



Alison Monahan: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're talking with ex-BigLaw recruiter Sadie Jones about how to pass the interview 'happy hour test.'

Your Law School Toolbox host today is Alison Monahan, that's me, and typically I'm here with Lee Burgess. 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, [CareerDicta](#). I also run [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app and if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can always reach us via the [contact form](#) on LawSchoolToolbox.com, and we would love to hear from you. With that, let's get started.

Alison Monahan: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're talking with ex-BigLaw law recruiter Sadie Jones about how to pass the dreaded interview happy hour test. So welcome, Sadie.

Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me back.

Alison Monahan: My pleasure. Well first off, what is a happy hour test? I mean, do people really need to go out drinking for all of their interviews?

Sadie Jones: No, that's not what it means. I guess that might be more fun. Really what it means is does this person want to hang out with you after work? Like would they want to, in theory, get a drink of some sort with you?

Alison Monahan: Right, and it's fine if you don't technically drink. That's not what we're talking about. It's really more like can you go to a social space and carry on a conversation for an hour or so and just not make the person want to shoot you in the head.

Sadie Jones: Exactly. Are you likable?

Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. Are you likable enough? And this is actually based on a [Girl's Guide](#) post that someone wrote, that we both thought was pretty interesting, so we decided to talk about it.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, I think it's a really important thing to think about going into an interview because people kind of prepare substantively a lot for interviews, and do their research and all that and I think sometimes they might miss this sort of aspect.

Alison Monahan: Yeah exactly. I mean once you've gotten the interview, you have to kind of assume that you're qualified based on grades and experience, and the interview



is about something different. So, they are trying to find something they can't find out from your resume. And really that's about fit and if somebody's going to want to work with you on a daily basis and potentially hang out with you afterwards.

- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And I think different employers call this different things. But everywhere I've ever worked people talk about it after the interview. Did they have this factor or this quality about them that they're going to be a good fit here, and we like you.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think sometimes people can get super paranoid about this. Like well I'm not a white man, maybe I'm not going to fit in. And that, hopefully at least, is not really what we're talking about. I mean obviously there's some element of that where people typically are more comfortable with people who are more like them. But this is really a broader question of like, is this a person in a professional context that I feel like would be a reasonable person to work with and hang out with?
- Sadie Jones: Definitely. And I think we're not telling you not to be yourself at all. We're saying show your personality. Show you have a personality.
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. It's better actually in this context to have some personality. You usually want to be showing your best self.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: Which might not be your Saturday night going out with your frat brothers self necessarily, in a law firm interview or other legal context. So, what are some red flags that people are looking for in this context?
- Sadie Jones: I think arrogance is a really big one. Kind of being over-confident. I think anything where you seem entitled, like you expect things, being rude to anybody, not just your interviewer but anybody around you. And seeming lazy or not interested.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I agree completely with all of those. I think particularly in this day and age, like that's sort of entitlement and arrogant rudeness, that a lot of lawyers have probably gotten away with for a long time, just really doesn't fly most places. And I think people are looking more carefully. If you get a report or two back from someone who does an interview that you know what, I think this person like really has some entitlement issues, I think that's probably going to sink your candidacy.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. And I mean that's probably the number one thing I would hear that would sort of be a negative, personality wise.



Alison Monahan: So on the flip side, what are some pluses that you know hopefully you can show off with some techniques that we'll discuss in a minute?

Sadie Jones: So, not to be arrogant, but you should be confident and you should show confidence. And I do think that's sort of a fine line that we can talk about. Being personable, having interesting things to say, being relaxed, being informed about the place you're interviewing at, showing good judgment is really important.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I completely agree with all those too. And I think sometimes ... You mentioned being well-informed. And as you talked about earlier, people almost always hopefully do their due diligence on the law firm, and they know at least where they have offices, what practice areas are available, maybe who you're talking to, a little bit about their background. That's all great, but you also need to be well informed about kind of the general things that people might want to talk to you about that are going on in the world. So for example, I think it's really important that you're at least a little bit up to speed on major cultural events or sporting events in the area, even if you don't actually care at all about this. Things like the Oscars were happening this weekend. Well do you have an interview on Monday? It's quite possible somebody might ask you, like hey, did you catch the Oscars last night? And you know, they're not trying to be obnoxious at all. They are just making conversation. So, if you know that something like this is happening, the Super Bowl, the local team is in the playoffs, whatever it is, I think that is an aspect of just being generally well informed.

