



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 about job search etiquette. Your Law School Toolbox host 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. And with that, let's get started.

Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're excited to have ex-BigLaw recruiter Sadie Jones here with us to talk about job search etiquette. Welcome, Sadie.

Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me back.

Alison Monahan: Oh, my pleasure. I think this will be a fun one. Well, I'm sure you've seen some bad behavior from applicants while you were working as a BigLaw recruiter – it is one of those jobs. What are some of the most common things that people do during the OCI process that maybe they don't realize are not really great?

Sadie Jones: I do think there are certain things that seem to happen over and over again, and like you said, I'm sure that people don't realize how annoying these things are. One of the biggest things is just following up over and over again. And I think we've previously talked about it's fine to follow up once, check on the status of your application after a couple of weeks...

Alison Monahan: Right, not the next day.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. And if you're just doing it over and over again, what I can promise all the students out there is, no one has forgotten about you. It's just, that isn't how the system works.

Alison Monahan: Right, you're going to get an answer one way or the other. They're going to check that box eventually.

Sadie Jones: Exactly. And so, I totally understand that sometimes it takes longer than you want, and you really want an answer, maybe you have another job offer. If you've let them know all of these things, sometimes they're not going to be able to get back to you in the timeframe you want, and you just need to accept that and move on. It just becomes annoying, and then I think you potentially could lose out on a job offer because they think you're annoying.



- Alison Monahan: Right. I think one of the key takeaways from this episode is, being annoying is rarely a great option when you're looking for a job.
- Sadie Jones: And that it actually matters. You could be a great candidate in lots of ways, but they're hiring you to be their co-worker, so they don't want someone who's annoying even if you have great grades.
- Alison Monahan: Right. I think that is something that happens a lot with people from really impressive schools – maybe they have really great grades and they think, "Well, I'm such a valuable candidate. Of course, I can do whatever I want." And yes, you have a lot going for you, but at the same time, they're hiring a person. So if you're not that person anyone wants to be around or work with, that's not a great way to get hired.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And whoever you're communicating with at the law firm, it's someone that's communicating with people in power, I promise you. And they are a human being. They're interacting with you as a human being and they're going to pass that along to other people.
- Alison Monahan: Right, I think sometimes people don't understand. At least in my experience, if I did an interview – and oftentimes you just get called in the last second, it's not like I had any real background or anything to do this interview or is particularly important for me to personally do it – but if I did an interview and somebody said something or did something that I didn't like, that was basically probably not going to get them hired if I decide to share that information.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. So I think even these little things that may not seem like such a big deal and they might seem nitpicky, they kind of matter because they add up to who you are, how aware you are of other people and their time and where you fit in.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And a law firm, particularly, is looking at, "Could I put this person in front of a client? Would I want them behaving this way with a client?" If the answer to that is "No", then they're probably not going to hire you.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly, because you could take what we just said and say, "Oh, what if a client wasn't getting back to you on a question you had for them and you just incessantly followed up with them for the answer?"
- Alison Monahan: Right, you're calling and leaving voicemail for the general counsel every 10 minutes. It's like, "Okay, that's not good judgment."
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: And I think it's important to understand, pretty much anyone you interact with in this process probably has veto power over you.



- Sadie Jones: It's really true. I mean, that's been my experience in multiple places.
- Alison Monahan: Mine too, yeah. Exactly. I think people don't fully understand that. They think, "Oh well, it only matters if the hiring partner likes me and they're a friend of my family, so I'm good." It's like, no, that's not the way this works.
- Sadie Jones: And especially if you have a particularly negative experience with someone along the line. That really can just be an absolute no-go, even if everyone else liked you.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think it's just a red flag. And lawyers are risk-averse, they don't want a red flag.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: Alright, what else do you see?
- Sadie Jones: Also, just thanking the person that you're dealing with. So we're talking about not being annoying, but also being polite, and again, like I was saying, thinking of them as a human being who's doing something for you. And yes, it's their job, but be appreciative and thank them and make them feel like you understand they're a person and you appreciate it.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's so key. I just feel like there's no reason to put negativity out in the world. Maybe you feel like you should have gotten something sooner than you got it – there's a nice way to ask about that and a not so nice way. You may as well pick the nice one.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. I just think nothing comes out of being rude or having an attitude, or not just being polite. And if you're polite, they're going to appreciate that and probably act better to you, even if maybe they were having a bad day.
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. I feel like even if you're annoyed about something, there's probably a more polite way to phrase your request or whatever it is, and you may as well use that.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And trust me that the HR recruiting people pick up on that kind of attitude real quick.
- Alison Monahan: Right, because you deal with a lot of people, and some of them are great and some of them are not so great.



- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And then along those lines, usually you'll get the schedule for your interview the day before, and they'll probably tell you that when they go to schedule it with you. So, the day before is just the day before...
- Alison Monahan: Like end of day.
- Sadie Jones: Until they leave work, right.
- Alison Monahan: Literally end of day, because they're probably still trying to get lawyers on your schedule at that point.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. So, something that I found particularly annoying were people following up at 2:00 PM, "Oh, I haven't received my schedule tomorrow. Have you forgotten about me or something?" And it's just like, "No, I've not forgotten. It's not done yet, you'll get it when it's done. And you're just wasting my time so that I can't get the schedule done."
- Alison Monahan: Right. Just so people understand, what you're generally doing at that point is you're trying to figure out, "Of the people I would like this person to talk to, based on their characteristics or their interest or their level or whatever it is, how can I get those people to agree to do this interview, based on what they have on their schedule tomorrow, which they may not even know is on their schedule yet for tomorrow?"
- Sadie Jones: Exactly, and sometimes there are last minute changes. So yeah, you want to look up their bios and do all that, but worst case scenario, you got the schedule right before and you'd still should be able to get through the interview.
- Alison Monahan: Right. I mean, it's not the end of the world, obviously, if they send your schedule the morning of the interview. No one really expects you to have a lot of background on anyone.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. So, just do not bug them about that; that's rude.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And think about the timing too, because sometimes if you're interviewing on the West Coast and you're flying or something, I understand people might want, "Oh, I'd love to have this before I fly" – that's not what you're going to get, probably. So don't worry about it.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, and what I'm sure of is that they have not forgotten. They're not going to not give you a schedule – that's never happened.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And that just kind of implies that the recruiter can't do their job or they're incompetent, which is generally not what you want to be implying.



- Sadie Jones: Exactly, it's just not a good look. And I find it really annoying if people would do it early in the day, where they haven't even... It's one thing if it's 8:00 PM and you haven't gotten it and you are a little worried – I sort of get that, but I definitely wouldn't do that early. So, I think that's something to keep in mind. That goes along the lines of everything else that we've said – just let them do their job and wait for them to contact you how they said they would. And along those lines, just being flexible. So, being flexible if they change an interviewer on you or something has to go different than you expected. You need to be able to roll with it. You're going to have to do that as a lawyer, that's just life. So that's important. And then being flexible on the interview timing. They'll probably ask when you're available, and you could possibly be flying in for one trip with a bunch of firms – do your best to give them however many options you have. It's not a great idea to say, "I can do Wednesday the 14th at 2:00 PM." That's not going to work. And if they can't get that together, you won't be able to interview with them. So, have options, be flexible, even if it's not your perfect scenario.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And I think if you are flying out, you probably want to have a lot of this sorted out before you book your ticket, so you're not like, "Oh, I only have this one day and a half", and then everyone's like, "Well, we can't do that."
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. And I can tell you that sometimes flights need to be changed, or things like that happen. I did find that rude, if people just didn't like the way it was and you're costing the firm money. So really, you should try to make that happen as little as possible. Don't ask for things above and beyond whatever the initial plan was.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think generally speaking, if you are traveling, they're fairly generous to start with.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly, so don't ask for anything more than... What's nice is there're guidelines on [NALP](#), which we've talked about – this is exactly like if you're flying, how many days you get, for how many firms you're seeing, or what the maximum amounts of reimbursement are. Do not ever ask for anything outside of that. Don't ask them to pay for things that are above and beyond, don't ask for some upgrade, don't ask for them to pay for the movie in the hotel room that you wanted – I've had people do that. Or like the UberX, when you are just supposed to take the regular one. Just don't do any of that; that's not good.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I remember once I was interviewing in San Francisco and a friend of mine came over and hit the mini bar at my hotel, and I was like, "What are you doing? I'm going to have to get a separate receipt for this. I can't submit this for reimbursement, are you kidding me?"
- Sadie Jones: Well, it's good you caught that.



