



Alison Monahan: Welcome to The Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're excited to have guest Sadie Jones, an ex big law recruiter, here with us to talk about the strategic decisions you're gonna need to make during OCI. Your Law School Toolbox host today is Alison Monahan, and normally I'm with Lee Burgess, my cohost. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so that you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. Together we're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career related website, [Career Dicta](#). I also run [The Girls Guide to Law School](#).

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Welcome back to The Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're excited to have guest Sadie Jones, an ex big law recruiter, here to talk with us about the strategic decisions you need to make during OCI. So, first off, let's talk about the basics. What is OCI, and how does the process typically work?

Sadie Jones: Well, OCI stands for On-Campus Interviewing. And it kind of has a few different steps. The first step is picking which firms the student wants to bid on. So, which firms they're interested in, it could be a large list, it could be a smaller more specific list. The next step is getting OCI interviews, and having a 20 or 30 minute interview, usually at a hotel or at the school, with one or two lawyers from the firms, and then the next step is getting a call back. So, you do well in the first round, and then you go back for a full round of interviews at the firm-

Alison Monahan: Basically the number of firms that you have available to bid on is gonna vary a lot by school. Is that true?

Sadie Jones: That's definitely true-

Alison Monahan: Absolutely. So, you know, if you are accepted by your top school, you're gonna have literally hundreds of firms from all over the country who are there, who are eager to talk to you, and if you're at a lower ranked school, the reality is that's just not necessarily gonna be the case. And ...

Sadie Jones: And I'd also add the difference between maybe a top school and a lower ranked school is that usually at a top school it's all completely random. So, the student



does pick the firm, but the firm just gets a list of students. At a lower rank school, a lot of times the firm gets to pick their schedule based on who's interested in them. Let's say half their schedule, 80% of their schedule. So, it's a little bit different depending on probably the ranking of the school.

Alison Monahan: Right. I think that's definitely true, and one of the key points that we're gonna make here is you need to know the process that your school works, and what it's based on. So, if you're at Harvard, your bids are basically gonna be assigned by lottery. So, you can just pick the firms that you're interested in, and then you'll get randomly assigned to them, but a lot of other places, that's not gonna be the case. So, you're gonna have to meet specific requirements, or you're going to have to get picked by a firm for the interview.

Sadie Jones: Correct. So, your options are probably a little more open, you know, at a really highly ranked school.

Alison Monahan: Right, but even then I think people have to be careful to be realistic, and we'll talk about that in detail. Just because you're at Harvard, doesn't mean that you're gonna get an offer at every single firm in the country if you're at the bottom of your class. That's just not the way it works. So, what factors are people looking at when they're deciding either from the firm perspective, I wanna talk to this person in an initial interview, or ultimately I wanna give them an offer?

Sadie Jones: Well, I mean, I think really the firm wants to find the right match for them. So, kind of different areas like even if firms don't say it, they usually do have sort of a general grade cut off, or what they're looking for. So, they are gonna look at that. They're gonna look at location, they're gonna look at the interest between what practice areas they have, those sorts of things.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, so these are the factors that you, as the person, student who's bidding, need to be thinking about too. So, let's dive into the grade stuff a bit, because I know that's an area of a lot of angst. I mean, from your perspective as a former recruiter, how firm are ... I mean, do the firms actually have specific grade requirements at different schools? And how firm are those?

Sadie Jones: So, I've been at firms where they do, and I've been at firms where they don't. I've never been at a firm that said what it was though.

Alison Monahan: Publicly, you mean. Okay, because I've seen them internally before.

Sadie Jones: Yes, yeah.

Alison Monahan: I mean, I'll be honest, Quinn basically just circulated them out to the entire firm. You know, it was crazy.



Alison Monahan: I don't think they even do OCI now, but at the time it was like, and to be honest, they were ridiculous. It's like, if you're at Columbia, you need to have a 3.7 to interview here. It's like, oh really? Come on.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, and I've never been at a firm with that's that blatant about it. But yeah, I mean, and the other thing is there usually is some leeway, right? So, if they say, they tell the interviewer we're really not looking at anyone with below a 3.5, or whatever school you're at. You know, you find someone who you love, and you're the interviewer, you wanna fight for them, and they have a 3.45, they might be able to push them through. They're not gonna be able to push someone through with a 3.2.