Sadie Jones: Absolutely. And like you said, you don't actually need to have an interest in it or have like, knowing it off the top of your head. I think it's something you need to look up. So, you can look at the local paper online, or something like that, or even like a national newspaper and see if there's anything going on that you should know about. You don't necessarily have to automatically know something's going on, but you can look it up.

Alison Monahan: Right. I feel like you want to at least glance through probably the New York Times online, the Washington Post online, and then maybe some sort of local paper, so that if there is some major event or major happening that people are interested in, that you're at least prepared to feign some type interest in it. You know like, oh yeah, I wasn't able to watch the Oscars, but I saw some dresses afterwards and they were really cool. Like what was your favorite? Did you see any? That's what we're looking for. We're not looking for, who do you think ... Do you know who won this award? Because frankly, no one really expects that, or probably really cares.

Sadie Jones: Right. Or you could pick like a movie that you saw this year that you heard was popular, something like that. Something not controversial.



Alison Monahan: Yeah. I mean you probably don't want to be talking about ... What was the best picture one that people didn't think should have won? Probably not a place to go but you know dresses, things like that, probably always popular. And it's fine, I mean if you really know nothing about a topic when it comes up, it's completely fine to redirect as well. And I think that shows a sort of social skill and social grace that you're going to need to pass the happy hour test. So, something like, somebody mentions a show to you, and you haven't watched it. Oh, you know I haven't had a chance to watch that show, but I really enjoyed this other thing, have you seen it?

Sadie Jones: Yeah, have some things in your back packet that you're comfortable with.

Alison Monahan: Right. And if you haven't done anything recently, maybe you want to at least pick up a book so you have something to talk about, maybe watch a Netflix show. I think sometimes people get so heads down in school that it makes it hard to communicate like a human being to other people, but that's actually kind of what we're going for here.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, I think it's a really big turn off to employers if they think that all you do is law school. That's the only thing you're interested in. And I think some law students think that that's a positive, that they're so dedicated to do it, and they're spending everything on it. But they're going to be spending time with you as a person. And so, they want to know that you are a fully realized person.

Alison Monahan: Yeah exactly. And also, it just makes it hard to fill 30 minutes if you have literally nothing to talk about.

Sadie Jones: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: We mentioned this before, but tell me about the [interests section](#) and why you think that matters on the resume?

Sadie Jones: So, I think it is so important, and not enough people do it or really put any thought into it. And the reason it's important is because a lot of times that is actually the main section that an interviewer is looking at to try to make small talk with you.

Alison Monahan: It was definitely the first place I went.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, because they want to think of something outside of the classes you're taking or legal stuff.

Alison Monahan: What's your favorite law school class?

Sadie Jones: Yeah.



- Alison Monahan: Okay that was 20 seconds. Well what other classes are you taking? Okay that was maybe one minute. I mean you've got to kill time with something.
- Sadie Jones: Make sure you have one, and really put some thought into what you're putting down. So not everyone has an obvious hobby, but if you really think about it you can come up with things you're interested in. I have no doubt that everyone can. And I think it's more interesting to be really specific. So you know, it's not just reading, you should say is there a specific type of book you like to read, and if there isn't just kind of make one up.
- Alison Monahan: Maybe find one.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, based on a lot of books you read. It doesn't actually have to be your favorite ever, or if you like to cook-
- Alison Monahan: On that note, it should be something you are prepared to talk about. So if you say that you like reading historical fiction, probably someone is obviously going to ask you, oh you like reading historical fiction, what are some of your favorite books? If you cannot answer that because you completely lied about reading historical fiction and thought no one was going to talk to you about it, that is a problem.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, and that's a huge problem if you don't know anything on your resume. You need to know everything on your resume. And you need to be able to have a conversation about it.
- Alison Monahan: Theoretically, this is a passion of yours, so you should be able to talk about it. You know if I put ... I didn't put this because it wasn't at the time an interest of mine, however if I were doing these interviews today, I would absolutely have on my resume that I like baking sourdough bread. Because that's interesting, it's something I actually do, and it's something that I can talk about for hours. So, if someone asks me about it I can tell them anything they want to know, and we can kill the entire interview that way.
- Sadie Jones: And I like that it's very specific. I don't think that writing 'baking' is that helpful.
- Alison Monahan: Baking ... No, not at all. It's like oh, what do you bake? I mean someone put that on his resume, and I asked him, and he looked at me blankly. I'm like, it's on your resume. Well I guess I actually like watching cooking shows. Which you could have just put, and I would have been fine with that.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, that would have maybe been more interesting.



