

ASK US ANYTHING!

The Power of Being Curious During Student Recruitment

Participating in the recruitment process is exciting. However, we know that it can also be stressful. As you navigate the process of selecting where to start your legal career, how do you make sure you select the firm that is right for you? Asking the right questions helps give you the information you need! We asked our students what questions they were glad they asked or wished they had asked of us and others during their recruitment experiences.

QUESTIONS I'M GLAD I ASKED



What are some examples of advocacy experiences and assignments a student will get at the firm?

“I understand that articling can be challenging, so I wanted to work at a firm where summer students are given a diverse range of work that adequately prepares them for the next stage of their education. This question gave me an impression of the variety of tasks a summer student may be working on and the extent students are involved in the litigation process. If students have a lower level of responsibility, their development will be much slower. When I asked this question at my Lenczner Slaght interview, I learned directly from students about their involvement in drafting submissions, affidavits and motion records, participating in the strategizing process and sitting in on trials. When I started at the firm, this was exactly the case!”



How does the firm and its lawyers provide constructive feedback to a student?

“I wanted to join a firm that could teach me how to be the best litigator that I could be by providing me with honest, direct, and real-time feedback. I also wanted teachers who would recognize that mistakes are a necessary part of the learning process. Lenczner Slaght lawyers let me know that they took on a more personal approach to feedback that extended beyond bureaucracy and encouraged reflection. This approach was a big part of why I felt that the firm was the right place for me.”



How does the firm support the legal and professional development of its students and junior lawyers?

“How a firm treats their juniors and helps them grow professionally is a good indication of the broader firm culture. This question helped me understand the opportunities students have to learn, network, and socialize, and the overall support they receive on a weekly basis as they navigate the beginning of their legal career.”



What drew the lawyers to the firm and what has kept them at the firm all these years?

“Asking this question helped me determine which firms were aligned with the values that I prioritized in a workplace (e.g., being a tight-knit firm, having a supportive network, teamwork, commitment to excellence, continuous learning from colleagues, etc.)”



Why should I choose a litigation boutique over the litigation department of a full-service firm?

“When you're new to the legal profession, it can be hard to determine what sets one firm apart from another. Asking this question provided me with the clarity that I needed, and gave me the assurance that I would be growing as a litigator in an environment that would offer me both the specialized focus and broad exposure that I needed to best develop my skills.”

QUESTIONS I WISH I ASKED



What is an example of a file you have on your desk and how did you get a student involved in it?

“I think it would have been helpful to learn more about the day-to-day interaction between lawyers and students in a tangible, practical way. How do students get work from lawyers? Are there ways to get involved in certain practice areas of interest? This question would’ve given me some valuable, practical perspective – and it’s always fun to hear a lawyer get excited about the work that they’re doing and how a student played an important role!”



How has the firm changed over time?

“I think that a firm’s growth and changes made in the past says a lot about their priorities for the future, and I wish I had been more proactive about asking some of those questions. Learning more about what my life would look like at the firm as not only a student, but as a future associate or partner, would have been valuable.”



How does the firm welcome and commit to supporting first generation students and lawyers from various socio-economic backgrounds?

“As a student, it can be very difficult to ask tough questions. It is well known that there are inequitable barriers to success for many students and that firms vary in their progressiveness. As a student who grew up under the poverty level with a single mother of four children, this question would have helped me to ensure that I am selecting a firm where I can feel comfortable embodying my personal experiences. Because I didn’t ask, I was left making inferences and assumptions about how I would fit in at a firm. I think that students should feel empowered to ask these important questions.”



Can you tell me more about the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility (IDEA) initiatives at the firm beyond what is on the website?

“Some firms simply reiterate what is already on their website and don’t comment further on their initiatives. This can be an indication that the initiatives aren’t championed firmwide or that there is little interest in doing the work to further IDEA at their firm. If I was more specific with my questions, I would have learned more about how firms value IDEA internally and not just what they promote in the market.”



What are the office traditions or group activities that keep the firm close?

“One of the things that I love about Lenczner Slaght is how many fun traditions they have, both in person and virtual. While I learned about these special parts of the firm culture as a student at the firm, it may have made my choice even easier if I knew about them beforehand. I also wish I could’ve compared them against the ways other firms make efforts to maintain their firm culture, especially during difficult circumstances like the pandemic.”

As you embark on your recruitment journey, don’t forget about our [Tips & Testimonials Guide](#) for important suggestions on preparing for virtual interviews and unique testimonials on what it’s like to be a student at Canada’s leading litigation firm. Our goal is to make sure that you have an excellent recruitment experience! Learn more at www.litigate.com/Students.