



Alison Monahan: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're excited to have ex-BigLaw recruiter Sadie Jones here with us to talk a bit more about the upcoming winter OCI process. Your Law School Toolbox host today is Alison Monahan, and typically, I'm 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.

Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're thrilled to have ex-BigLaw recruiter Sadie Jones here to talk a bit more about the upcoming winter OCI process. So, welcome Sadie.

Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me back.

Alison Monahan: It's my pleasure. Well, to kick things off, what are you hearing about the winter OCI and what firms have already been doing beforehand? I know there was some speculation, a lot of places were just going to ignore this and go ahead and hire everyone early. Do you feel like that's turned out to be accurate?

Sadie Jones: I think that a lot of firms thought they were going to do that, and I've heard of quite a few people getting screen interviews, or even having full round around interviews and then being told that they're holding off on offers until they get to OCI. And I have not heard of a lot of offers going out yet. So, I think what may have happened is that they sort of wanted to see the pool of people. I also think they're probably trying to see what happens with the outside world, how the economy's going to do. We're going to have a new administration, the virus has gotten worse, so I have a feeling that they wanted to pull back a little and wait to see what the outside forces are doing.

Alison Monahan: Right, I guess that makes sense. They can kind of kick the tires on people and then be like, "Oh, you guys are great, but we're just going to expand our pool a little bit and see who else comes in."

Sadie Jones: Exactly. Which is hard if you're a student, but if you're an employer, that's sort of your right right now. You're in the driver's seat for a while.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. You can't really blame people for doing that, even if it's probably not exactly the nicest thing,



- Sadie Jones: But if you're a student, don't feel bad. You're in the same boat as everybody else.
- Alison Monahan: Right, yeah. I think that's a good takeaway, that if you haven't gotten an offer yet, it's probably not your fault.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: Alright. Well, we talked about some basics of this whole process and what was changing in a [different episode](#) earlier that we can link to, but just basically, what's the general timeframe now for this winter OCI process?
- Sadie Jones: My understanding is that it's going to be anywhere from the second week of January through the rest of the month, is when the at least virtual OCI interviews will happen, followed by callbacks.
- Alison Monahan: Okay, so kind of that January, February-ish. Just when everyone's getting back to school, maybe getting their winter sickness, hopefully not this year because you're not going to be hanging out with anyone, and getting your new classes. And it's just ready time to go and deal with this OCI thing. So, that's going to be interesting. What general advice do you have for students who are just about to go into this process?
- Sadie Jones: I would say the advantage you have is that you have some time, and we're heading into winter break. I know that it's different for every student, but it should be pretty soon. And so, take that time to do research, have your plan, write down where you want to apply, who you have interviews with, whatever it is about them. You have tons of prep time, so I feel like that's great because normally, you'd probably be working a summer job right into OCI. So, take advantage of this time you have once your exams are over.
- Alison Monahan: No, I think that's great advice. I think one thing people have underestimated in the past is how difficult it can be to do a bunch of interviews with different firms in a compressed period of time, and just to keep them all straight and to keep their offices straight and their practice groups straight. It seems like this would be a no brainer, but I've heard tons of stories from friends of mine who were in these interviews. Even in my case, once I was talking to a firm that I thought was in New York and it was their DC office. These things happen and you look like an idiot, basically.
- Sadie Jones: Definitely. And I think that is something that you can sort of control a lot better now. Also that it's virtual, so you're not physically running around, I think it can be kind of helpful. But I think that you should take the time to get yourself really organized. Not that things won't come up, and you've got to roll with it, but I



think you can do whatever you can to get your whole setup ready and get to know the firms you're going to be talking to.

Alison Monahan: Right. I'm just thinking if I'm doing a virtual interview, even behind my computer on the wall I could have a Post-it note just with the basics of this firm. Where are they located? What are their key practice groups? Why am I interested? All those things that are probably going to come up, like, "Oh, why are you interested in firm ABC?" "Oh, well..." If you can just spiel that off, it's going to sound a lot better than, "Oh wait, you guys do bankruptcy, right?" And it's like, "No, we don't do bankruptcy."

Sadie Jones: Definitely. I think there's a place here for some cheat sheets...