- Alison Monahan: I was just like, I'm happy to talk to about cooking shows, but you didn't say that. You said you like baking, and you can't even think of one thing you've ever baked in your life so you're not getting this job. Sorry, you lied to me.
- Sadie Jones: So if you're going exaggerate something, you need to know a lot about it and be prepared to talk about it.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think you also need to make sure whatever's on here is work appropriate. You know maybe you won your beer pong tournament in college or something, which you're very proud of. That is probably not a topic that you want to put on your interest section.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. So I think it doesn't have to be ... It can be outside of the box a little bit, but you don't want it to be not work appropriate.
- Alison Monahan: Right, and I think this is a case where this is the area to let your personality shine. Everyone has unique things about them. I mean I don't think I've ever met a truly boring person in my life, once you really start digging into it. And this is your chance to talk about the things that you are comfortable talking about, maybe you're an expert in, that someone else doesn't know anything about, and that's always useful. So even say, maybe you have a different cultural background, and you're very interested in that type of food or movies from that culture, whatever it is, put that on your resume, then somebody can actually learn something from you. Like oh, I see that you're very interested in Indian Bollywood, tell me about that.
- Sadie Jones: And if it's something that you are very interested in, that's going to come across, and just that is going to be attractive to the other person, I think.
- Alison Monahan: Oh, I completely agree.
- Sadie Jones: That's what it's about. It's not about what the interest is.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's about you ... I mean as an interviewer, you basically want this person to be talking about something they care about. And then you can kind of see that they are a person who has passions and you can sort of see, oh well you know, I can see them being convincing to a jury or something, if they were passionate about our clients. You know, these skills kind of, they roll over into the actual work. And also, we're just thinking, gosh if I'm stuck in a hotel room with this person at three in the morning preparing for a trial, would I lose my mind?
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I think that is what they're thinking.



Alison Monahan: That is definitely what you're thinking. You're like wow, I would not want to be with this person at a trial situation of high stress, low sleep, and lots of work. Nope, nope, nope. Talk a little bit about this confidence versus arrogance issue, and how people can kind of come off as confident, maybe even if they don't feel confident without coming off as arrogant.

Sadie Jones: I think this is such a fine line. And it is one of those things where it's sort of like you know it when you see it, so it can be a little hard to explain. But I would say you should look at your resume and your story, and you should go over all the things that you have to offer, and you should feel good about that, whatever that is. What are the areas that you can feel that you bring to the table and that are your good qualities, and all of that? And I think that's confidence. I think arrogance is when you think you know everything or you're talking about things that you're not necessarily an expert at, or you're sort of overstating it. And I think anyone who we're talking about, who's going to come in at sort of a summer associate, junior level, there is going to be a lot you don't know, and so I think it's important to come across that you want to learn. You're there to learn from them. And that's what you're looking for. So there are things that you bring to the table, and that you feel good about, but that you're open, and you know kind of where you are in this situation.

Alison Monahan: Right. I think that understanding your position in the hierarchy is very important. And one of the things that always bothered me was when people kind of over claimed credit for things. You know, if they were, say, the vice president of some club or whatever and they started telling me about all these amazing things they personally had done themselves blah de blah. And it's just like, you know what? I don't think you did that by yourself. I don't think you single handedly planned this conference. And I wouldn't expect you to do that. But I also don't like the fact that you are taking credit for other people's work. That is not an appealing characteristic.

Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I also think not just in an interview situation, but I've noticed this sometimes in cover letters, that people sort of overstate what they're going to bring to the job.