So, I think you kind of, you know, we did have an idea of what we were looking at, and it did depend on what the school was, because especially these days, a lot of schools don't even have exact grades.

Alison Monahan: Right, that's true. I mean, we were officially not even allowed to calculate our GPA, which we find this list was sort of funny too, after the fact. It was like, people don't even know what their GPA is actually. Neither do you. But yeah, I think grades are one of those things that you have to be realistic about when you're bidding, and that certainly is something that's gonna play a huge factor in your strategy, right?

Sadie Jones: Absolutely, and I think the thing you have to remember is that the interviewer's not gonna see your grades until either they get there, or most likely even I know a lot of people don't even look at the transcript until after they've talked to you. So, I think you do have a chance to make your impression without them knowing what your grades are. That being said, you know, there's gonna be those cutoffs where no matter how much they loved you, they're not gonna be able to call you back.

So, I don't think you wanna aim for somewhere that you know is gonna be out of reach, because it's really just a waste.

Alison Monahan: Right, because it's gonna be like applying to law school. You gotta have your target school, your target firms, your reach firms, and then your safety firms. And it's fine to mix in a couple where you're like, "Oh, I'd really love to be at this place but I know that I may be not exactly in their target demographic in terms of grades", but a couple of those are fine. You just wanna make sure you're not only bidding on those types of places.

Sadie Jones: And I do know that certain firms, for them to get a student ... Like, let's say you're at a top ranked school, but you're not doing that well, for some firms just having someone from that school is gonna be great and you're gonna have a real shot at it. So, that's why I do think you have to keep in mind that you



probably want some firms that you feel pretty confident that you can get through.

Alison Monahan: Right. And how do students figure this out? I mean, you're saying, "Okay, well we have these internal grade cutoffs, but they don't really make them public." I mean, how can they kind of suss out where they're competitive?

Sadie Jones: Well, I think you should look at the ranking of the firm in the same way that you'd look at a ranking for a school. So, you know, there's the American lawyer, which does rank law firms, and it is kind of like a school in that the higher ranked ones, a lot of times are gonna have a higher grade cutoffs. So, I think that's one way. I also think you can talk to people that have been there. You can talk to ... You can see who were their former summers, and that sort of thing. But I think a lot of it is just sort of common sense and that sort of thing.

Alison Monahan: Yeah you're not going to get an interview with Wachtell with a 3.0.

Sadie Jones: Exactly. I think another thing to look at is how many summers they've historically taken. So, you don't know for sure that they're not coming back, but I do think that firms with bigger classes, you know, at times are gonna be more open because they need to fill numbers as a firm versus a really good firm that's only taking six summers or something.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. That way you're gonna be at the very tip, tip top. And also really wanna work there. Somehow I randomly ended up in a first round interview with Wachtell which I swear to you I did not put on my schedule, because it is like the last place ... You could imagine, that is not the right fit for me, right? That's very clear. But somehow, I don't know how, I ended up in this interview, and the guy says to me, "So, why do you wanna work at Wachtell. And I was like, "To be perfectly honest, I really don't think I do."

Sadie Jones: I bet they respect you for being honest though and not trying to take a job from somebody.

Alison Monahan: Well, then it was this moment where he kind of looked at me and was like, "Well, why not?" And so then I told him why not, which was basically I think their hours requirements are crazy, and I just don't think it's a great fit for me. And then he spent the rest of the interview trying to convince me that actually I did wanna work there, and it wasn't really that bad, and then they didn't give me a call back. So, it was just one of those bizarre experiences where you're like, how am I in this interview? I don't know how this happened. I shouldn't be here. What's going on? But you know, whatever. It was one of my interviews, so having one or two ... I probably had like three that were really terrible, actually. Two of them were my fault, and one of them wasn't.



Sadie Jones: Well, I think that's not a terrible percentage, considering how many interviews you probably did.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I didn't do all that many. I probably did like 15 or something? Well, I was just like, you know what? I'm on Law Review at Columbia. I'm looking for a job in New York City. How hard can this be? Like, there are plenty of people who want to hire people like me, right? Which I think we'll talk about later in terms of strategy. Some people are over confident, some people are under confident. I might've been slightly over confident, but it was fine.