- Alison Monahan: I know. I literally had the hotel issue two separate receipts. I was like, "Can you put all my actual room service that's legitimate on one receipt, and then I'll pay for this other stuff separately? Because I don't want to submit my friend's beer."
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And some people just try to submit a credit card receipt.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's not going to fly.
- Sadie Jones: They are going to need an itemized receipt, because there are specific rules about things they can't pay for. So just be careful.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, just think about what's going on in that receipt. And the hotel will clean this up for you if they need to. They know how this works.
- Sadie Jones: And if you have to pay for some stuff for yourself, that's okay.
- Alison Monahan: Right. I mean, if you're watching porn, you probably shouldn't be submitting that.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. There's some strange stuff that comes up that I think students haven't thought ahead about, so be careful.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think just stay within the rules, don't do anything crazy, and you'll be fine. But you don't want to be that person that everyone's like, "Oh my gosh, did you hear what this person tried to get expensed?"
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, because there are classic stories that all the recruiters know, about crazy, crazy things. I did have someone one time book a flight and then tell me that they decided they didn't want to see us anymore and were cancelling it, and so we had to pay. I think we had to pay the full price of the flight because it was too late, but obviously we did it; it's better to not waste everyone's time. And then called me back and wanted to re-book it because they changed their mind.
- Alison Monahan: Oh wow. You're like, "Mm, no."
- Sadie Jones: It was just unbelievable that this was real. And we didn't do that, because that's just not okay.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, you've got to be reasonable. And I think in a case like that, even if you think you've got some other offer lined up, you probably ought to just do that interview, because, a) it makes you look like an idiot if you don't, and b) you never know what's going to happen.



Sadie Jones: Exactly. Another classic story was someone who was at a local school but was staying somewhere else, was out of town for some reason and then wanted a flight from where they were to fly home.

Alison Monahan: Like visiting their girlfriend or something?

Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly. I think some people think they can hide this stuff and we won't notice, but we know what school you're at. You only get from that school to the firm.

Alison Monahan: Right, you get the taxi ride, basically.

Sadie Jones: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: There is some funny stuff that happens. I had some funny interviews that I won't really go into, but it was like, "Wow, did you really just say that?"

Sadie Jones: Exactly, but you don't want to be that person that's the funny story. It's like we all enjoy it, but...

Alison Monahan: Yeah, they definitely did not get an offer.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. If the recruiter, whoever mentions that something happened, doesn't say a name or anything, let's say in front of a partner – I promise you the partner is like, "Who did that? What school were they from?" They'll be upset.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, just don't be that person.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, because ultimately it's their money, so they think about stuff like this.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, they won't hire you if you're going to do things like this.

Sadie Jones: Something else that might be my number one pet peeve is that if you've been rejected – and it could be anywhere along the way, although I really mean mostly early on in the process – don't ask for feedback about why they rejected you. That's not their job. You probably didn't get it because they didn't like something in your materials, you didn't meet their hiring standards, the interview did not go well. There's nothing that they can tell you that really is going to matter. Now, the exception might be if you've had a bunch of interviews, you've made a relationship with someone, and you feel like one-on-one you can say, do they have some feedback about anything along the way? Again, if you've developed a relationship with somebody. But don't respond to just an email that says, "We're passing", asking them what they can do better, how they can get another job. That's not their job.