Alison Monahan: That's always funny.

Sadie Jones: So, I think that's something to really be aware of. And I know that the person writing it probably doesn't mean it like that, but I think that student should be aware that that's how it can read a lot of the time so I'd be really careful.

Alison Monahan: Could you give an example?



- Sadie Jones: Well as a summer associate, where you've never worked as a lawyer before, to say you're going to come in and be able to do all of these things, and contribute stuff that's going to make the firm ... I don't know.
- Alison Monahan: I've seen some be like 'revolutionized the practice area' and it's like 'really?'
- Sadie Jones: It's like there's nothing-
- Alison Monahan: You don't know anything.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. You shouldn't say anything along those lines at all. The only time that I can think of where you might even touch on this would be if you have a specific background, like a technical background and that's part of what this is going to be. I think you could talk about how that's going to add to it, but other than that, I wouldn't even phrase it in any way like that.
- Alison Monahan: And even then, I think it's more along the lines of I can help you out in this role because I have this unique background, and this is why it's applicable. It's not I'm going to come in and revolutionize your practice area, because I happen to be an engineer in addition to law school. It's like, we probably have other people like that, if they have a practice area that would actually use that. And also-
- Sadie Jones: And there's nothing a 2L is going to be able to do that's going to put them in that category.
- Alison Monahan: What are they going to do?
- Sadie Jones: No matter who they are. So I think the key is you can be confident and also humble.
- Alison Monahan: Right, I think humble ... People are always looking for humble, because humble means you're trainable. And you have to understand that any organization you're going into already has a process in place, and you may or may not agree with that process once you get into these organizations, and there may be valid reasons that your ideas are better, however they're basically looking for someone they can slot into this process, at least until they improve it and have you functioning. And if you're not humble about learning and listening to people they will basically assume, probably correctly, that you're not going to sort of go along and follow the rules that they've put down, and that's going to be a problem.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I think that is such an important point and something that everyone looks for in an interviewee. And I think that a lot of law students don't realize that that's what they're looking for.



- Alison Monahan: They think they have to be like the best of the best of the best to get hired. It's like no, you just have to be basically ... It's kind of like the bar exam. You have to be kind of minimally competent and meet the standards, and they are probably going to hire you if they've taken you for an interview.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And I think confidence in this situation, I think of more as the way you're speaking, that you're not kind of ... Like your tone. You're not being too sort of quiet or meek, like that kind of thing. I don't think of it as much as you know so much.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And I think body language and stuff like that plays a big roll. So let's actually get into that a little bit deeper. Let's talk about some things to do in the interview itself. So, one thing in the article on the Girl's Guide site and also I've always offered as advice to people is ... And I think a lot of people don't do this. I mean I'd says most people don't, because they feel like they're imposing when they say yes. But if somebody offers you say water or tea, I feel like you always should accept that. What do you think?
- Sadie Jones: I completely agree. I think it just kind of makes things a little more relaxed and it kind of starts off on a less formal note. And it doesn't matter if you really want it.
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. Like you don't have to drink it. I feel like it's just when you turn down an offer that someone makes to you, I feel like it kind of sets you off socially on a bad foot.
- Sadie Jones: It sort of leaves it out there or something. And so it's like they're offering you something, accept it.
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. Just say yes. Like oh, that's so nice, thank you so much, I really appreciate that. Even if you don't want it. And then maybe if you're in someone's office, you might even, if they were going to make tea, you might get to walk down the hallway to the tea and so that starts off already on a less formal note. You're more friendly, you're kind of buddies, you're hanging out. And I think that's always a good way to start versus just like oh, no thanks I'm good, and then you sit down and suddenly it's like uh okay, well I guess we'll do the interview now.
- Sadie Jones: I agree. Although I will add, make sure you don't spill it on yourself or something. So be careful.
- Alison Monahan: It is totally fine to take it, take one or two sips, and then set it down on the edge of the desk and never touch it again. Like that is not a problem.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. Maybe that's better.