Yeah, so the other thing, and this actually is my disastrous interview number two, that people really need to be thinking about in terms of bid strategy is there location, right? Yeah, so for me in one case, I'd accidentally bid on a firm that was in DC. Like their DC office instead of their New York office without realizing it, and I'm in that interview, and they say, "Oh, why do you wanna work in DC?" And there's that moment of like, DC. Really. Okay, I like the Smithsonian. Not a good answer.

Sadie Jones: Well, and I think actually this can be confusing, both on the firm side, and on the students side, because I know that some things have changed at OCI where firms are interviewing firm wide, versus for a specific office. So, you should probably ... Yeah, so it's sort of a new strategy, which is just have three interviewers interview for that firm just generally, and then they talk specifically the student about which office you're interested in, versus always how they did it which was you're interviewing for the DC office, the New York office or whatever.

The other thing is sometimes, I always found this a waste as a recruiter, people would be in slots for different offices of the same firm, but take up a slot for each office, and what we would always would try to do as we saw that on the schedule was combine it and say you can interview with this person. They know you're interested in both offices. So, I would say going into it, definitely make that clear, especially if you're interested in more than one office with the same firm, which I think is a little tricky because you wanna be selling them on where you wanna be, so if you see they have different offices and you think oh I want to be in LA or NY...

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's what happened here. I think I actually did interview in their New York office too, and somehow the box had been checked for DC, and it was one of those things like, why am I doing this twice, you know?

Sadie Jones: It's such a waste, because a lot of these schools, we have lots more people we would love to interview with, but we only have one day, or we only have this interview. We don't wanna waste it on two people, because usually there's not a ton of openings.



So, I would say clarify that, clarify that during bidding. Make sure you know who you're interviewing for, which office, and all that sort of thing.

Alison Monahan: What if people just have absolutely no idea where they wanna work?

Sadie Jones: I would say pick a couple of market, and have a reason why you wanna be there, whether or not it's true. Don't go to too many. I always found that more than two markets, it's really hard to sell that, I think it gets confusing for you, I think you don't even remember where you wanna be and why, and you are gonna have to answer that question every single time, if it's somewhere where you're not from, or you don't go to school there. So, you do need a fairly consistent strategy, and unless it's like San Francisco, and Palo Alto or something, where they're really close together so it makes sense, I do think it can get a little tricky if you're picking two totally different cities.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I mean, I was interviewing in firms in New York and firms in San Francisco, and apparently occasionally DC, but for me the San Francisco one was legitimate. I lived there, I'd gone to school there previously, I had a job there, I was really ... And eventually I did actually go back there, but even then I had a real problem convincing people that I was serious about it because they're looking at my resume saying, "Okay, you were at Berkeley, and then you worked in San Francisco, but you left. Now you're in law school in New York. Why wouldn't you just take a job in New York?"

And so, even with that background, I still really had to overcome that, and I got far fewer offers in San Francisco than in New York.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, and I do think ... So, New York is the one place where I think you don't necessarily have to have that much of a reason, and they may not even ask you, because I think people view New York, you know, best city in the world, and it's big, and there's so many firms, and they take kinda the biggest summer classes. So, the New York thing I think you can sell easier. I think what happens in San Francisco, and it's smaller summer classes a lot of times, is that people wanna try out San Francisco, and so generally a lot of firms have gotten burned there. So, they are a lot stricter, and it's gonna come up multiple times.

So, it's gonna come up during the OCI interview, it's gonna come up during the call back, and then they're gonna talk about you in a hiring meeting after, and it's gonna come up, especially if it's not an obvious connection. Okay, why do they wanna be there? And you know, if they're deciding between you and somebody else, and you're kinda equal, but they don't feel like you have a strong connection, they may not even pick you.



- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think I got after the fact that they said they just thought I wasn't ready to come back to San Francisco and that's why after the call back, I didn't get the offer. You know, which, fair enough. Yeah.
- Sadie Jones: So, I do think it's on the student to sell that. You know, if that's really what you want. But yeah, if you pick like a whole bunch of different markets, I just don't think it's gonna be a-
- Alison Monahan: No, and I think you too, if you're really not sure where you wanna be, but you know you want some type of firm job, I think the most obvious thing to do is to interview, if possible, where your law school is located. So, if you're at UCLA, do a bunch of interviews in LA. You don't really have to sell that. As opposed to New York or wherever, where ... I mean, maybe not New York, but DC, that's gonna be a much harder transition. So, you've just gotta be strategic. I mean, if you really, really wanna be in DC, say for family reasons, or your partner's there, whatever, that's fine. Just be aware it's probably gonna be a little harder than just getting something in California.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. I also think be really careful about anything that makes it seem like you're trying it out, or you wanna move to a different office. Just saying that right away is never a good idea. I also had a lot of people, "Well, I have a cousin who I want to visit", that's not gonna do it either.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, you need to have something. I mean, and I think in certain areas you can sell this in terms of practice area. So, say for example you really are interested in doing something in technology, or IP, something like that. Patent litigation, you can sell that to someone in San Francisco or in the Bay area, and Palo Alto. And that can be an in. I mean, if you're really interested in doing, say, regulatory work, you can sell DC. You've gotta kind of think about what story makes sense, even if maybe it's not 100% you're dead set on doing this, right?
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, and I think a lot of people's background makes sense. Like you're saying, you know, to be in Silicon Valley, and you have an engineering background, and so that can sell it I think even better than, you know, I have friends there, or something silly like that. I think like that seems more legit in a lot of ways. The other thing I would do is make sure you know how big the office is. Is it the main office? Is it a smaller office? Be ready to answer those questions, because you don't wanna be saying, "Oh, I really wanna be in the headquarter office", and then they're like, "But we're not."
- Alison Monahan: Right. We're a satellite office. In fact, we were just purchased. We just merged like two years ago. Don't you know this?



- Sadie Jones: Yeah. Be really careful about stuff like that. Do your backgrounds. You're not going to that many firms that you can't, definitely at least for the call back. But know what they are, what they do, what the office is, that kind of thing.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's just basic respect for the company too. And it makes you look terrible if you say you wanna do ... You're dead set on doing bankruptcy and they're like, "We don't practice bankruptcy." You know, it's like, okay well that was a waste of everyone's 20 to 30 minutes. Thanks.
- Sadie Jones: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Well, and you know, they're sitting there all day, and they're seeing 20 students, so yeah, I think that's never a good thing. And I think that's the other thing that can come into play if you're interviewing in too many markets, and too many different areas you say you're interested in. I think it's really easy to get confused.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. A friend of mine had a good tip on this. She said that she would make index cards for every firm when she was prepping, for her interviews, and so the advantage of that is that then when she's sitting on the hallway for the two or three minutes awaiting her turn, she can pull out her index card with basic notes. What type of office is this? How big is it? What are their key practice areas? What are the points I wanna make? Where are they located? You know, all these type of things so that when she went in ... I mean, let's face it, if you're doing 20 or 30 interviews, everyone starts to look the same, but she at least could be like, "Oh yes, I'm really excited about this case that you guys recently worked on", or I'm really excited about whatever I found on the internet that seems like something I could bring up.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, I've seen students with that, and I think like being organized is so helpful in these kind of chaotic situations. The other thing is you may not know who your interviewer is until right before, or even ... I mean, there are times, yeah ... Or they just switch. You know, we would try to print out a bio and put it on the door, so at least you have that. So, I don't think in an OCI interview they expect you to know a ton about them. If you were given it ahead of time, it's obviously great if you know a little bit, but at least if you know ahead of time, look up what their practice area is, but I think it's more important to know more about the firm because that they expect you to have done your homework on.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think the firm in general is what you're going for with the OCI stuff. And then typically with call backs, they often will give you the names in advance, and I think there you wanna do some research. Another way to organize this that could be amazing is using [Trello](#). So, for Trello you could have every card, every firm you're interviewing with has a card and you just keep on adding your notes to that, after your interview you could make yourself some notes saying how did I like this person, did I feel like I clicked with them, here's some questions I



might wanna bring up the next time around. Even better probably than the note cards.

