

Interview Substance & Style

**Turning an Interview
Into an Offer!
Part I**

**University of Wisconsin Law School
Office of Career & Professional Development**



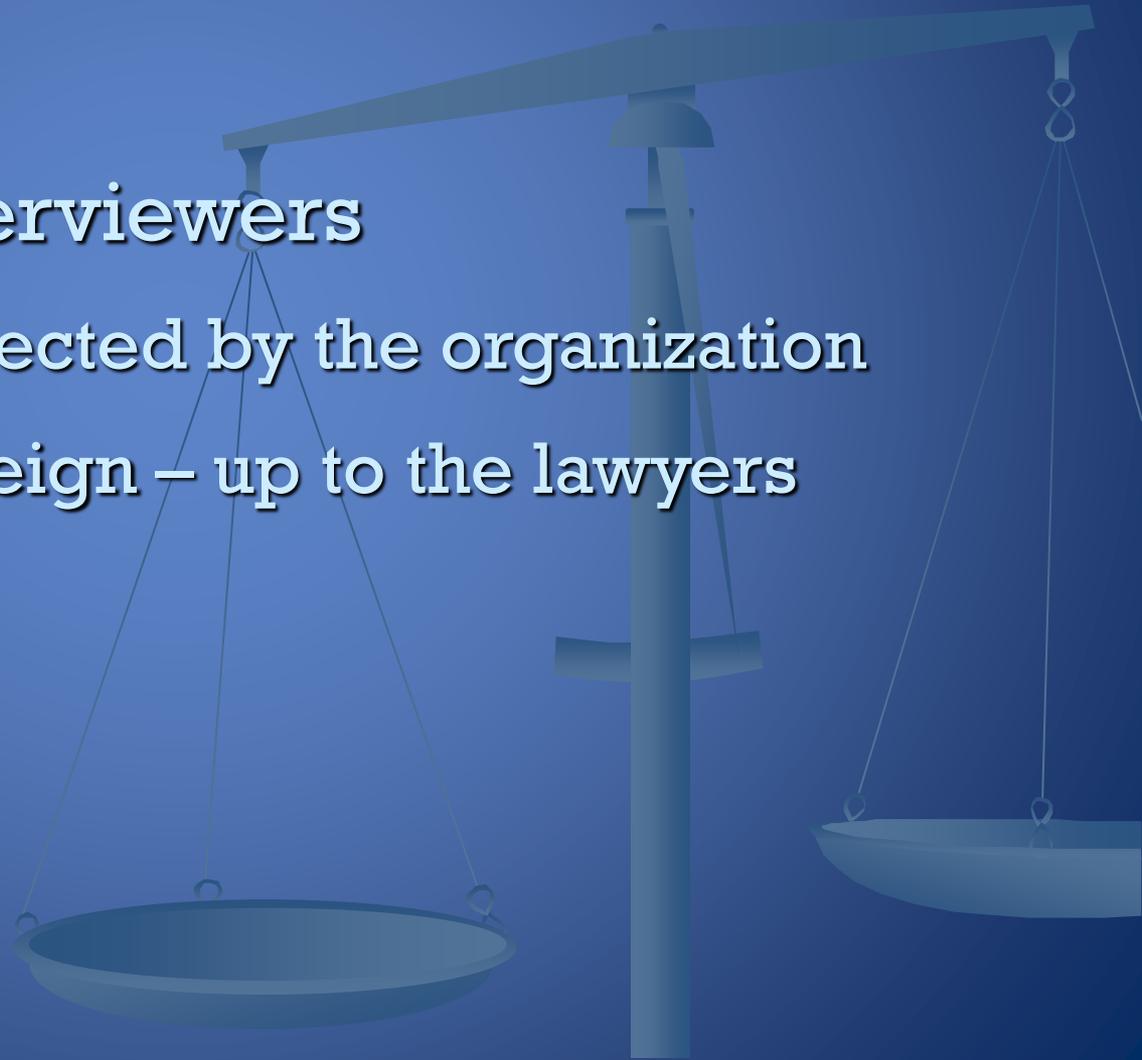
What to Expect

- The On-Campus Interview
- The Call Back Interview



Interviews as an Assessment Tool

- Effectiveness
- Lawyers as Interviewers
 - Sometimes directed by the organization
 - Mostly: Free reign – up to the lawyers