Alison Monahan: For sure.

Sadie Jones: ...that you couldn't do in person. So take advantage of whatever you can with this kind of crazy time.

Alison Monahan: Right, yeah. Look for the upsides.

Sadie Jones: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: Alright. Well, let's talk a bit about a few specific concerns that we've heard about or that people are probably wondering about. So, right now people are either just getting grades, they've gotten some grades, they're about to be getting a grade. How can they handle a bad grade or two from the Fall 2020 semester going into this process and knowing that firms are probably either going to have these or they're going to be asking about them?

Sadie Jones: So, obviously you need to prepare for them to ask about it, and have a simple answer. I think that sometimes people get really defensive about the grades, or uncomfortable, and kind of focus on it or write extremely long explanation of how it happened. They do these supplements with their application. Personally, I don't like any of that. If you have a really specific reason, maybe why you had a completely different grade from any grades you've ever gotten – like you had surgery, or you had COVID, somebody died in your family, something really specific happened – then I could understand explaining it. Other than that, it's a hard time for everybody. I'm sure that a lot of students' grades went down. I think you have to be prepared to just talk about it quickly, maybe talk about what you're doing to improve. Talk about how maybe it's an anomaly, focus on the positive and just move on. So I really don't think that you should focus too much. And if they have a set GPA cutoff or whatever it is, that is out of your control. So, if you don't fit their criteria, you're going to move on to a firm where you do fit their criteria. This is the part of it that you can't change.



- Alison Monahan: Right. And I think part of the issue with the new grades is that these are going to feel fresher. So, it's one thing if you got a bad grade, say, your first semester in Contracts, and you can talk about that calmly and explain that things happened. It's a little different if you've completely bombed a class last semester, and now someone's asking you about it. So I think you need to practice talking about it. Like you said, you need to have your storyline, which is very compact. It takes responsibility but doesn't belabor the point. And sometimes, honestly, there's no reason. I think you just basically treat that as a life experience and say, "Hey, things happen. I didn't do as well on this exam as I expected to. I'm going to go talk to my professor about it, but to be perfectly honest, I really don't know what happened yet."
- Sadie Jones: And I think that sounds way better than a lot of students going into blaming certain things, all these excuses. That starts getting like, no one wants to hear that.
- Alison Monahan: Right. Here it's just like, "I don't know what happened. I would like to know what happened too, and I'm going to go talk to my professor and figure this out, but things happen."
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, focus on what you're going to do to change it. And if that's going to be the reason they don't give you a call back or they don't give you an offer, then that was going to be the reason. You can't change the grade.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And I think if anything, that just shows that you're a person who can kind of roll with things. And if you're going to be working in a law firm, if you're a litigator, you're going to lose things. That just happens. It doesn't matter how great you think your case is, you're not going to win every single hearing and every single motion for the rest of your life. And the same, I'm sure, with deals. I don't know anything about them, I'm sure things go wrong. A part of what they're looking for is just, how do you handle things like this? How do you handle something and roll with it and not get so defensive or so tied up in it? So, it can be challenging, but I think just practice your story, try not to get upset about it, and just keep it as simple as possible.
- Sadie Jones: And I would suggest practicing it with another person who can give you feedback, and take that feedback and maybe try to adjust some things. If they tell you that it's sounding too detailed or going on and on about it, or whatever it is, listen to them and try to get the story tight.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And you can even videotape yourself and watch it later and figure out what you might want to cut. You don't want to sound too scripted, but basically you want to have a story that you can make sound not totally scripted, that's pretty much scripted.