Sadie Jones: And I think that's a great visual way to do it, you know? And I think that could really help [crosstalk 00:21:34], where everything kinda looks the same.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, the advantage of Trello is you can have your lists so you can have your list for ... I got the bid on this firm, or I want to bid on this firm, I did bid on them, I got the interview, I got the call back, I got the offer, whatever. So, you can see at a glance really where you are in that process with everyone, and are there people that you maybe need to follow up with or something like that.

All right. Let's shift gears a little bit. What kind of common mistakes do you see people making in this process?

Sadie Jones: Well, one like we were talking about, bidding on the wrong office. Or being confused about which place they're interviewing with. I think it's one thing.

Alison Monahan: Definitely not a good look. Trust me on this one, you don't wanna go into a firm and be like, "Oh, yeah. I didn't really realize that I was talking about this office, or this firm. How did that happen?" They're not gonna be impressed.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, and I think mistakes happen, but I do think this process is fairly streamlined, so you're not really gonna get somewhere that you didn't bid on most of the time. You know, you've given the example like an outlier.

Alison Monahan: Well, I'm sure I had bid on them. I just didn't mean to. I clicked the wrong box or whatever.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, yeah. Well, but I think that's important. We're assuming, we're sending someone over there that if you at least bid on us, that you're somewhat interested. So, I think another mistake is kind of wasting everyone's time. I think that's never a good idea if you're clearly not interested. Or it's clearly your sort of safety place. I think you need to come in as much as you can to every OCI interview with energy, and somewhat excitement about it, because that's what they wanna see from you.

Alison Monahan: I think that's right. And the other thing is you just don't know what's going to happen, you know? So, you might think, "Oh, I can just blow off this firm because they're no big deal and I'm sure that they're gonna want me", but if you go in and you act totally entitled, and like you're not interested, they're not gonna want you. It doesn't matter what kind of grades you have. They'll look at you as a person that someone has to work with, and if you come off as a person who no one would want to work with, they're not gonna hire you.



- Sadie Jones: Well, and I'll tell you that I can think of a school we interviewed at that did our rankings, and we interviewed the number one person, and we didn't give them a call back. And it was kind of controversial because everyone was like, "Well, they're number one. It feels like we're supposed to", but they did not do a good job in the interview. So, what was the point, you know?
- Alison Monahan: Right, and there's a big disconnect between the ability to get good grades and the ability to be a good lawyer in a lot of cases. You know, those don't necessarily overlap. So, even if you're a person who is at the top of your class, or be on a law review, whatever it is, you still have to sell yourself as a person that they wanna hire, and they have a lot of choices. That's the reality.
- Sadie Jones: And I think that's where you talked about over confidence comes in. That is not a good reflection on anyone, and I think especially if you're a top school, I think sometimes you're kind of overcoming that people might think you already have that in you. So, I think you wanna be humble.
- Alison Monahan: That's exactly what I was saying. It's like, from my perspective of having done interviews, if you see someone coming from a top school, you wanna see that person who's humble, who seems like they're trainable, who seems like they're gonna try hard, because you know they're smart, but that's not the point. Yeah, in terms of mistakes, I think people make a lot in terms of bidding is either wasting a bunch of bids on firms where they're just not competitive, or on the flip side, doing a really absurd amount of interviews when you're a very strong candidate. If you were at a top school, you're on your law review, you don't need to do 50 or 100 interviews. That's just crazy.
- Sadie Jones: I remember one school, a very good school in the Bay area, where the person was bragging that they had done over 50 interviews, and I don't think that was a good idea.
- Alison Monahan: Can you make up your mind? Don't you have any idea what you're looking for?
- Sadie Jones: Well, it's obviously if a firm hears that from the student, it's like, oh well you're not special. Why would we think that we're one of your top choices?
- Alison Monahan: Right, and it looks rude to your prospects. Why are you taking those spots from somebody who might really need them to get that job?
- Sadie Jones: And I'll tell you that firms think about things like that with OCI bidding, or offers, or things like that, that people are respectful and that they really are interested in all the things they're looking at. And I get you're gonna have places that you're more excited than others, that's fine. But you have to ... Yeah. But you have to have a legit interest in a place you think you are possible a fit.