Types of Interviews

- Traditional

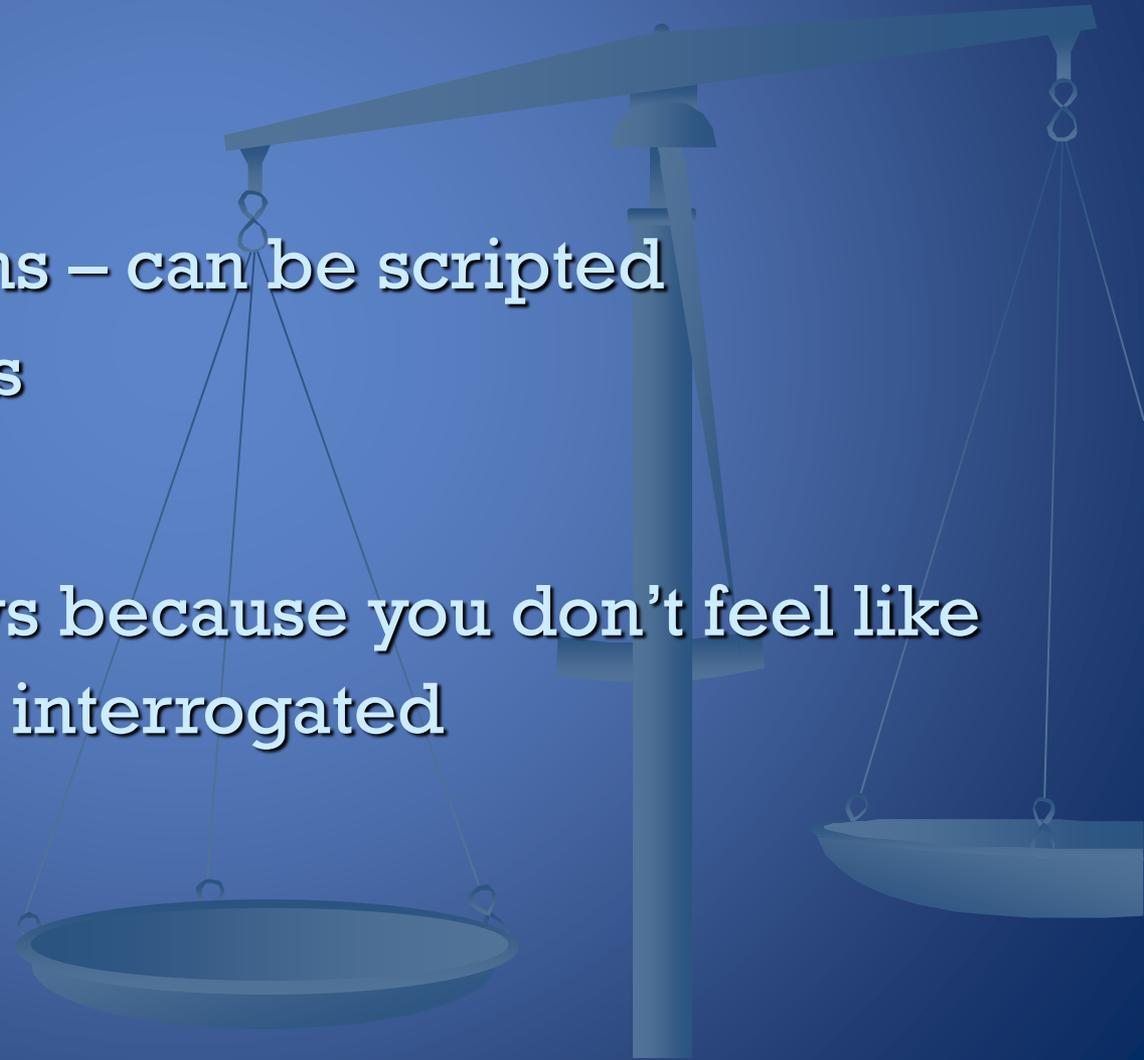
- Intro

- Their questions – can be scripted

- Your questions

- Conversation

- Best interviews because you don't feel like you are being interrogated



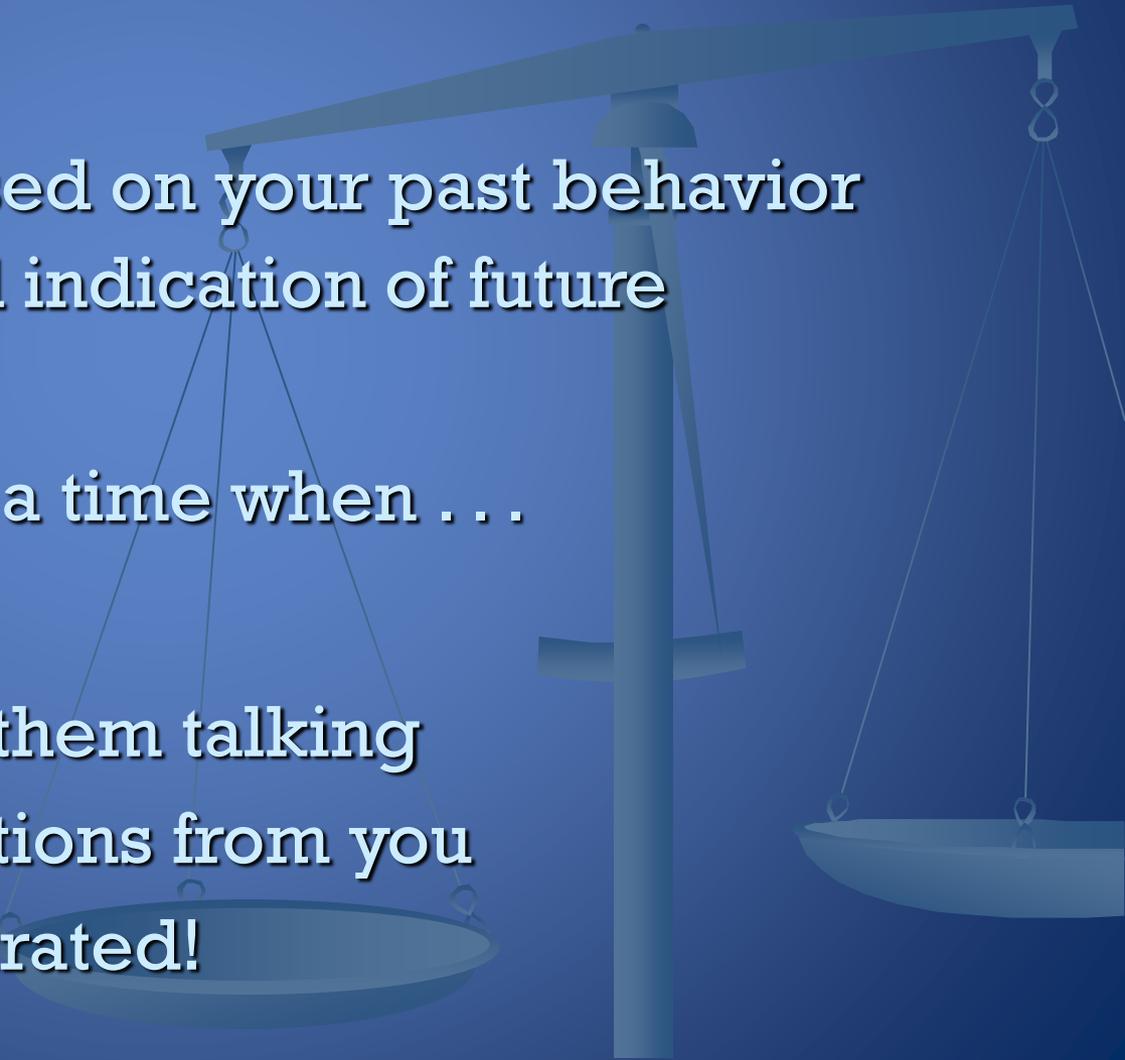
Types of Interviews (cont)