- Sadie Jones: Definitely.
- Alison Monahan: I think this is the case with anything weird on your resume. Anything you know people are going to ask you about in your background, you want to have the storyline ready to go. And you can literally give them the same story, every single person. I talk to every single person about how I went from architecture school to law school because they want to know, and I needed to have a story. And it was basically word for word by the end, but they didn't think that. They thought I was just telling them something.
- Sadie Jones: I think the key here is to sort of take the emotion out of it, would be my advice. And I think practicing it will help accomplish that.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, because frankly, in the end, no one really cares. And like you said, if the grade itself is literally going to be the reason you don't get the offer, there's just nothing you can do about that at this point.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And focus on all the other great stuff you have to talk about.
- Alison Monahan: Exactly. Alright, well, what about a situation where maybe students don't get all of the first round interviews that they'd hoped for? Is all lost, or are there things that they can do at this point?
- Sadie Jones: Definitely all is never lost. I would say first of all, try to reach out to places where maybe you didn't get matched up with them. If we're talking about OCI, there's still a chance that you can get on their schedule. And I think we've talked about this before, but it's surprising how few law students actually directly reach out, and firms notice the students that do reach out. So there's always a chance. So you should be in touch with every firm that you wanted to talk to, that you didn't get on their schedule. That's not like going around the process or cheating or anything. That's completely acceptable. And then if they tell you there isn't space, let them know if anything opens up to please let you know, you'd just really love to make it work. And then I think the general advice is to sort of expand your search. And so, maybe this is going to be more challenging than you initially thought. I think that this year particularly, you should be really broad in where you're looking.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And also I would say any interviews that you do have, to really treat those as real, valid interviews that you're going to take seriously, because I think it's going to be a weird year and people just don't know what's going to happen. So, sometimes people will maybe get a little arrogant, like, "Oh, I don't have to prepare for this interview. I'm a shoo-in at this firm." But if you go in with that kind of attitude, you're probably not.



- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I think that things are going to be very competitive, and the firms are probably going to have their choice of who they want. And so, you should take everything really seriously and you should be trying to get an offer everywhere, and you should kind of throw out whatever your plan was maybe last year and focus on the now.
- Alison Monahan: Right. I think focus on what's in front of you, what you have in your pocket. I always say, even if it's a firm that maybe is not your absolute first choice, if you're going to do an interview with them, you may as well try to get that callback. And if you get that callback, you may as well try to get that offer, because you can always turn it down, but it's better to have options.
- Sadie Jones: Right. You should want to get an offer from as many places as possible, because you don't really know how it's all going to turn out. And if there's a place you absolutely know you would never work, it's a practice group you would never do even if you had no other options, that's one thing. But I would say, have an open mind. You may end up doing something you didn't think you were going to do, and that might be okay. So you kind of have to separate those two things.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And I would say in that first case, the nice thing to do in that scenario – say for example you thought you might need to be in a different city so you applied to a couple of firms in that city and now it's turning out, for whatever personal reason, you don't need to be there. I would say don't do those interviews. Tell them as soon as possible and let someone else have that spot.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. I think that people should try to look out for their classmates, especially now. Don't take things that you're not really going to do, because you may be taking a spot from somebody else.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, for sure. If you know absolutely for whatever reason this is something you would definitely not ever accept an offer, then just turn it down and don't waste everyone's time.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: Alright. How about some advice for handling maybe a not-great home setup for these virtual interviews? Say you have young kids, maybe you have pets, you have roommates, your house is a mess, you don't have good Internet. What are some things people can do in that scenario?
- Sadie Jones: I would say I bet no one has a perfect setup for this. I would be surprised. But I do think that's where what I was saying, about getting set up early is a good idea. So, there may be a situation where you need to find an area of your house that you can clean up and make the background the office space. Hopefully it has a door. Maybe the rest of your family can leave the house while you're



doing this. You can talk to them about that ahead of time. There are things people can do outside right now other places. I also think if it was OCI and you know everything in one day, you could consider renting another space. There are hotel rooms or things that are pretty safe right now that are doing by-the-day office space. I think that could potentially be worth it, even though there'd be a cost involved, if you knew that you were doing a bunch back-to-back. And they probably have a good tech setup and you're alone. If there was really nothing you could do in your house to keep everyone away, maybe there is somebody you know, where there is a way to safely use their space. So I would be creative about where else you could possibly go. And then worst case scenario, I think you do the best you can in your house, and maybe you're going to have to apologize if something happens or disrupts or whatever it is, and show that you can roll with it, like we've talked about.