- Alison Monahan: Yeah. Basically, like take a sip or two, put it down, and then don't think about it for the rest of the interview. But hopefully you're already off on your friendly happy hour track at that point.
- Sadie Jones: Another thing along these lines is never have gum in your mouth.
- Alison Monahan: Oh gosh, do people do that?
- Sadie Jones: Yes, they do.
- Alison Monahan: Wow. That's so crazy.
- Sadie Jones: And that is going to get you ... You're not getting it.
- Alison Monahan: Why would anyone do that?
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, they do. And it will be in the review.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, of course it would be. I mean If somebody came in my office for an interview chewing gum. I'd be like, are you joking?
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, badly, too.
- Alison Monahan: No, I mean there are plenty of ... If you feel like you need a breath freshener, there are plenty of other options. You can get those little strips that dissolve. I personally like the Altoid like small version, because you can eat them quickly.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And that's great to do right before. But do not have gum in your mouth.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, never. Never, never, never. That's unfathomable to me. I feel bad chewing gum even in public.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: All right, well talk a little bit about kind of like body stuff.
- Sadie Jones: Well I know that not everyone likes to hear this as sort of a criticism or anything. But make sure you're smiling. And I know that not everyone is doing it naturally, but you need to come in like you're happy to be there, even if you're not. And I think you want to make sure that you have good posture, that you're not slouching, that you're not crossing your arms. You want to be open and look like you're interested, you're awake, that kind of thing.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think these things, even eye contact ... I mean again, sort of like chewing gum, you might not think we need to tell people to make eye contact but I



remember one place I worked, that my boss after the interview and said "Oh, I know you kind of recommended this person, but it was a really weird interview because the whole time they were just looking at a spot above my head on the right side. And I kept wanting to turn around and see what was on wall there, because they never made eye contact."

Sadie Jones: I think this is something some people maybe should practice actually.

Alison Monahan: Oh absolutely.

Sadie Jones: Because there is sort of ... Right, you don't want to stare into someone's eyes.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. So, I think if there's any possibility that any of these body language things are an issue for you, this is something you need to have someone video tape. And so, what we're looking for here is, again kind of confident but relaxed. So, if you're sitting ... Presumably you're going to be sitting in a chair, so your feet should probably be on the ground, maybe crossed. Your shoulders should be open. You want to figure out what you're going to do with your arms so you're not leaning on different pieces of the chair all the time and stuff like that, or you're not fidgeting in some distracting way. Maybe you have a portfolio and you can hold it in your hands. These things really do make a difference in how you're perceived. And I think you want to look at how you look. Even with sound off-

Sadie Jones: You want to be comfortable.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. But there are ways that are better or worse to kind of present yourself. And these are definitely things you can work on, but you have to be aware of them in order to do that.

Sadie Jones: And I think what you were saying about looking different places, some people sort of get distracted by things. And a lot of lawyers have a lot of random stuff in their office, or their office is a mess. So just be careful. You don't need to stare at their pile of papers on the floor.

Alison Monahan: No. I mean ideally you want to kind of be moving your eyes around and make some eye contact and then you look off to the side, and then look down at your hands. I don't really care what you do, as long as you're not doing something super weird. Try not to be super weird, that's the goal here. I think it's also important that you really have to be able to hold up your end of the conversation. So, what are some ways people can do that?

Sadie Jones: This is especially important, because some of your interviewers are going to be terrible and not be able to hold up their end of the conversation, and that's still on you, because you're the one trying to get the job.