■ Behavioral

- Questions based on your past behavior will be a good indication of future performance
- Tell me about a time when . . .

■ Instructional

- 15 minutes of them talking
- Time for questions from you
- Don't get frustrated!



Types of Interviews (cont)

■ Phone Interview

- May just call you to chat

- Advantages:

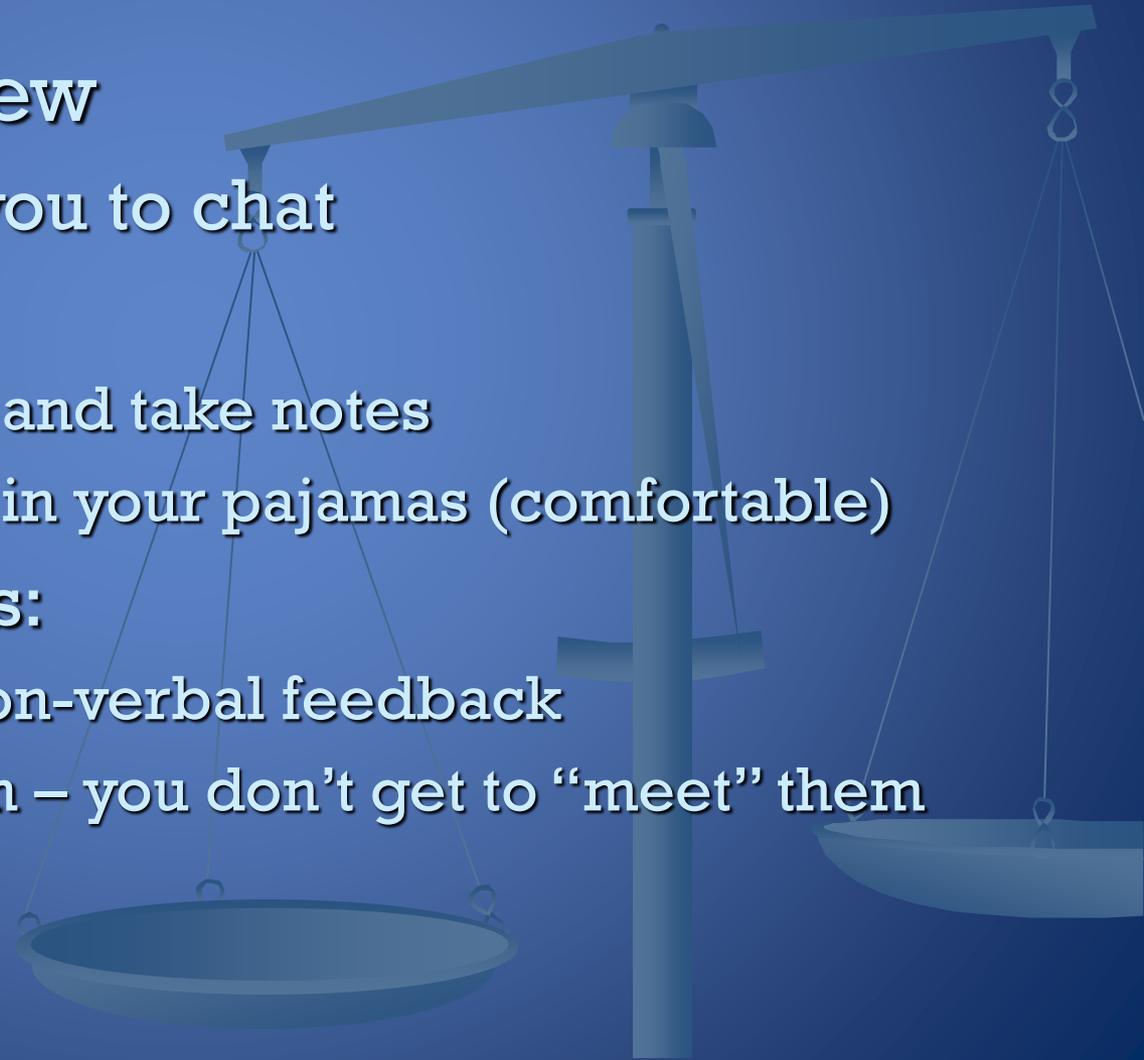
 - You can have and take notes

 - You could be in your pajamas (comfortable)

