

[Rutgers-Camden Law School Career Planning Office Blog](#)

[The OCI “Call-Back” Interview](#)

Invited to interview at the firm office after your on-campus screening interview? If so, you’re one of the very few. Make the most of the highly competitive interview by doing a little more preparation. Know what to expect, and follow some simple rules and you’ll leave your best impression:

- **Research:** Do more than just look up the firm online and read about the people on the hiring committee. Talk to people in the law school, alumni and in the community about the firm. Search the internet. You will generally be given the names of the specific individuals you will meet with the day before the interview.
- **Confirm:** Call the firm the day before your interview to confirm the arrangements. If you have not been given a list of people you will meet with, you can politely ask at that time.
- **The Players:** At most firms, the interview will last several hours, and consist of meeting with several different people in the firm. Generally, you will meet with anywhere from three to six attorneys, from new associates to partners. If you can, get a business card from each person you meet with, and write a short note on the back about your conversation. That information will come in handy later for your thank-you letters. Don’t take notes during your interview though – do it between interviews.
- **Your Demeanor:** The interview starts the minute you walk in the door. Support staff who welcome you are interviewing you as well as the people formally conducting your interview. Make sure you are fully prepared before you get there – do not review notes in the waiting room. Make eye-contact with everyone, give a friendly smile and STAY CALM! Watching how well you perform under pressure is part of the process.
- **The Questions, Part I:** Don’t be surprised if you get some of the same questions that you were asked during your on-campus interview. You may be asked about your grades, your interest in a particular firm or practice area, why you want to be a lawyer, your strengths and weaknesses, where you see yourself in ten years, etc. You may also be asked questions designed to have you illustrate how you handled a particular situation in the past, such as, "How did you handle the last time you received an unexpected project?" or "What was an innovative idea you came up with in the workplace?" or "How did you handle a situation where you disagreed with a supervisor?" Your answers to these types of questions will help the firm determine whether you have the characteristics of an attorney the firm is looking for. Remember, lawyers are expected to answer difficult questions routinely - it’s part of the job. Get used to it!
- **The Questions, Part II:** You are expected to ask questions as well, to help you determine whether you

want to work for the firm. Other than the obvious questions about billable hours, compensation and rate of offers to summer associates, you might consider asking the interviewers what they like most about their jobs. A question that might elicit some good information is “What was the most important case you’ve worked on?” You might ask about how young associates are supervised, supported and evaluated in their professional development, how cases are staffed, and how the recession has affected the firm in terms of hiring, billing, etc. Take time and listen to the answers you get, and formulate follow-up questions. Try to avoid asking one question and moving on to an unrelated question. You want the interview to feel as much like a conversation as possible.

- **Thank You Notes:** Send them! Thank-you emails are sub-optimal. Handwritten notes on plain card stock, or business letters, individually addressed to each person you met at the firm and sent by snail-mail are the most professional. They should be mailed no later than 24 hours after your interview. Refer to the notes on the back of the business cards for information to personalize each letter or note.

Much of this information is relevant to interviews in general, not only to the OCI call-back interview. For more information on how to prepare for your call-back interview, or any interview, contact your counselor in the career planning office to set up an appointment.