Alison Monahan: Exactly. And sometimes when you go for call back interviews, you might be really impressed by a place that you didn't actually expect to like that much, but everybody you meet seems amazing, and they're really nice to you, and sometimes you go to the place you think is gonna be your absolute top choice and you're like, "Oh, I just don't get a good vibe here. This is not my scene." And you can't predict that. I mean, how many ...

Sadie Jones: When going into the bidding process, you're really, you don't have the people side of things usually that much. So, we really are just basing it mostly on just information you have about what we were talking about.

Alison Monahan: I think it's general lack of clarity, we've talked about this. You need to know, or at least pretend you know what you're looking for, because a firm that senses you're super wishy washy, they're not gonna be impressed. And it's not that you need to be, say, "Oh, the only thing I ever wanted to do in my entire life is to be a patent litigator", I mean if that's true, great. But you at least need to answer, "Oh, were you thinking about corporate or litigation?"

Sadie Jones: And I will say that I think anyone who's too committed to an area, except in a situation where they have a very specific background, if they're too into one very specific thing, I don't ... First of all, I don't think firms believe it, because they're like, "How do you know that much about it?" And also, if you're too tied to it, it's like, "Well, they say they wanna do international law. We have a small practice but we can't guarantee it to them. Let's not even waste our time."

So, that's the negative of, I think, being too specific, but I do think usually, at that point you know if you want litigation or corporate.

Alison Monahan: Right, and you just finally say, "Oh, you're not interested in doing corporate work, it'd be great to do some international M&A deals, but I'd be fine with doing regular M&A too." That's broad enough that they're like, "Oh, okay. We can do M&A."

Sadie Jones: Yeah. I also think it's actually okay to say, for example, if you really feel strongly that you're litigation, I really think I'm leaning towards litigation, but I'd love to try corporate if I'm entering the summer, people love that. That, I don't know, because it makes you feel like ... It makes the firm feel like, you know, oh they'd be flexible.

Alison Monahan: Right. Unless you're interviewing at a firm that doesn't have a corporate practice, in which case don't say that, because they'll be like, "Yeah, that's not possible. Sorry."

Sadie Jones: You better know what their areas are. That's certainly important. But I would say you wanna have some interest but not be like too into it.



Alison Monahan: Exactly. You wanna make it seem like you're fond about this, and you have some story, but at the same time be flexible, because you know, you never know, you might try stuff and realize you really like it. You might try stuff and realize you don't like it. The firm's practice might change before you start there. I mean, obviously probably not. They're not gonna stop doing litigation, or stop doing corporate if they do that, but within that certain areas might shift. People might leave, you just never know.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, so generally just being flexible is a good idea.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, basically that's what they look for in these interviews. You are enthusiastic, you are hard working, you are flexible, you are eager to please. That's what we're going for.

Sadie Jones: Yep. And you are interested in that actual firm, and you know their name, and you know where their office is, and all of that stuff.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. You've actually thought about this. So, how important is your resume in this whole process?

Sadie Jones: It is key.

Alison Monahan: Okay.

Sadie Jones: So, this is the thing. I think your resume, I doubt anything about it is gonna be so amazing that people are gonna remember that she had the best resume I've ever seen. But yeah. It can really hurt you. It's kind of how I feel about thank you notes. So, I think that really what you want is just a straight forward, to the point resume that has no mistakes, that has formatted correctly, everything lines up, it clearly tells a story. If there's any holes in it, you know where they are, and you know how you're gonna address them, and generally it should not be more than one page. So, I think you just wanna make sure your resume is perfect for you. It should be. You had plenty of time to work on it.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. And this can be a bit tricky, as we talked about if you're applying to, say, two different offices at the same firm, do you send them a different resume with a different address? That's a common trick. Like, "Oh, I have an address in San Francisco." I don't know, do you have any thoughts on that?

Sadie Jones: I don't think you wanna do anything too tricky. I think it's okay to potentially use a different address, not for the same firm.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think it's fine if you're sending it to different firms, and you probably don't wanna do it if you're sending it to different offices of the same firm, because I'm sure you guys all talk to each other, right?



