thomas
Subject: Re: DePaul Presentation on April 6

I have a few areas that I think should be covered. Here are my thoughts - let me know if it's redundant.
- **Technology Manners/Use**

Addressing the generational gap. You may be able to listen and text at the same time, but chances are your boss can't. In other words, turn off your BlackBerry at meetings and at lunch. It's disrespectful. And, quite frankly, you're not that important. If you are, you probably should be at your desk and not at the lunch.

- **Blogs and Social Networking Sites**

Don't mention your Firm by name in your blog. Don't link to Bios of your colleagues. And take down the topless keg stand photo asap.

- **Know Your Firm**

The Firm will be pitching itself to you all summer. But take the time in advance to learn about it and to find areas that interest you. You'll get more out of the summer program. And they will really notice.

- **How to Handle Lay Offs and Questions About Them**

It's been a terrible year. Our bosses, our friends, our secretaries have been fired. We've been through hell. Respect that. This is not the year to have an air of entitlement. You are getting paid \$2000 a month to do nothing and you will not turn a profit for us. We know this. Be respectful of the opportunity you've been given.

Moreover, firms have cut back on hiring. You competed heavily for this job. Be proud of that. But know that there are 3 of your classmates who would kill for the job you have. Respect them too by taking this seriously.

Learn what you can. This information is out there. Listen to associates who talk to you confidentially. Find someone you learn to trust to ask the questions you need answered. You are deciding whether or not to take the offer. Get all the information you can up front.

- **Attitudes**

DePaul students aren't prone to entitlement issues. Just in case -- this isn't the year for them.

- **Work Assignments**

This should go without saying - but sadly, it comes up every year. Do your assignments. You are expected to finish your work while you are at the Firm. You cannot turn it in after you're done. Seriously.

Great thoughts, Kate.

I came up with a list of some of the standard questions soon-to-be summer associates ask (or want to ask) prior to starting work. Below that, and building on Kate's comments, is some of my sage advice.

TJH

Common questions we may want to address during the panel

- • What is real summer associate day like?
- • What type of projects will I actually be doing?
- • How are projects assigned?
- • How do I get the assignments I want in the practice area I want?
- • How do I get to an offer in the practice area I want?
- • How will the current economic conditions affect my summer?
- • How will the current economic conditions affect my chances of getting hired as an associate?
- • How do I make myself stand out from the crowd?
- • How much will I be expected to work each day?
- • Am I expected to bill real hours to real clients? How many hours will I be expected to bill each day?
- • How do I avoid difficult partners/associates?
- • How do I balance the social and work aspects of being a summer associate?
- • How is the firm evaluating my performance?
- • What do I do if I am swamped with work? Can I turn down assignments?
- • How do I discover and evaluate the "real" firm in order to decide if I want to work there as an associate?
- • What are common summer associate mistakes? How can I avoid them?
- • What do I do if I get a poor review on a project?
- • What do I do if I don't get an offer?

Advice from the associate ranks

Understand the project

Ask questions until you truly understand the task you have been given. If you don't feel comfortable asking the partner/associate who assigned the project, find someone who can help you understand exactly what is expected of you. Nothing irritates those assigning projects more than getting back a long memo that answers the wrong question. And once you know exactly what the task is and you've done it, think creativity to determine if there is anything else that you can add to make the project more complete (within reason and using good judgment of course). If you can independently add value by asking the "next question" and then answering it, you show that you can succeed as an associate.

Use the resources available to you--don't reinvent the wheel

Most firms with summer associate classes have incredible resources, including experienced secretaries, libraries and librarians, Westlaw and Lexis reps, proofreading departments, document technology staff,

after hours help, etc. Learn what resources are available and use them to make your projects that much better. Start with the "free" ones; make sure to get clearance for any resources that cost extra. Lexis and Westlaw are not part of the "free" ones.

Excellent writing should be your focus

The majority of your projects will culminate with some type of written work product, which will be reviewed by at least one person and possibly a committee of associates and partners. Put your all into each project and incorporate any comments if there is any intermediate review by an associate. Consider anything you do turn in as final--don't treat anything you turn in as a "draft."

Realize you will be doing real work and people will be relying on your work product

Summer associates often wrongly believe they are only confirming things partners and associates already know. That is almost never the case--partners don't bill clients for finding answers that are already known. Real people--partners and clients--are relying on your work, including your legal analysis. Treat your projects accordingly.

Be proactive and assertive

If there is a type of work you want to try or a specific project you would like to do, ask someone (nicely). Not every project has to be a legal research memo. Not every project has to be billed to a client. Many partners are willing and happy to let you tag along to a client meeting, sit in on a deposition, or watch a court hearing, but these projects are often overlooked because they don't fit the research memo mold. Showing interest and asking to be included raises your profile and is the best way for you to truly find out what types of legal work you want to do in the future.

Don't act like an idiot--consider yourself "on the job" all summer long

Partners, associates, and other summers will do a lot of things over the course of the summer that are not exactly professional. Don't be tempted to follow suit, even if it's after hours and off firm grounds. This really is a three month long job interview. If you are doing something that would make a good post on Above the Law, stop it.

Good judgment is demonstrated all summer long—bad judgment is demonstrated in a single act

Partners and associates rarely remember a summer associate demonstrating good professional judgment because good judgment is a given. But everyone will remember a summer associate that shows poor judgment. Bad judgment can crop up in any number of situations—client calls, partner meetings, social events, interaction with staff and other associates. To avoid overstepping into the bad judgment realm, try this: think more and talk less. If you are questioning whether to make a comment, it's probably better to hold off. You can demonstrate your knowledge on a subject and interest in a practice area in lots of ways. Take your time and think before you act.