- Disadvantages:

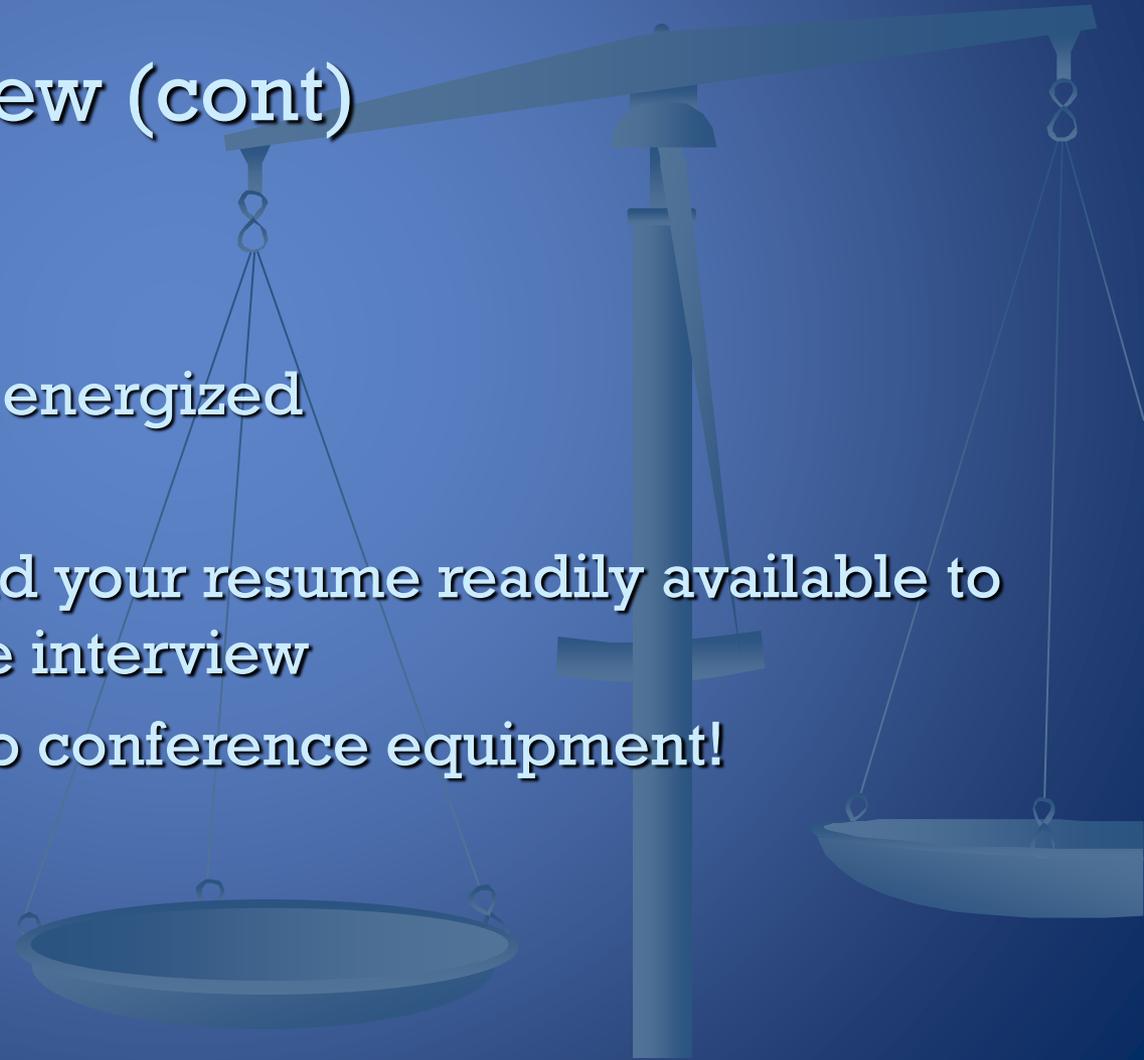
 - Little if any non-verbal feedback

 - No interaction – you don't get to “meet” them

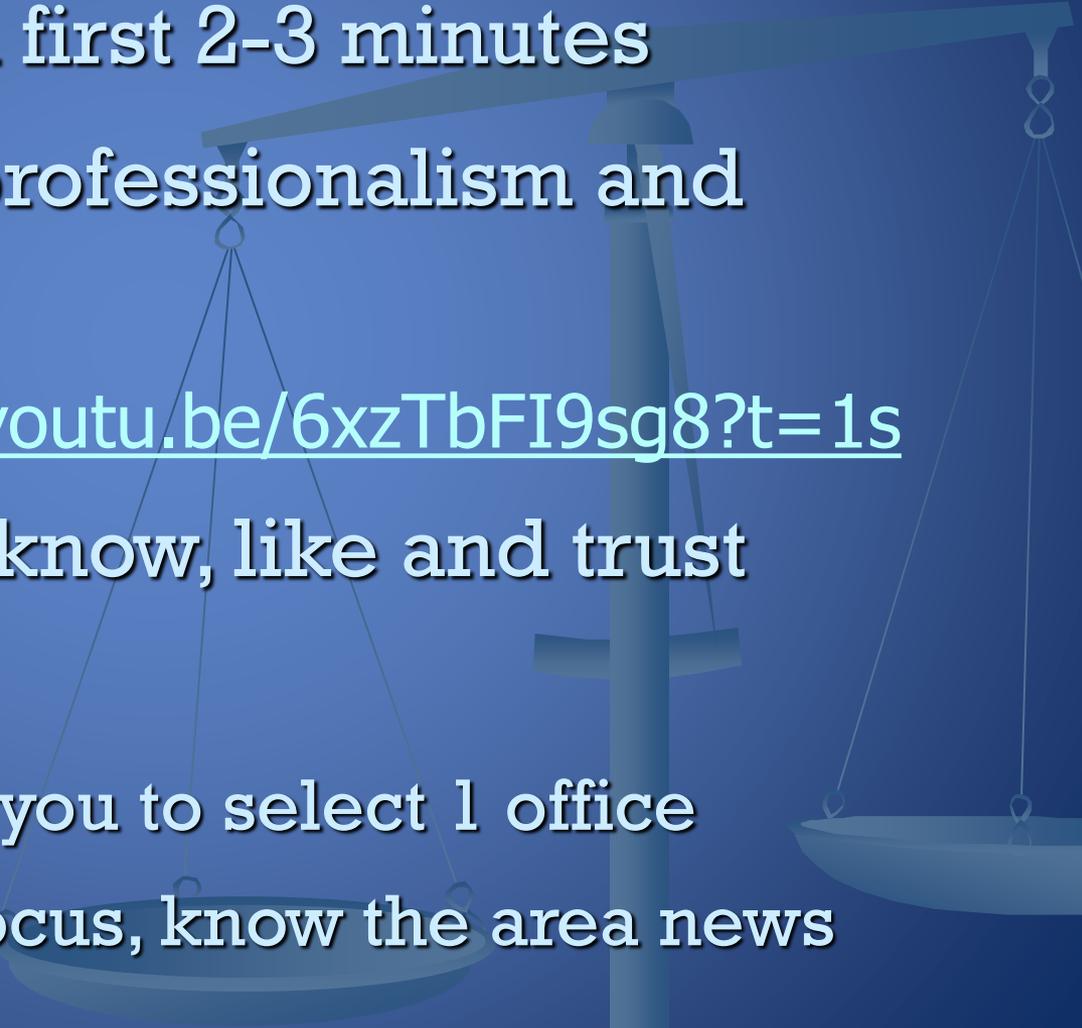


Types of Interviews (cont)

- Phone Interview (cont)
 - Advice:
 - Dress up
 - Stand up – be energized
 - Smile
 - Have notes and your resume readily available to use during the interview
 - We have video conference equipment!