- Alison Monahan: And they may not have seen your materials very far in advance if at all, so you cannot assume they have extensive familiarity with your resume.
- Sadie Jones: And you don't know what kind of day they're having. You're having a day where you're doing interviews all day, but they got lots of other stuff going on and they're just fitting this in. So, it is on you to keep things going. So, something I think we've talked about before, but you should always have questions ready. Good questions. So, there should never be in a situation, one where they ask you have any questions and you just say no. That's not good.
- Alison Monahan: You're dead in the water. Done. You're not getting the job. Next.
- Sadie Jones: Or, you need to come up with questions sometimes to fill silences.
- Alison Monahan: I think sometimes people don't have enough questions prepared. They think like oh, I've got two or three, I'm good to go. If they ask me, I have questions I'll ask these. But you may ... I mean I've had interviews certainly with people who were just like, okay so tell me about yourself. All right, what can I tell you? Like that was basically all they had. So you've got to fill that space.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And there's no way that you can't come up with a bunch. If you spend some time on it, and they can kind of be your standard questions, that's fine. And maybe you have some specific to this person, or this job, that kind of thing. But I think you should always be prepared with that. I think you should be able to elaborate on everything.
- Alison Monahan: Oh yes. One of my pet peeves was when people responded with single word answers to questions I asked them. I'm like okay, maybe that wasn't the best phrasing. It maybe was a yes or no questions, however, I would like you to talk more than yes or no, please go.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, I mean that's just terrible. I think that just really gives off the impression that you're not interested.
- Alison Monahan: Well, or that you just don't know how to interact with people. It's like if I ask you what is technically a yes or no question, we're not in a deposition. I mean in a deposition I would advise you as the person I'm defending the deposition of, if they ask you a question that can be answered yes or no, answer yes or no. However, this is basically the opposite of a deposition and you need to talk.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I also think that, remember that people like to talk about themselves. So you can ask them questions about themselves. Not personal questions. Nothing inappropriate.
- Alison Monahan: Right.



- Sadie Jones: But questions about their work or what they're doing, something exciting that's going on there, whatever it is. People love that. So, you can have them also fill things in, and you can kind of drive it a little bit.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think sometimes students feel like oh, if I'm not talking about myself then the interview is not going well. It's kind of the opposite actually. Again, it's a balance. You don't want to have 90% of the conversation be by the other person, because you are refusing to say anything. But if you've got one of those people who just like to talk about themselves, let them talk. Like oh, what are you working on?
- Sadie Jones: And I guarantee they're going to leave and say that went great.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, they're going to be like that person was fantastic. Loved them. Can they work for me? I'd love to have them listen to me talk for the next several years. Yeah, what are you working on? What do you like about the firm? I would not ask what they don't like. You know, what do you like? And genuine interest goes a long way. So, if they tell you that they're working on a particular case or a particular deal, you don't necessarily just need to let that drop. I mean you can't obviously delve into that confidentially. But like oh, that sounds really interesting. What type of work are you doing on it? These are questions that can eat up a lot of time.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely.
- Alison Monahan: And that's usually a good thing.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah and I think that you're right that students don't necessarily realize that that can be their place in this. And I think it's helpful.
- Alison Monahan: I mean if you think about happy hour, there are those people who just want to talk about themselves. And you might not want to hang out with those people repeatedly at happy hour, but they're going to be happy if they have somebody who's eager to listen to them.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. So, I think like you're going to leave them with a good impression for sure.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah exactly. You mentioned this earlier I think you have to be nice to everybody. Whether it's waiters, secretaries, the janitor, whoever. Always be polite. Always be accommodating, easy to deal with. Obviously if you have serious issues around food, like you're vegetarian, you can't eat gluten, whatever, you probably should mention those in advance to the person who's organizing if you have to have a lunch or a dinner. But once you're at the restaurant, I would say you don't want to be that person who's so picky and



sending things back, and making crazy special orders. You can always just kind of order a salad, something simple, pick at it, and eat later.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. I think don't take it so seriously that this is about the meal for you. I'd also say on the ... You know what you were saying preferences, usually you can tell them ahead of time if it's something major. It was sort of a pet peeve of mine when people would say things that are really minor but they just wanted you to know. I think that comes across as slightly entitled. So, if you have a minor thing like you don't eat tomatoes, don't tell them that ahead of time.

Alison Monahan: It needs to be something that would impact their choice of restaurant. So, for me, I don't eat meat so I might mention if they asked me, only if they asked me probably, if I had any preferences on food I might say "I'm a pescatarian." So, then they know probably not to send me to a steakhouse. I mean if they send me to a steakhouse it's cool. I'll order some sides and move on with my life. And I think also, if that did happen, obviously you don't want to be like "Oh my gosh, I'm a vegetarian. I can't eat at this steakhouse." It's probably one of those times just to go along to get along.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. Just be easygoing.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. Whatever it is. And I think never, ever, ever send something back unless it has a bug right on top of it or something.