Never go anywhere without a pen and a pad of paper

Outline of "Successful Summer Clerkships" Brown Bag

4/6/09 LARC Presentation - Successful Summer Clerkships

JAKE – Good afternoon and welcome to our panel discussion about how to succeed during a summer law clerkship. I'm Prof. Carpenter and co-hosting with me is Prof. Ruffner.

During law school, we both **clerked** during summers
practiced as associates for 4 years

- **mentored and supervised** summer associates.
- saw behaviors – **some good, some bad** – by summer assc's.
- listened to **numerous reviews** of summer associates

Definitely ways summer clerks **help** themselves succeed and hurt.

We wanted to **share some experiences and advice** for you as you prepare to clerk this summer, work at a firm next school year, or even as you begin a new associates.

- Especially w/ tougher job market

To provide broader insights, we **asked two senior associates** to join us and discuss this topic with you. These attorneys play active roles in hiring summer associates, supervising them, and evaluating them.

- **Todd Haugh** graduated from Brown w/ honors and then graduated from the University of Illinois Law School w/ honors in 2002. He then worked for Stetler & Duffy, a white collar criminal defense firm for 4 years. He then clerked for a year for the Honorable Judge Conlon at the federal district court. He is now a senior associate at Winston & Strawn where he practices in state and federal court in the areas of white collar criminal defense, internal investigations, and complex commercial litigation. Todd has active responsibilities in overseeing aspects of Winston's summer associate program.

TOM – **Kate Newman** graduated from Georgetown Law Center in 1999. She spent her first three years of practice with Lewis & Roca in Phoenix, specializing in Complex Commercial Litigation. In 2002, she joined Skadden Arps's Chicago office, specializing in Securities Litigation and Class Actions. She joined the Global Litigation group at Howrey Simon in 2004 and has spent the past four years at Jenner & Block practicing

securities litigation and class action. In May, she will join the Office of the U.S. Attorney in Nevada.

Kate has been actively involved in recruiting and designing the summer programs throughout her career. She has mentored associates and summer associates in formal and informal capacities. At Jenner, she served on the junior associate training committee, designing the summer and junior associate core competency programs. She speaks and writes regularly to firm and bar associations on practical tips for development and negotiating the complex waters of firm life.

JAKE Questions What we'd like to do now is ask the panelists some Qs, and our goal is to have enough time after this segment to let you ask Qs before the end of the hour.

Todd: **Typical day?** What is a typical day like for a summer associate?

Kate: **Type of projects?** What types of projects will summer associates be doing?

Either **How assigned?** How are assignments assigned?

Kate: **Areas of Interest:** How can a summer associate get assignments in the area he or she is interested in?

Todd: What can a summer associate do to help get an offer in the practice area she is interested in?

Todd: **How much?** How much work will a summer be expected to do?

Kate: **Billing?** Do summers keep track of time, bill clients, etc.?
How much will they be expected to bill each day?

Kate: **Work v. Social:** How much of the summer is actual work versus observing, social events, etc.?

Kate: How important is the social aspect?

Evaluations

How? How is the firm evaluating the performances of their summer associates?

Handling Difficult Situations

Swamped: What is a summer get swamped? Can they turn down work?

Difficult partners: What if a summer associate learns of difficult partners/associates? How should the summer handle them?

Poor review: What should a summer do if he or she gets a poor review on a project?

Ensuring an offer: What should a summer do if he or she does not get an offer to return at the end of the summer?

Switching around: Many attorneys end up at 4-5 firms throughout career. Is it really *that* important how seriously you take the summer job?

Economy: This may be an awkward summer for some at firms b/c of economy, recent job cuts, rumors of upcoming cuts, etc. How do you think associates should handle this situation?

Generation gap: Do you notice a difference in behavior between new summer associates that may be normal in young adults now, but that attorneys may not be comfortable with?

Don't listen to Ipod at work. Don't text when at meetings or lunch. Don't blog about work/firm.

ADVICE

Both: **Being a Star**: How does a summer associate stand out among the crowd of summer associates? What's your advice?

Be social.

Be proactive. Assert yourself. Ask for opp's to observe depts, attend court, etc.

Treat staff as respectfully as attorneys.

Always be prepared (w/ pen and paper)

Write well. No typos!

Be professional, not casual.

Both: **Common mistakes**: What are the common mistakes summer associates make? And, how can students avoid those?

Not taking work product seriously.

Not completing an assignment on time.

Not returning emails, phone messages, requests, etc., promptly

Not acting professionally at all times, even if attorneys aren't.

AUDIENCE Qs

SUCCESSFUL SUMMER CLERKSHIPS

WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO SUCCEED

Monday, April 6
Noon to 12:45 p.m. (Room 903)

All students are invited.
Pizza will be provided!!!

Will you be working as a summer associate this summer? *Learn what firms will expect of you, how firms will evaluate you, and what you need to do to receive an offer for a permanent position!*

During this panel discussion, Professors Jacob Carpenter and Thomas Ruffner will host two senior associates – **Todd Haugh of Winston & Strawn LLP** and **Kathryn Newman of Jenner & Block** – both of whom are active in their firms' summer associate programs. Mr. Haugh and Ms. Newman will share their insights, experiences, advice, and answers to your questions.

Prepare yourself to succeed this summer.
Join us to get the inside scoop—and free pizza!