- Alison Monahan: I think that's right. It is also possible your school may have options if you're living near your school. They want you to succeed here, and probably understand that in some cases your house might not be the best place to do interviews. So, reach out to people. And you can really get creative in your house. All you actually need, if you're not being interrupted by children and pets and roommates and things like that, is you just need a wall that you can have your back to, and then have your computer in front of you and a light behind the computer. That works totally fine. I've done that setup. I'm literally podcasting right now from a walk-in closet. I've done setups in my kitchen because the light is good and everyone thinks it looks great. I've gotten my sister set up for interviews in this dark corner of her downstairs that's not even really a house. Put a little plant, put some succulents and everything's going to look great. I think the bigger problem is the interruptions.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. That's why I think you have to be very clear with whoever else is there that you're doing this. And see if there's anything you can do to make sure that they don't interrupt you unless it was an emergency.
- Alison Monahan: Right. You don't want to be that guy whose kid comes crawling in while he's doing the BBC interview. Although I guess he went viral and everyone loves him now.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, I know. They might think it's cute, but not ideal.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think ideally we want to not have your cute dog jumping on your lap, if you can avoid it.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And your dog could be there, you just make sure they're not on the camera. Also, you're really only looking in the space that they can see, is the other thing, like you were saying about being creative.



- Alison Monahan: Yeah, you need a blank wall. You can make that work.
- Sadie Jones: It could be literally anywhere just in a corner of your space. And so, I think you just need to plan ahead the best you can to try to minimize the distractions and the noise and things like that.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And what about if there's a scenario where people maybe have Internet issues or tech problems during these interviews? Do you think this is something to talk about in advance with the firm, like, "Hey, what should I do if we get disconnected? Can I call on the phone?" Or do you think people should just kind of roll with it? What's the best approach there?
- Sadie Jones: I hope that firms are giving them a backup option. I think if it's a concern, there's nothing wrong with saying that ahead of time, especially if you're talking to the recruiter or whoever set it up for you. I'd probably try to do that though ahead, ahead of time. Reply to the email where they confirm it. I don't know if I would say that directly to the interviewer to start it off, because it might be kind of distracting or something. On your end, if you're worried about Internet issues, I would again try as best you can to test everything, make sure you have things that are working. Maybe it means that you upgrade to the higher speed Internet for that month that you're doing this. I know that mine you could change back and forth and things like that. So, all things to do the best you can to try to get it set up ahead of time.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. The other thing people can do if you're concerned about your Wi-Fi is that you can set up with an ethernet cable, plugged directly into the router, which is typically going to be much more stable. Of course it does limit where you can sit, but these are the trade-offs of life.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And I think that all that stuff is things to think about now, while you have a few weeks. Not things to think about the day before.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think when you get that initial request for the interview, if in that conversation you were like, "Hey, just as a backup, would there be a number we can call?" – that's going to make you look prepared. Obviously you don't want to go too crazy if they're like, "Oh no, don't worry about it." Then it's like, "All right, fine."
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And I would also say that in the end, of course we're saying prepare, prepare, be ready for anything. They know that you're doing this from your house, most likely. And they know that it's weird times and things happen. And they might be doing it from their house and something happens on their end. I would think that most people are pretty reasonable.



- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I agree. I think people have to be reasonable these days to get anything done. Yeah, so if your Internet totally drops, hopefully you have a phone number of someone you can call from your cell phone and say, "Hey, this is what just happened. What do you want me to do?" And again, just not panic about it and not totally freak out. Just be like, "This is the scenario. How do you want me to handle it?"
- Sadie Jones: I think it's similar. I've had people in person show up late for an interview and it's like, that's not great but it happens. Weird things happen no matter how much time you left. But if you're talking about that for the whole interview, and how stressed you are about it, then that's the problem. So it is sort of an opportunity to roll with it, not panic, and kind of move on.
- Alison Monahan: I agree. Alright, this is a perennial question people have. What are some good questions to ask when the interview gets to that point? And I assume saying you don't have any questions is not really a great answer.
- Sadie Jones: That's the worst answer, but people do it a lot. Just have them prepared. I think that generally people have their list of questions that they're probably asking to everybody, which I actually think is fine because I think it's pretty rare that the interviewers are going to talk to each other and realize you asked the exact same question, or care. So some of them I think should be specific to what's the firm, what's the practice group? And you should look up any news on the person recently, or articles about the firm, whatever. If you have something that's really specific, I always think that's great. Just general questions. I like the questions about what they normally do in a day. Some of it depends on the level of the lawyer. I'd probably ask different questions to a first-year associate than a partner. I think partners like being asked about their career path. If you've looked up their bio, something interesting about how they got from here to here, especially if it's an area that you're really interested in practicing. You can ask them what they think are important qualities to have as a new associate, what they wish that they had known starting out, things like that.
- Alison Monahan: I agree with all that. I do think you have to be a little careful on the background research not to appear to be stalker-ish.
- Sadie Jones: I was going to say that.
- Alison Monahan: So, anything that's on the website or on their LinkedIn profile, very obviously, totally fair game. If you noticed they left one firm and moved to this one – totally fair to be like, "Oh, I noticed you moved to this firm a few years ago. What was your thought process around that?", or whatever. Occasionally you get those people who dig up some random nugget and bring it out to show you, and you're like, "That's actually really creepy."