- Alison Monahan: Right, you should go hire a career coach. I think sometimes career coaches tell people to ask this stuff; I feel like it's really inappropriate.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, and I think some headhunters sometimes say that. I just find it really off-putting.
- Alison Monahan: I feel like in a headhunter situation though, sometimes they can go behind the scenes and kind of find out and tell you, which is different.
- Sadie Jones: Definitely, yeah.
- Alison Monahan: But that's their role, and that's actually beneficial for you and probably for the firm as well, because they don't want the headhunter sending them people who are not appropriate. But for you to do it directly, particularly as a student, it's just sort of like, "Well, get better grades" or, "Have a better personality." What are they supposed to say?
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, like "We didn't like you." They're not going to say that.
- Alison Monahan: Right, they're not going to say anything. They're lawyers.
- Sadie Jones: I wouldn't even respond to a rejection, it's not necessary. You don't need to continue this conversation back and forth, it has to end somewhere. The only response I can think though would be like, "Thank you for your time" or something.
- Alison Monahan: Right, "Thanks so much for your consideration and for considering my application, I really appreciate it."
- Sadie Jones: That's it.
- Alison Monahan: Even that to me feels a little over the top, because you just got rejected.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. You don't want them to feel like then they have to write back or something. It's just like, the rejection is usually a standard email, and just leave it there.
- Alison Monahan: Right. Be disappointed on your own time, don't bother everyone else about it.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: Alright, yeah. I think overall, a lot of this kind of comes down to entitlement, frankly. You're not entitled to anyone else's feedback about this process, you're not entitled to a business class flight, you're not entitled to the exact interview on the exact day, at the exact time, with the exact people that you want. You're



applying for a position, so try to make it easy for the person to hire you. You're not being owed this position, right?

Sadie Jones: Absolutely. And along those lines, it doesn't matter what economy you're applying for a position in. To me, the advice is always exactly the same. Whether or not you're in a good position, because they really need someone, and the economy is good as someone looking for a job, it doesn't matter. It's all the same, it's not like they owe you anything. You're still looking for them to hire you, there're still only so many good jobs. To me, the attitude should always be, go in looking for them to hire you. You can ask the questions later once you have a job offer. I think that the positions change a little. And along those lines, whatever they've asked you to do, you should be doing. So, if the application said they wanted you to submit certain documents, submit those documents. Submit all the things they asked, not things they didn't ask for, not extra, not longer emails explaining what you're submitting. I don't really like getting those emails with the attachment that are like a separate cover letter. The email is like its own cover letter, and then there's a cover letter attached. There is a point where it's too much to read and you just think, "This person is annoying, and asking a lot of me to spend time on." So it should all be along the lines of, make it easy. So if they've asked you to submit an online job application, it should never be, "Oh, but I already sent you an email with it." No.

Alison Monahan: Right, it's like, "Why is that my problem? Follow the process."

Sadie Jones: They've asked you to do that so they don't need to input it, and so there's nothing else to say. You do what they've asked, even if you've sent it twice. And if they haven't asked for references, you don't need to include references. It's too much.

Alison Monahan: Right, or a writing sample or anything like that. If they want this stuff, they'll ask for it.

Sadie Jones: Right, you can have it prepared and...

Alison Monahan: And you should.

Sadie Jones: ...submit it if necessary. Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Right, someone may follow up and be like, "Oh, could we get this other information?" I also think putting stuff in the requested format, people often underestimate that importance. Particularly for online stuff, if you're submitting it in a certain way, they're probably adding it to some type of automated system, so it's really important that you actually follow the directions.

Sadie Jones: I totally agree. Just do whatever they said. Read them carefully.



Alison Monahan: Yeah. Part of this is actually to see if you will follow a process, oftentimes.

Sadie Jones: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: And if you won't, then that's also a red flag that you maybe won't follow instructions later.

Sadie Jones: For example, if someone asks you, let's say in a form, to list certain previous experience, what you should never do is say, "See my resume attached."

Alison Monahan: I love that. You're like, "Really? It's my problem to sort this out? No, it's not. Goodbye."