Sadie Jones: Also, another thing about the meals is don't ever order alcohol. And I think we said this before but it's worth repeating.

Alison Monahan: I agree. I mean sometimes people get careless at these meals and think oh ... I mean frankly the people interviewing you shouldn't be either but sometimes they do and they might try to pressure you. It's fine just to say "I'm good. It's cool. Thanks." And you don't need to go into any more detail than that. It doesn't have to be like oh, I don't drink or oh, it's the middle of the day. It's just like oh, no thanks. I appreciate the offer but no.

Sadie Jones: I just think that's important like you said, even if the interviewer or interviewers are ordering drinks you should not.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, because they might go back and be like "Yeah, this guy's a total lush. He had two beers at lunch."

Sadie Jones: Yeah. Or I've seen people who sort of use it as a test which is crazy.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. It's like we said we're looking for good judgment. And a lot of good judgment as a lawyer is like you might be in kind of an awkward situation with a client or something where you need to be the one with good judgment



and you need to be the person who has a way to deal with that in a way that's not going to kind of make it a big deal.

Sadie Jones: Well this is the thing. No one's going to go back and write a review and say they didn't like you because you didn't order a margarita. They can't say that.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, they refused to drink at lunch. Basically, anyone who's running HR is going to be like "I'm sorry. What? Like you were drinking a margarita and you offered it to them? We need to have a conversation because that's not okay."

Sadie Jones: Exactly. That's why you should always say no because there's nothing good that's going to come out of saying yes.

Alison Monahan: No. Exactly. Nothing good is going to come out of being like yeah, okay. I mean best case scenario, just nothing happens. Worst case scenario, you don't get the offer for that reason so just don't risk it.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. And I've seen it happen.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, totally.

Sadie Jones: And same thing I think we've talked about before but don't order anything too messy. Think about what it's going to be like to eat the thing.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I was at a dinner last night and the person beside me actually discretely asked the waiter, because we kind of the last to order of a group of 20 people, and he kind of discretely asked the waiter "What are other people at the table getting? How many courses are they ordering?" So that he could make sure ... The answer was "Oh, people are getting two." So we both knew great, we'll get a starter and an entrée. So something like that, you can see what other people are ordering, you can kind of ask, but you don't want to be the person who orders entrée, appetizer, dessert, side dish, if everybody else is just getting a sandwich.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, you go along with what everybody else is doing.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. All right, well any final thoughts on this?

Sadie Jones: I think it really comes down to what we had said before which is, you're going to be working long hours with these people. Maybe you're going to be on business trips. You're going to be spending a lot of time together. And that's what they're thinking about when they're interviewing you. Do I want this person around? So, I just think that's something to keep in mind. They want to see if you're going to be a good colleague.



- Alison Monahan: Right. And we're not saying, as we'd like to repeat, that you cannot be your authentic self. Quite the opposite. I want you to talk about your authentic interests and the things that make you unique as a person. But at the same time, you need to make sure that you're doing that in a way that is thoughtful, respectful, all of these kinds of things, and I don't think it really has any ... It has very little to do with who you end up actually talking about. It's really more about mannerisms and do you seem like a reasonable person.
- Sadie Jones: Definitely. And I think this is basically the way they're deciding about you after the callback interview.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, absolutely. Because at that point you're already qualified or you wouldn't be there.
- Sadie Jones: Yep.
- Alison Monahan: All right, well Sadie thank you so much for joining us.
- Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me back.
- Alison Monahan: My pleasure. With that, we are unfortunately out of time. For more career help and the opportunity to work one on one with us you can check out [careerdicta.com](https://www.careerdicta.com). If you enjoyed this episode of the Law School Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app because we would really appreciate it, and make 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](https://www.lawschooltoolbox.com) Thanks for listening and we'll talk soon.



RESOURCES:

- [Is the Secret to Acing a Job Interview Passing the Happy Hour Test?](#)
- [Podcast Episode 27: Job Interview Basics](#)
- [Podcast Episode 173: FAQ's About Resumes and Cover Letters](#)
- [Podcast Episode 175: Top Interview Questions](#)
- [Podcast Episode 5: Maintaining Authenticity in the Legal Profession](#)
- [How to Prepare for OCI Interviews](#)