Sadie Jones: Yeah. And don't look at their social media.

Alison Monahan: Right. This would be public-facing professional profile stuff only.

Sadie Jones: LinkedIn I think is okay.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, LinkedIn or the website. Those are the two places to look.

Sadie Jones: I think sometimes people don't even think about it and they do find their social media, and they don't even realize that that's where they knew that fact. So that's why I would say maybe don't even look, be careful about that. I've definitely seen that a few times and it does really weird people out if it's something really specific.

Alison Monahan: Right, like, "Oh, I saw you got married last year in the Caribbean." It's like, "What?"

Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly.

Alison Monahan: "How was the resort?" This is not appropriate.

Sadie Jones: Exactly. But if it's a news article about a case they just worked on, that's great. They know you're interested.

Alison Monahan: Right. You can basically Google them for professional stuff, but don't go beyond that.

Sadie Jones: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: And I think if they have something really random on their bio, like in the past they used to have some totally different career or something – probably don't bring that up either.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. I think you just don't want to get too into it in any way that isn't just the basics.

Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. If it was hard for you to find this tidbit, do not bring it up.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. If it's where they went to law school, that's fine.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, whatever. Alright, how do you think firms are going to handle the logistics of callback interviews? Are they still thinking they're all going to be done in a row like they were in-person? Are they going to have breaks to get water? How is this going to happen, do you think?



Sadie Jones: What I've seen so far, because I've seen a few of these virtual callbacks, is they're a really similar setup to a regular callback. They are all in a row and you're sort of signed in and then the different people join during the spot, their 30 minutes or whatever. They do seem to give at least one break, especially if it's let's say four or five or six interviews in a row. I did hear of somebody saying the last interview was the coffee interview, which I don't really think means anything. Because I was not sure if they were expected to go get a drink coffee. I think that was a way of saying it's more casual.

Alison Monahan: Right, they were informal.

Sadie Jones: And it was a younger, more junior associate. But I thought that was a funny way to say it. So, I think it is sort of in a row and there could be tech problems. There could be tech problems on their side, but it seems like firms have now sort of practiced this. Know what video conferencing system they're using, how that's going to work. And I think they're all going to be virtual for the foreseeable future in this typical callback, one person after the other sort of way.

Alison Monahan: Right. Alright, so it sounds relatively similar at least. Well, before we wrap up, let's talk a little bit about some general etiquette questions around callbacks and that kind of thing. And I guess the first round interviews too. This is a perennial question as well, and I think it's even more pointed in the virtual setting. Do students need to send thank-you notes for virtual interviews, and if so, what do those look like?