Sadie Jones: Yeah, we do. Yeah, it's all gonna get entered into the same system, and people are just gonna be confused. So, I also think whatever, even if you're sending to different firms, the address needs to be legit, so it needs to be either if it's where your parents live, you can not give the address of some family member that you know, yeah, don't do that. That seems like lying. So, yeah, I think you have to, especially when it's the same firm, I think you have to stick with the same resume, and hopefully if you're picking two different offices, your resume tells a story where two offices may make sense. Like, it might make sense that you were in either place.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think it totally could make sense, because you could be in either place. I'm just not sure ... Yeah, sending them the different versions of your resume is a particularly great plan. Just keep it consistent. I think consistency ... Another consistency point is make sure everything online about you supports what is on your resume. So, for example, your LinkedIn profile basically needs to correspond to what's on your resume, because it's possible someone might Google you. Google yourself from an incognito browser, so you can see what's gonna come up. I mean, if there are things you're concerned about, now is the time to deal with those.

If you wanna try to get them removed from Google or whatever, or just create different content, but you know, it's totally possible that people are gonna put your name in a search engine, and then you wanna know what's gonna come up.

Sadie Jones: And another thing, even if you're private on Facebook, one, make sure your profile picture looks appropriate. And two, just keep in mind that just because you're private doesn't mean somebody doesn't know you and can see all your stuff. So think about that.

Alison Monahan: Right, or know a friend of a friend, or how people screenshot things. Just be careful. Clean up your online presence before you go into these interviews. How will people ... This is something that I ran into a lot with friends of mine. How about if they're not even sure that you want to work in a firm. I mean, a lot of these people did end up summering there. How do the firms view people like that? You know, your resume's all public interest, for summer you did public interest, you did Teach for America before law school. I mean, do they have a bigger hurdle to overcome?

Sadie Jones: Like for example ... Yeah, they probably do.

Alison Monahan: I mean, it makes sense, right?

Sadie Jones: They do. I'm gonna say that. I know I looked at lots of resumes, and it's like, I love public interest, you know what I mean? I think that's great if that's what



you wanna do. But I would look at a resume immediately and say this person wants to do public interest. So, I think it's something you're gonna have to overcome. It's a story you're gonna need to have to tell. Don't go into it saying how much pro bono do you do.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, probably not the right first question.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, but you'd be surprised how many people do that.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's one of those things you can talk about after you have the offer, and when you ask to go back and talk with other people.

Sadie Jones: Exactly. But I think you are gonna need a story, and you're gonna need to sell that you know this is a business, they're around to make money, and they're gonna do corporate work, and that's what you wanna do and this is why. And I think lots of public interest places give you great experience, just generally, that you can talk about how you wanna use that, but I do think it's probably something that you should bring up and they're gonna ask you.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and there's certain areas I think it's harder to sell than others. I mean, say for example, all of your pre law school work and your first summer was all in environmental public interest work, you really probably cannot go to a firm and tell them that you want to do the type of environmental law they do, because you're gonna be on the other side, and it doesn't make sense.

Sadie Jones: Well, some students don't even know that.

Alison Monahan: I know, I know. Trust me, if you're getting paid big law dollars, you're gonna be on the other side of this.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, absolutely. And think some students ... I have had students where it's like, oh you don't even understand, and then we're totally not interested because you don't understand what we do or why we're doing it. Or exactly which side we're on. So, it's saying why do you wanna be on the other side? Why do you wanna learn that part of it?

Alison Monahan: Right. Or just saying you wanna switch sides, neutral part of this area.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. But I think that just generally, if you're working in big law, or you're looking at just ... Actually it doesn't even have to be big law, but any law firm who is working on the side of the corporation, or what not, that you know why they're in business, what they do, and that's what you wanna do.

Alison Monahan: How they make money, who pays them.



Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly. So, I think highlighting all your pro bono work, or your volunteer work, or all the good things you do, I don't think you wanna make that the focus of your resume.