Sadie Jones: Because we were asking for your resume as well. We understand the difference.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think sometimes people don't understand that if an employer is asking for something specific – say they have a short questionnaire or something they ask you to fill out – that's actually an opportunity. And so, if all you do is say, "See attached", you're passing up that opportunity.

Sadie Jones: Or you're just trying to get it done as quick as possible – one sentence each and not make it thoughtful – then you might as well not submit it.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. It's kind of like, why bother?

Sadie Jones: Well, that's the thing. If you don't like their process or they're asking for stuff that seems like you don't want to do it, you don't need to apply. That's okay.

Alison Monahan: Exactly, you can go find something else that's easier to apply to.

Sadie Jones: Yeah. And along all these lines of just following directions and being clear – whatever email address, phone number, whatever you used when you submitted your application, that's what you should use for everything. It's very annoying if someone emails you, let's say, from a Gmail, and then once they've submitted, they tell you, "Oh, no. I want you to use my school email." That's asking the person to do too much work.

Alison Monahan: Right. Why should they have to go in and figure out how to update your contact information, when you submitted your contact information and it was something else?

Sadie Jones: Or they tried to contact you and you're like, "Oh, I don't check that email."

Alison Monahan: Yeah, you should never do that.



- Sadie Jones: And also check your spam, some things go to spam. You're able to look in your spam and make sure that...
- Alison Monahan: Right, it is allowed.
- Sadie Jones: If you know where it's coming from, you can add that to your contacts so it won't go into spam.
- Alison Monahan: There's an argument even to be made for setting up a completely separate email address that's very professional-looking, that you only use for applications, so that things don't get lost. As a law student, you have a lot going on. You have a lot of emails coming in, you have a lot of things occupying your time, but this stuff is important. If somebody emails you and says they want to set up an interview, you need to make sure that with 99.999% likelihood, you are going to see that email in a timely manner.
- Sadie Jones: Absolutely. And I really like that idea of a separate professional email. You can forward emails or set up rules and stuff. There's always a way to do different tricks like that, but having something that's just devoted to the job search, I think is a great idea.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, you probably don't want to be like hot99@hotmail.com.
- Sadie Jones: I've seen some crazy things like that.
- Alison Monahan: I know.
- Sadie Jones: And I think sometimes people think they're being funny, and it's not funny.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah.
- Sadie Jones: It's funny like we're making fun of you, but it doesn't convey a professional attitude, and that says something. All of these things say something about who you are. Also, don't ask a million questions before you apply.
- Alison Monahan: I hate that one. I'm just like, "You know what? There's a lot of information on my website. There's a form. You can read it, you can decide if you want to apply." Nobody's going to answer all of your questions.
- Sadie Jones: And we'll talk about it later if we want to. You can ask all these questions after you've had an interview, during the interview, after you have a job offer.
- Alison Monahan: Basically, if we want to talk to you, a lot of these questions will get answered. If we don't want to talk to you, stop wasting everyone's time.



- Sadie Jones: And none of this is so complicated. If you don't have the five or 10 minutes to submit it, then it's probably not the right position for you, you don't care that much.
- Alison Monahan: Right.
- Sadie Jones: It's not asking for that much. So, I would say up front, just don't even go there. Unless the question is about submitting the application, there's nothing that you probably really need to know.
- Alison Monahan: But even there, I'm pretty sure most people have clear instructions about how to submit the application, because there's a process.
- Sadie Jones: I agree. I would always just redirect people to the career website; that would be the standard answer. And I think when people ask questions beyond that, it's just like, all of this is about asking the person at the employer to do work for you.
- Alison Monahan: Right.
- Sadie Jones: Or that's how it comes across to me.
- Alison Monahan: No, I think so. And I think, again, it comes back to this entitlement situation. It's like, nobody's being paid to answer your questions about this at this point. They're being paid to figure out who they want to hire, and you may or may not be that person.
- Sadie Jones: And it's different if you're being actively reached out to, like we were saying, by a headhunter or an internal recruiting person that is trying to recruit you. In that way, that might be a different scenario – they are trying to sell it to you. But that's really not the situation that we're talking about. It's you coming to them if you apply for a job.
- Alison Monahan: A job exists, you want to apply for that job, you need to submit an application to get into the process. That's what we're talking about.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, and all of that initial stuff is all you trying to sell yourself to them. Not the other way around.
- Alison Monahan: Absolutely.
- Sadie Jones: What we were saying about the email and phone number, I'd also add that everything should line up. So, in your cover letter or a job application or a questionnaire or whatever it is, if you mention something, it should match on all