Sadie Jones: So, I think this is a personal preference. I don't think there's a right or wrong answer. For me personally, I've seen more people get into trouble sending thank-you notes than not. So I always say, "Are you sure you want to do this, because you need to make sure that there're no issues with it?" Which means that you got the person's name right; if you're mentioning something you talked about, it is something you talked about with that person and not a different person in the schedule; there're no spelling or grammar mistakes; there's nothing strange about it. All of those things happen, and they could be a reason you don't get an offer if it was really close. So I would say if you're sure about all of those, then I would treat it however you would have a normal interview, which is probably if you normally send out thank-you notes. I guess I would probably do email. Some people handwrite notes. You can, but that seems more complicated now. So, I would say if you're sure you know what you talked about, what you want to say – just keep it short and sweet, and probably send them the next day or two days later or something like that.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I would say there's no point in sending a handwritten one because where would you even send it? The good news is you can take notes now very easily. So with each interview, if you decide you wanted to do this... And some of this probably depends on the part of the country too. In the south, people probably



send more thank-you notes. But you could write down, "Sadie: we discussed her work on this particular case." And then my email to her later that day or the next day: "Thanks so much for taking the time out of your busy day to meet with me. I really enjoyed hearing about your work on case X." Blah. One or two more sentences, done.

- Sadie Jones: Just be sure if you have any question that maybe you don't remember who it was, just don't send it.
- Alison Monahan: You should take notes. If you didn't take notes on it, don't send it.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. I'd also say if you're doing that, it's really nice to send a thank-you note to the recruiter, whoever organized your schedule.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that person is more important.
- Sadie Jones: That's a really nice touch.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I agree. I think that person would probably appreciate it more anyway. Alright, one other etiquette issue question. Is it ever okay to ask for feedback, say from the recruiter or even maybe from people you spoke with in the interview on why you did not get a callback or an offer?
- Sadie Jones: No, it's never okay. You should never ask that, ever, in any setting. Having had a lot of people ask me that, it's like you're giving an assignment to the person who decided not to hire you. That's not their job to give you feedback on that. You can hire someone to do that or talk to a friend or talk to someone in career services. They're not going to tell you the truth anyway. So, I don't really know what somebody thinks they're going to get out of this. I know that occasionally a partner will have brought someone back for a callback and then they won't get the offer, and the partner might reach out on their own and let the person know something about it, but that's not something you ask for. Sometimes they might offer you feedback, and that's different, but I don't think it should ever come from the student.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think it's just a weird thing to ask for. I know some online people in the career space advise people to do that. I think in the legal setting, it's basically never really appropriate. And as you said, these are lawyers. They're not going to tell you anything anyway. So, just don't do that. Go hire a coach if you can't figure out why you're not getting any offers. Well, assuming people do get some offers, what should they be considering when they decide which ones to accept? Has this changed at all with the pandemic, or is it kind of the same stuff that you'd usually consider?



- Sadie Jones: I think it's similar to what you would usually consider if you have a bunch of offers and options, and I think that's great. I think something maybe to consider is just generally, how is the firm doing? Because there may be places that don't make it out of this, and you may not know, but I think it's worth at least seeing if you've heard anything, that they're not doing well.
- Alison Monahan: Well, I guess one thing people are going to look at now too, or will be able to look at that they didn't have information on before, is what the bonus structure looked like for the previous year, because those will have just come out.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. I think anything that gives you any indication about the financial health of the firm. Or you sort of know what practice areas they're big on also, is another clue about how they're going to do, because I think this economic situation is going to last for a while. So, all of that is something to consider. But the thing I would say this year is also that I don't think I would recommend people wait for some better offer. I think there are other situations where you may have something and it's going to expire, but you feel really confident that you're going to be getting a whole bunch of other offers. I think this is a year where you say, "I'm going to take the one I have, which may not be ideal, because I don't know if I'm going to get any more." So I think people need to not be picky.
- Alison Monahan: Right. We're at a very minimum set, a very firm timeline of like, "Okay, if I don't have another offer in the next three days or by the end of the week, I'm going to accept this offer."
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. I think that's great to set deadlines that you do for yourself. I think you can always try to get some kind of small extension, but I don't think this is the kind of year where they're going to feel the need to go out of their way for people to do that. They may just say, "No, we have lots of people to move on to."
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think that's kind of going to be the reality. Alright, well, what if people do strike out at OCI in these initial interviews and they don't get callbacks, or they don't get any offers after getting callbacks? Am I just doomed never to find a job? What should my next steps be?
- Sadie Jones: You're definitely not doomed. There's always a next step to look for. I would say just the timing of it this year, this is really the start. There may be some firms that already did interviews, but most of them are starting now with OCI. So there is time, there are other firms. You should probably make a plan and reevaluate where you're looking, what you're looking for. I think there're lots of firms that aren't even going to do OCI, may not think it's worth the trouble. There'll probably be lots of places you can still apply. So I would say probably broaden your search, reevaluate where you're looking, maybe you see if



there're government positions, see if there're things outside of firms that you could apply to, talk to career services. But I think don't get discouraged. I think a lot of people aren't going to come out of OCI with a job, or maybe they'll be waiting. I think they may leave a lot of people on hold and see how things go. Don't worry about that, you continue your process. You keep trying to make connections, do more applications, continue.