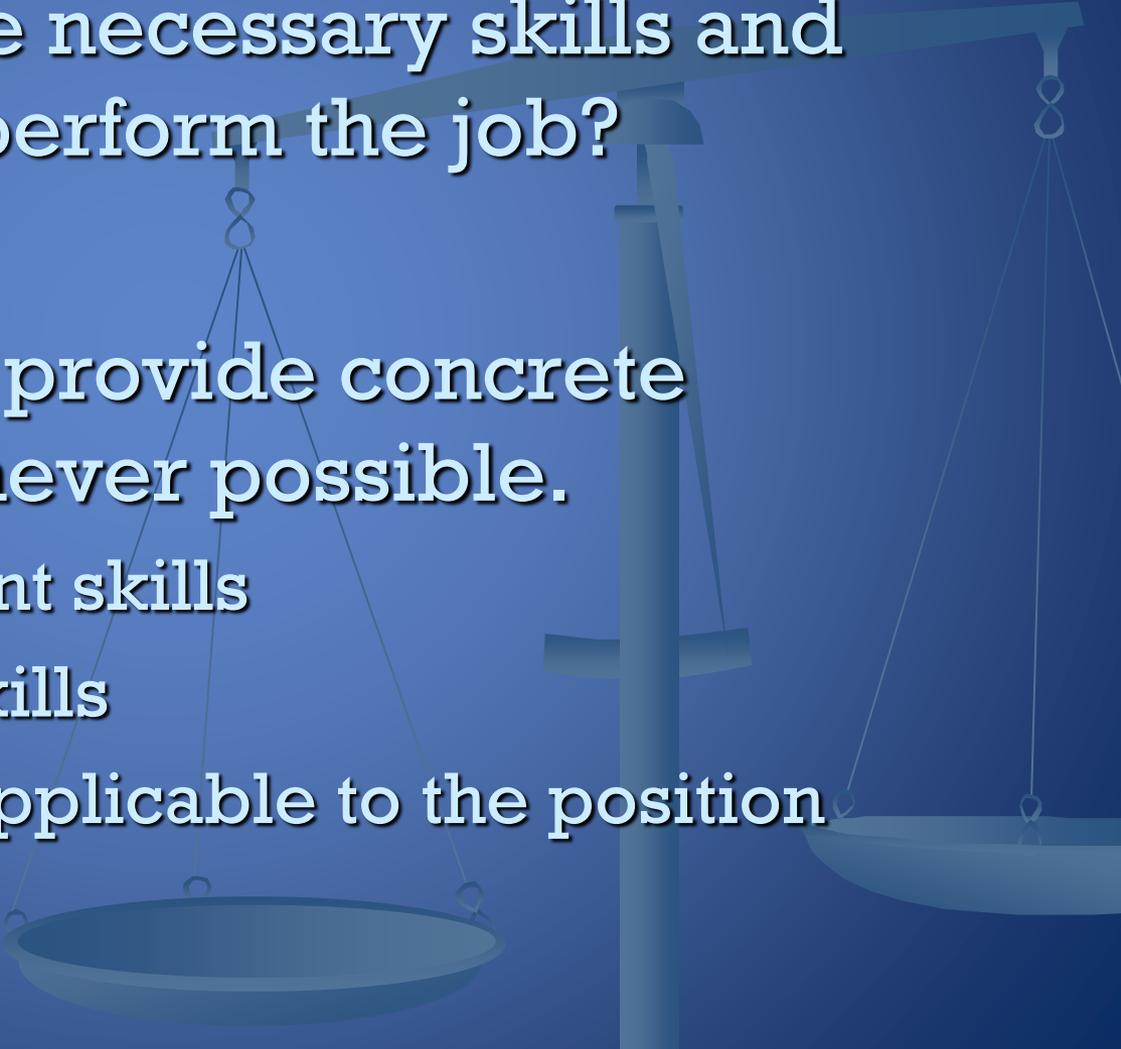
Things to Keep in Mind

- Impressions in first 2-3 minutes
 - Always show professionalism and maturity
 - Avoid: <http://youtu.be/6xzTbFI9sg8?t=1s>
 - Hire who they know, like and trust
 - Focus
 - Big orgs want you to select 1 office
 - Geographic focus, know the area news
- 