your other documents. So, it should be in your resume or wherever else you had to put it. You should not be mentioning a job somewhere and then it doesn't appear somewhere else. That seems weird. If you say that you transferred schools, then that school should be on your resume; I should know where you transferred schools from. Or anything else that's just fact-based, it should be everywhere, because if it's not, it feels like you're either hiding something or you're being lazy.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. You're dealing with lawyers, we look at the evidence. It's like, "Okay, well, this person mentioned transferring in their cover letter. Huh, there's only one school on their resume. That's weird. I wonder where they transferred from, what are they trying to hide from me?"

Sadie Jones: Because I think people don't realize that's the first thing we look at. It's like, "Do the dates line up, do the..." All the basic facts.

Alison Monahan: Right, just like, "There's all this stuff here."

Sadie Jones: Yeah, exactly. You're not going to pull one off, so just make it all make sense.

Alison Monahan: It just looks sloppy.

Sadie Jones: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: If you assume that someone's not trying to pull something off, then it just makes them look sloppy, which is also not a great look.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, none of that is good. It should all match. And maybe have someone else look at it to make sure they didn't catch, "Oh, you forgot to put this here. This is the wrong version."

Alison Monahan: Yeah, no, I think that's true. Just have everything kind of line up, nothing weird. Make it concise, respect people's time. Recognize people are busy and just make it as easy as possible. It's kind of like writing a law school exam – the easier it is for your professor to find what you're talking about, the easier it is for them to give you points. Here, the easier it is to see if you're the right person, the easier it is to give you an interview.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, I think that people get in their own way in all these situations.

Alison Monahan: I agree. Well, let's switch gears a little bit before we're out of time. I think it's really important if somebody put in a good word for you or gave you some type of connection, even if it's a very loose connection. Somebody you know that works at the same company and they don't know the hiring partner, but they send an email saying, "Hey, my friend's applying for this, FYI." I think you want



to make sure that you're making that person look good. People have to understand they invested social capital for you, they put their reputation on the line. So, any time that happens, you want to make sure you're being extra accommodating, submitting everything really promptly, being extremely polite. And also follow up with the person who helped you out, either with the outcome, or at least to say "Thank you".

Sadie Jones: Absolutely. And you're just saying "Thank you", you're not asking for anything else. You're just appreciating what they did. And I think we've talked about this before, but if there's anything they told you to do, do it. They recommended something, they wanted you to follow up with another person, they wanted you to submit something. Make sure you've done whatever they asked, because I think that's disrespectful to have them spend their time and effort on you, and then not respond in the right way. And I think sometimes people, let's say they know someone high up at the law firm, and first of all, only use their name once. You can say it, you could have it in the letter or whatever it is, that you know this person. Do not continually talk about how you know that person; no one really cares.

Alison Monahan: Right.

Sadie Jones: They got it. You've name-dropped, you know someone. That's not getting you the job, that's just like giving you maybe a leg up or getting you in the door.

Alison Monahan: And I think you should make sure that you have permission from that person to name-drop.

Sadie Jones: Yes, absolutely. That's a really good point. But I think some people take the attitude of, "Oh, I know this high up partner, so I don't have to do that much." Like the opposite of what you said, they don't have to make the effort or it doesn't matter how it looks, because, "Oh well, I know this high up person." And I think you're absolutely right, it's the opposite. That person, whoever they are, they want you to be a good candidate, make a good impression and do well.

Alison Monahan: Right. Yeah, I think you just have to be careful with all these things, and be thoughtful about... And it's not that hard to say, "Hey Bob, thanks so much for your suggestion that I apply to the firm. I've sent in my information. If there's anything else, I would be happy to provide it." It doesn't have to be anything big.

