



Lee Burgess: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we are talking about Law Review leadership as part of our “Quick Tips” series. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that’s me. We’re here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so you’ll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. We’re the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career-related website [CareerDicta](#). Alison also runs [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 reach us via the [contact form](#) on LawSchoolToolBox.com, and we’d love to hear from you. And with that, let’s get started.

Lee Burgess: Welcome back! Today we’re talking about how to give yourself the best shot at a leadership position on a Law Review or any other journal. Now, every journal is different – some elect their leadership, some appoint their leadership. But the qualities of a great leader remain the same, and we have a number of tips to ensure that you are putting those qualities on display.

Lee Burgess: The most important first step to being a rockstar leader on Law Review is being a rockstar editor. We realize that this is easier said than done, but it can be determinative depending on what position you’re interested in. You’d be hard-pressed to find a Managing Editor that was not strong as a 2L editor, because that’s the entire gig. So it’s important to know your strengths and aim for positions that will allow you to best serve your journal.

Lee Burgess: Now, that’s not to say that someone who did not start off strong could never be elected to an editing-intensive position, which brings us to my next point: Think about reaching out to your leadership after the first or second editing cycle to ask if there are ways that you could improve. Not only will it make you a better editor, but it will also show your leaders that you are committed to excellence, which is something that every Law Review strives for. Generally, you want to always submit your edits on time, keep on open line of communication with your leadership, and if you have to write a Note or Comment, work hard on your writing. The goal is that, if there is a discussion that takes place during leadership selection, the conversation is about the hard work and dedication you have already contributed to the Law Review.

Lee Burgess: In that same vein, it would also be wise to get to know your peers. This is especially important if the leadership on your journal is elected by your peers. Go to the Law Review social events, take advantage of any volunteer opportunities, and anything else that gets you in front of the membership. If your journal has an office, think about studying in the office to get as much face time with your fellow editors as possible. Your peers won’t know how capable



you are of leading the Law Review unless they know you. This may also be crucial if you feel that you'll already be working against some type of bias in the selection process. The more your peers get to know you, the hope is that the vote will be about your capabilities and nothing else.

Lee Burgess:

An important tip for getting an edge up on elections is to talk to many students currently in leadership positions. It is often general practice to reach out specifically to the person holding the position you are seeking. In doing so, you find out more about the role while demonstrating your commitment to seeking that position. Now, imagine how much more it says about you if you reach out to more than just the person in the role you're seeking. Think about reaching out to every person whose position you'd be interacting with – so if you're considering running for Editor-in-Chief, that means you could reach out to every single person currently in a leadership position. It will be important for you to have an idea of what everyone on your journal does, so why not get a head start and give yourself a leg up? If you're interested in being the Managing Editor, consider reaching out to the Executive Editors in addition to the current Managing Editor. If you're interested in running the write-on competition, talk to the Diversity Editor – perhaps about ways to increase minority membership through write-on. The bottom line is that you want the people currently in leadership positions to know that you intend to put a significant amount of time and effort into maintaining and improving the journal.

Lee Burgess:

Now, if you have to give a speech, we have some tips for that as well. The first is to keep your audience in mind. If you've gotten to know your peers, you'll know what will move them – and that is also just good lawyering. If you're looking for an emotional angle, think about speaking on why leadership is so important to you. Maybe you wrote your Student Note on a topic important to your journal and can talk about how meaningful it is that the journal gave you the platform to write on that topic. If you're looking for a logical angle, now is the time to talk about the hard work as an editor that we emphasized earlier. If you've spent the last year going above and beyond for the Law Review, now is the time for a humble brag to make it clear that you are simply the logical choice – that you've worked for this and you've earned it.

Lee Burgess:

Another thing you may want to think about including in your speech is your vision for the journal. Could your journal benefit from an increased focus on quality writing? Do your bylaws need an overhaul? Think about how your journal can improve and have a well thought out vision ready to present at elections. Also, if you're running for Editor-in-Chief, and you'll have to make certain decisions immediately following your election, make sure you've already thought about and made those decisions. For example, if you have to set the number of Executive Editors or decide whether your volume will have a



Commentary Issue, come to elections with your mind already made up as a show of proactivity and decisiveness.

Lee Burgess: Our final tip is to take a moment to be honest with yourself about why you want a leadership position on Law Review. These positions are enormous time and energy commitments, and schools vary drastically on compensation. Some Editors-in-Chief are financially compensated, and others receive no more than one single credit after four semesters of work on Law Review. So, in many cases, there must be a reason other than compensation as to why you want a leadership position, and that reason can keep you grounded through a long year on Law Review. The reason could be that you've enjoyed your time on Law Review and now you want to serve. Perhaps you're hoping that a leadership position will increase your job prospects. Or maybe you want to break social barriers at your school by becoming the first person from your community to lead your journal. Whatever the reason, let it motivate you to be the best editor you can be, and in turn, give you the best shot at a leadership position.

Lee Burgess: Implementing any combination of these tips applicable to your journal could help to increase your chances at being elected or appointed to your Law Review's leadership. Consider running any or all of these tips by your Law Review mentors, and then decide on the best approach to reach your goal!

Lee Burgess: And with that, we're out of time! 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. 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 or alison@lawschooltoolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](#) on LawSchoolToolBox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

RESOURCES:

[Podcast Episode 374: How to Be a Great Law Journal Member Benefits of Journal Membership from a Law Review Editor-in-Chief](#)
[What Do You Actually Do on Law Review? An Overview of Opportunities Should You Join Law Review?](#)