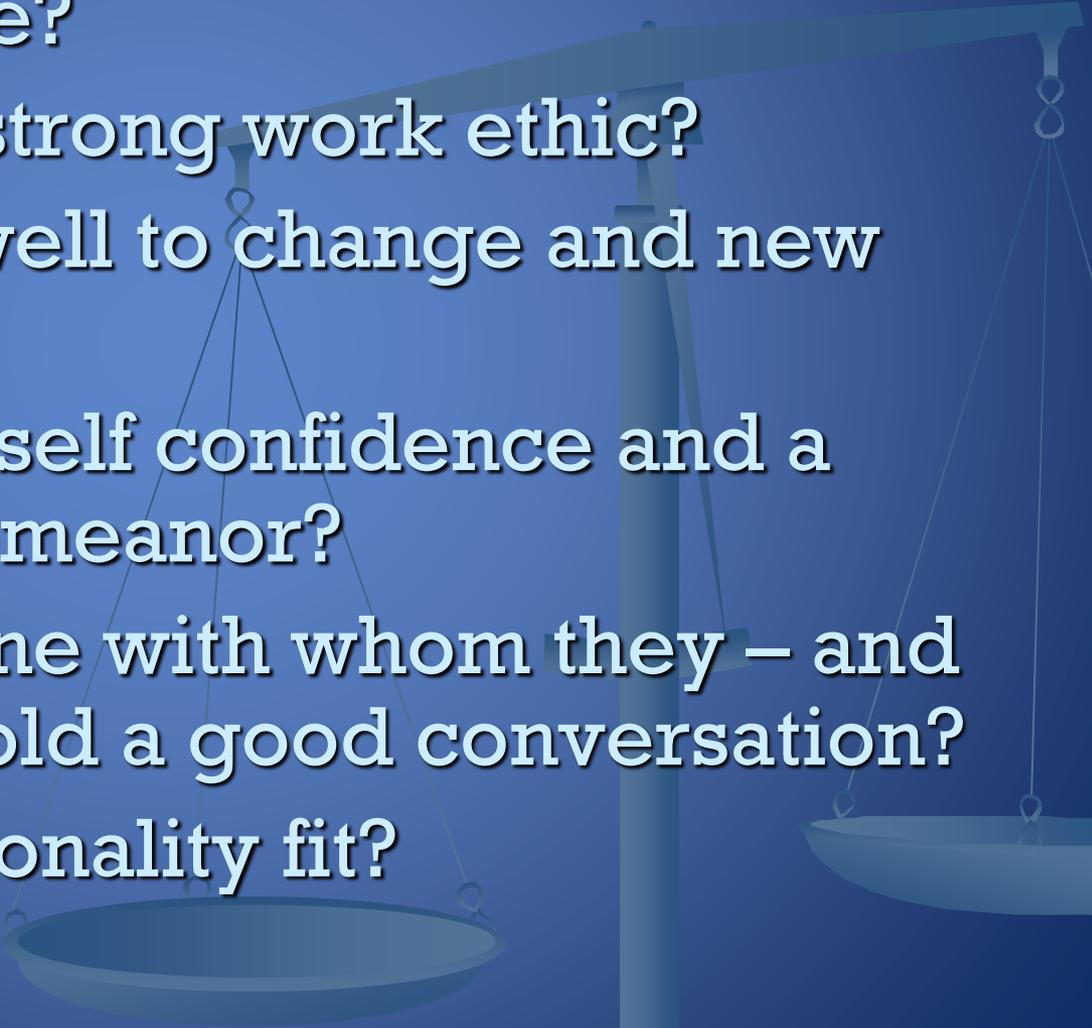
Things to Keep in Mind

- Put yourself in the interviewers' shoes
 - Interview to their requirements
 - Can you do the job?
 - Do I want to work with you?
 - Will you fit into our workplace?
 - Are you enthusiastic about working for us?
 - Are you worth the investment?
- 

Can you do the job?