Sadie Jones: Absolutely.

Alison Monahan: Alright, one last thing. Let's talk a little bit about the interviews. We've been talking mostly about the pre-interview. I know we talked about this earlier briefly, so you kind of have to be flexible and understand that schedules change,



it's not about you, people have things come up, and you can't get kind of persnickety about that one.

Sadie Jones: Right. Some people get really stuck on like, "I've reviewed all the bios", and so if something got switched... Or let's say even the timing switched, and you thought it was going to be in this order – you need to be able to roll with it. And they'll know if they just got added on, that you don't know their bio. They know they just got added on.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I've literally had a recruiter drop by my office and be like, "Can you do an interview in five minutes? Here's the resume. My person had to get to court." And I'm like, "Okay, cool." I don't expect that person to know anything about me at that point.

Sadie Jones: And you should be able to get through an interview without knowing any background about the person.

Alison Monahan: Of course.

Sadie Jones: There should be standard questions that we've talked about in the past that could work for anyone, so that should be fine. So yeah, be flexible, don't have a look of panic. I just say going into it, say to yourself, "Things could change, that's okay." And I always suggest that people do some basic research, but not too much.

Alison Monahan: Oh yeah, it can get weird if you think somebody's been stalking you on the Internet all night, the night before you interview them for 20 minutes.

Sadie Jones: And I've seen that.

Alison Monahan: Oh, I've had that experience.

Sadie Jones: Yeah, it's weird.

Alison Monahan: I've had people bring stuff up where I'm like, "This is weird. You had to go really far down the rabbit hole of the Internet to find that out."

Sadie Jones: Which is like, don't even look. The only places you really should look are just maybe their LinkedIn and their professional bio on the website, that's it. Don't even go there, because you might say something that you forgot was from their Facebook or something.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, no, I've had this where I'm like, "Why do you know that? And why did you say that?"



- Sadie Jones: Or don't say you know a mutual person that there's no way you would have found that out, except for stalking.
- Alison Monahan: Right. Yeah, it's one thing if you're like, "Oh, I was on LinkedIn and I saw that you know 10 people that I know from college. Isn't that funny?" But even that, I feel like is a little weird.
- Sadie Jones: Yeah, or it's different if someone mentioned it – if it's a really good friend of yours. "Oh, you're interviewing with someone I used to work with." It has to be an easy, obvious explanation. So, my advice is, just don't even get into it. Just keep it really surface level and don't spend too much time on it. There's nothing you really need to know that deep about the person you're interviewing with.
- Alison Monahan: No, I think it's all just professional. If you go in knowing the basic area they work in, maybe some cases, if their cases are mentioned on the website, that's totally fine. Maybe what school they went to, but even that's kind of getting into like, "Eh, that's a little weird."
- Sadie Jones: Yeah. And you might know a little more if it's like a practice area you're specifically interested in, something that you really do know a lot about. But I would just keep it easy. And along the same lines of just rolling with it, if something crazy unexpected happens and you're late, or something goes awry, you need to be able to just move on. Do not focus on the thing that went wrong, just move on. That becomes a thing that can ruin the interview, more than that you were five minutes late.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think just obviously apologize and then drop it. Don't apologize to every single person, "Oh, I had such a crazy morning. I was five minutes late to the interview", when you're at like 4:00 PM.
- Sadie Jones: Like, no one knew.
- Alison Monahan: No one knew, no one cares. Now I'm thinking like, "Wow, this person doesn't ever show up on time. Alright, good to know."
- Sadie Jones: Exactly.
- Alison Monahan: I think some stuff, hopefully, would be obvious, like no off-color jokes, nothing like this. I can't believe we have to say this, but again, I've seen it, and you're just like, "Wow, did you really just say that? Okay." You need to be polite to everyone, like the receptionist, anyone you encounter. Like we said, almost certainly, this person has veto power. You may not realize that, but secretaries or someone that you meet may have been at the firm for 20 or 30 years, and actually have more power than an associate does.