Alison Monahan: No, I think it needs to be more I learned all these amazing negotiation skills in this clinic that I did, or direct legal services, or whatever it is. I learned a lot about writing briefs when I wrote this brief for the environmental defense fund, you know?

All right, so we're running out of time here. What if you don't get the interviews you want in the bidding? Is there anything people can do after the fact to massage that?

Sadie Jones: There absolutely is. I think this is the biggest trick that law students may not even realize, which is that you can contact the firm directly and try to get an interview. And I was always shocked at the number of students that didn't do that. So, really all you need to do is reach out to the recruiter who will be listed on the out form, or hiring partner, or maybe someone you have a connection to there, and just say, "I didn't get an interview. I would love to be put on your OCI schedule, or come into the office for a screened interview." I think that's great. You know, you can also go to the hospitality sweep during on campus interviewing. At a lot of schools they have this. So a firm will kind of rent a room, and say, "I didn't get an interview. I really wanna drop off my materials." Sit and chat with people. They usually have attorneys in there, the recruiter.

So, I think all of that shows a lot of interest, and I would say that probably 75% of the time I would find a job for that person.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I mean, if it's somebody who seems to have a real interest and they're in your zone of people you consider, why not?

Sadie Jones: I do think, and I don't know what the rules are at all schools, but in that situation, you probably have to give them your grades to get on the schedule. So, make sure you do have your resume and your transcripts. So, even though they're not given grades ahead of time, you know, when the bidding process is going on? In this situation it's outside of that, so they have to really decide whether they wanna put you on. So, they do need to know that, and they're not gonna probably put you on if it seems like you're not even in the range, and that's probably best for everybody to know ahead of time.

Alison Monahan: All right, speaking of time, any final tips for our listeners before we sign off?

Sadie Jones: Really the tip I wanna repeat is be interested, be positive, and have some energy going into the interview, because that is really the thing that people come out of it with. You need to have certain grades, and be at a certain school



maybe for firms, but you are gonna start to blend in to everybody else, and so I think the people that are remembered in a day of like 22 interviews are the people that they had a nice chat with.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I think too, when you think about things in your background, whether it's your resume or whatever it is, anything on there that's weird, you need to have a story for. And you can tell the exact same story to every single person you interview with, that is not a problem, but you need to have a story so that you're not caught like a deer in the headlights when somebody says, "Huh. Tell me about this one grade." Or, "Tell me about this transition that doesn't really make sense."

I mean, my background was super weird. I went from sociology to architecture, to programming, to law. So, of course, the very first question in 95% of my interviews was, "Huh. Tell me about that." You know, so I had to have a story ready to go, and I had one, and it worked fine. But if you're just sitting there like, "Oh gosh, how do I explain this?" You need to think about that before hand.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, because you really are selling yourself, and you know, maybe practice that story to somebody, even who doesn't know that much about your background and say, "How does this sound?"

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. You can try coming up with stories until you get the one where it's like, "Oh yeah, that totally makes sense. I'll buy that." And also, I can sell that, you know? So, when somebody else, when the recruiter comes, be like, "Are we sure we want this person? They have a really weird background." You know, they can remember, "Oh no, but this is the story that they told me about that." It makes you more memorable.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, and it might be really memorable.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. You're like the weird one.

Sadie Jones: And also, one more thing, please, please don't have any typos on anything. I don't care how many people you have to review it, there should not be even one typo.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's pretty much deadly just because lawyers are detail oriented. That's what you're getting paid for. It's not one of those things that people will forgive. It's just not.

Sadie Jones: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: All right, well thank you so much, Sadie, for your time.



Sadie Jones: Thank you for having me.

Alison Monahan: Oh, our pleasure. If you enjoyed this episode of The Law School Toolbox, please take a second to leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app, because we really appreciate it, and be sure to subscribe, so you don't miss anything. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to Lee, or Alison, at lee@lawschooltoolbox.com, or alison@lawschooltoolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](#) at lawschooltoolbox.com. Also, we offer personal career coaching including resume reviews, OCI strategy, interview tips, all of that, so if you're interested, check out careerdicta.com.

Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon.

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- [Podcast Episode 111: Resumes and Cover Letters \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)
- [Podcast Episode 127: Avoid These Resume No-Gos \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)
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