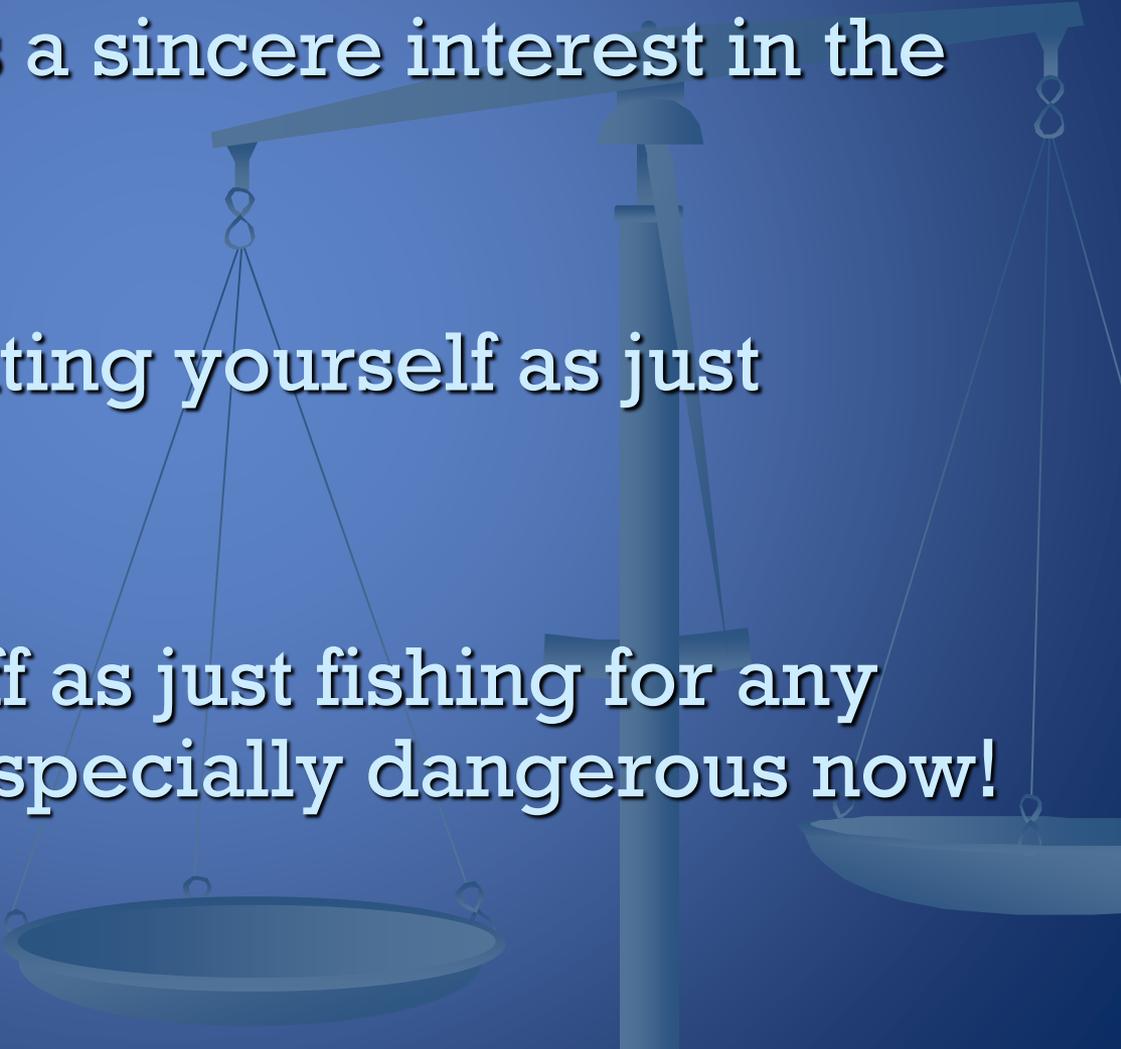
- Do you have the necessary skills and experience to perform the job?
 - Be prepared to provide concrete examples whenever possible.
 - Directly relevant skills
 - Transferable skills
 - All should be applicable to the position
- 

Will you fit into our workplace?