Alison Monahan: I think that's right. I think there's just going to be uncertainty all around because no one really understands exactly what the next six months or a year are really going to look like. So yeah, I think flexibility is the key and just keep plugging away at it, and eventually something will work out.

Sadie Jones: Yes, everyone finds something at the end of this. It may not be the thing that you initially thought you were going to find, but you can hopefully take something from it and...

Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's life. Alright.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly.

Alison Monahan: Any final thoughts before we wrap up on this?

Sadie Jones: Just that when I talked about using this time, I know that after finals and this crazy year, a lot of people may not even want to be thinking about this, and just be on break and give yourself some time to do that. But you really shouldn't squander this time you have to get prepared. And so, make sure that you calendar into your break that you're going to spend certain days or a certain amount of time on certain days doing this. Which means preparing for all the things we talked about, making sure you have your outfit and your setup and all of this, because this is a great opportunity that you have this time.

Alison Monahan: I think that's a great point. And just being very aware of everything on your resume. If you mention a writing sample or anything else... I've had people quiz me on my undergraduate thesis before, which I hadn't thought about in years. So, anything on your resume is fair game. It doesn't mean you have to go read the thing again, but just be generally thinking about, "Could I explain in 30 seconds what this was about in case someone asked me about it?"

Sadie Jones: Absolutely.

Alison Monahan: And that should be the case with literally anything on your resume.

Sadie Jones: Which means one final thought. If you write that you speak a language...

Alison Monahan: I was going to go there.



Sadie Jones: They could speak to you in that language.

Alison Monahan: I was definitely going to mention that, yeah. That was exactly what I was thinking. If you put you're fluent in Spanish, you need to be able to conduct the interview in Spanish. That is the bottom line.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, in a business setting. So maybe take it off if you don't feel prepared.

Alison Monahan: Having lived in Mexico City for several years, I would not put I was fluent in Spanish, because I don't want to do the interview in Spanish.

Sadie Jones: I think it's a safer bet.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I might say I had conversational fluency.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly.

Alison Monahan: Because it does happen. I definitely have had friends who walked in and that interview is fully in a different language. But in that case they did speak it and they were fine, but it was absolutely a test.

Sadie Jones: That's the number one thing I think people could get tripped up on that they would put on their resume.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, don't exaggerate. Alright, well, with that, we are out of time. Thank you so much for joining us.

Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me.

Alison Monahan: My pleasure. For more career help and the opportunity to work one-on-one with us, including prepping for your interviews, 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 or rating on your favorite listening app. We would 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](mailto:lee@lawschooltoolbox.com) or [alison@lawschooltoolbox.com](mailto:alison@lawschooltoolbox.com). Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](https://www.lawschooltoolbox.com/contact) at – you guessed it – LawSchoolToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

## **RESOURCES:**

[CareerDicta](https://www.careerdicta.com)  
[Podcast Episode 76: Making the Most of Your Law School Winter Break](https://www.lawschooltoolbox.com/podcast-episode-76-making-the-most-of-your-law-school-winter-break)



[Podcast Episode 222: Using Winter Break to Advance Your Career](#)

[Podcast Episode 241: Tips for Virtual Job Interviews](#)

[Podcast Episode 243: Pushing OCI Back to the Winter of 2021 \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 253: Networking in Quarantine \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 260: Career Implications of the COVID-19 Crisis \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 262: Researching Law Firms \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 266: Preparing for Virtual OCI \(w/Sadie Jones\)](#)

[Tips to Help You Make a Successful Adjustment to the Virtual Interview Process](#)