- Sadie Jones: Absolutely, and I think that a lot of students don't realize that. And it seems weird to tell people, "Be a nice person", which you should be doing anyway, treating everyone with respect. But I understand these situations are kind of nerve-racking, so I think that students sometimes might not even think about all the people along the way; they're just really focused on the lawyer that they're going to talk to.
- Alison Monahan: Right.
- Sadie Jones: And just so you know, the recruiter that meets with you, let's say first usually, or last, or both – even though they're not sitting down for a formal interview, that is an interview.
- Alison Monahan: Right.
- Sadie Jones: They're asking you things on purpose and they're interacting with you on purpose, and they're going to be part of the review process. They're in the meeting and they usually have some say. So, everybody that you're talking to, you should assume that the hiring partner is going to hear all of it. So, exactly, just be polite. I would go out of your way actually, with everybody, to just make sure they know that you're treating them with respect.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, be on your very best behavior. And on the recruiter thing, I think we've talked before about "Thank you" notes. I don't want to belabor that – probably not necessary. If you do them, make sure they're perfect, but I do think it's nice to at least send a "Thank you" email to the person who set up your schedule and all that. I think that's totally sufficient. What do you think?
- Sadie Jones: I totally agree. In almost 15 years of doing it, I probably only got a handful or two of "Thank yous" ever, and I remember them. Sometimes they were handwritten cards, sometimes they were emails, either way. It actually surprises me that it was that unusual. So, even though, I think I've said before, I'm kind of "err on the no" on "Thank you" notes generally, I'm a definite "Yes" on "Thank you" notes to the person who did your schedule or who you were interacting with at the firm. I think that's really classy.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think it's just a nice wrap-up, like, "Oh, thank you so much for setting up my schedule, I really enjoyed meeting everyone. I think this would be a fantastic opportunity for me. If you have any other questions or want more information, please feel free to let me know." That's it.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. But again, read it carefully. Don't have any typos.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And even there, I'm like, "Ooh, 'fantastic opportunity'. I might re-word that."



- Sadie Jones: So, not to make everyone nervous. That one should still be good, but it goes a long way.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think it's a nice touch. Alright, well, we are out of time. Any other final thoughts on this topic?
- Sadie Jones: My final thought is basically, make it as easy as possible for the person that needs to process all of this.
- Alison Monahan: Definitely.
- Sadie Jones: So, if you need to spend a few extra minutes to save them some extra minutes, that's what you should do. And I think if you have a question where you can find the answer another way, don't ask them. Find it another way, save it till later. Just make it easy.
- Alison Monahan: Well, think about whether it's absolutely necessary that you have that information.
- Sadie Jones: Exactly. So I just think everything should be concise, well done, follows directions, apologize if there's an issue, be polite, and feel proud of the way you're acting.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think people should understand, particularly if you're applying for a large law firm, there is a process here. And so, you can just kind of feel confident that once you get on that process, the train's going to keep moving. You're probably not having an issue that they've never thought about before. Maybe you are, but probably not. So just kind of relax and go with the process, and assume that at some point you'll probably find out who you're going to talk to.
- Sadie Jones: And one more thing. In the same way I was saying that doing something wrong could kind of lose you the job, doing something right can actually get you the job. So obviously, you need to have the qualifications to get through the interview process, but I can tell you that a lot of people saying they really liked someone or they appreciated X, Y or Z – that actually matters.
- Alison Monahan: Oh, for sure. If everybody's like, "Wow, this person was great. I really enjoyed talking with them."
- Sadie Jones: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: That's going to go a long way. I mean, it's not going to get you hired if your grades aren't there, but you probably wouldn't have gotten the interview if your grades weren't there.



Sadie Jones: Exactly. So just be that person.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Be nice, be polite. Alright, well, thank you so much for joining us.

Sadie Jones: Thanks for having me.

Alison Monahan: My pleasure. With that, we are out of time. For more career help and the opportunity to work one-on-one with us, 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](#) at LawSchoolToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

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