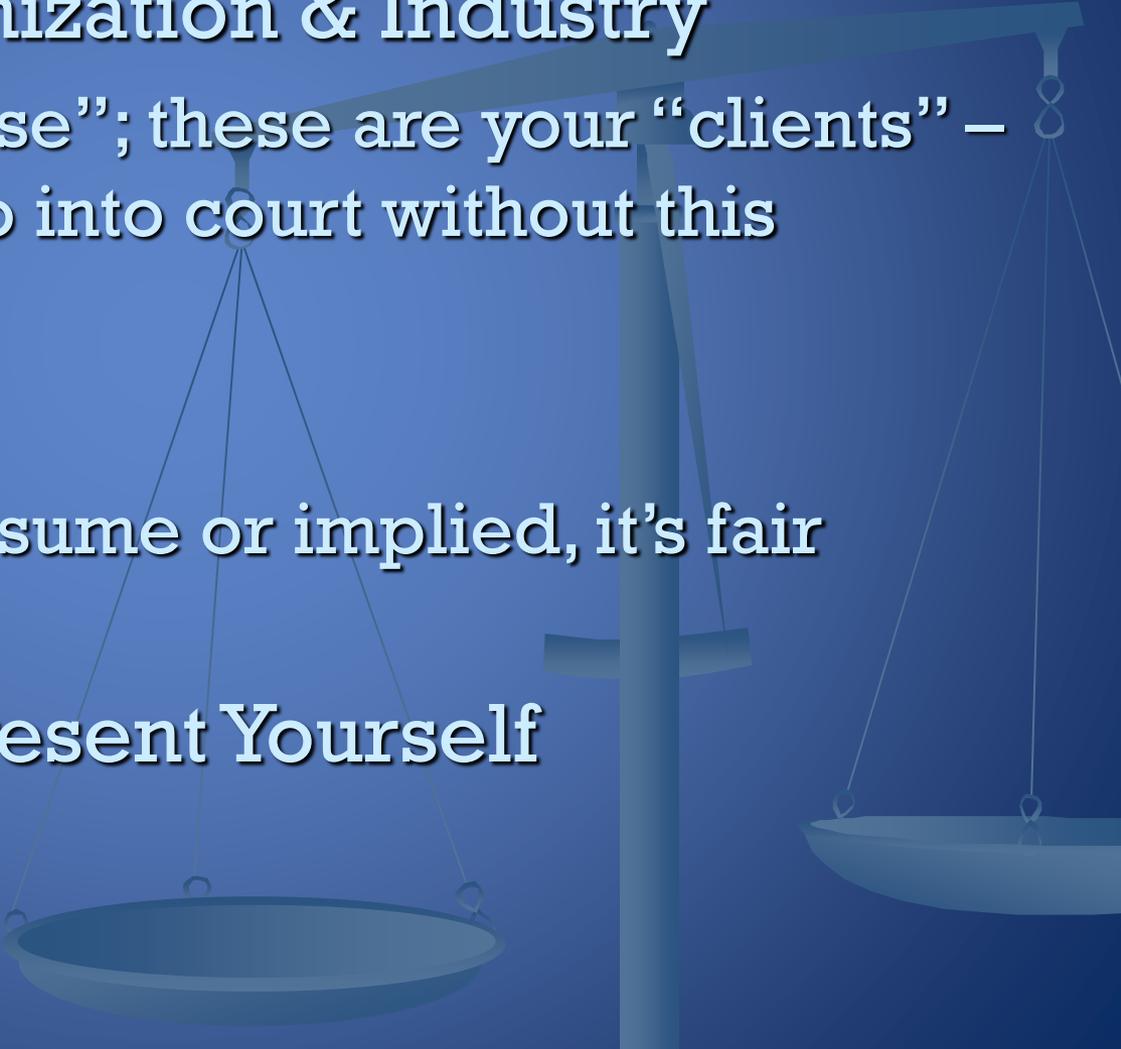


- Are you reliable?
- Do you have a strong work ethic?
- Do you adjust well to change and new challenges?
- Do you project self confidence and a professional demeanor?
- Are you someone with whom they – and a client – can hold a good conversation?
- Does your personality fit?

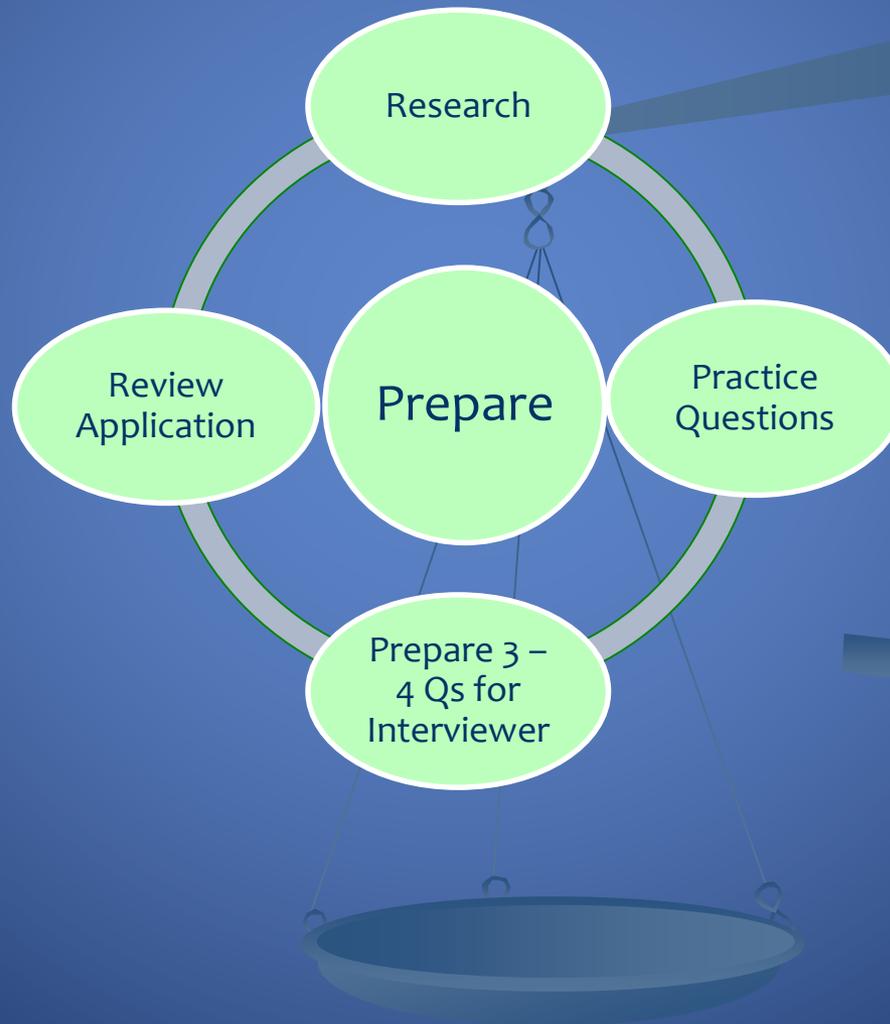
Are you enthusiastic about working for us?

- Do you express a sincere interest in the opportunity?
 - Are you presenting yourself as just wanting a job?
 - Do you come off as just fishing for any opportunity – especially dangerous now!
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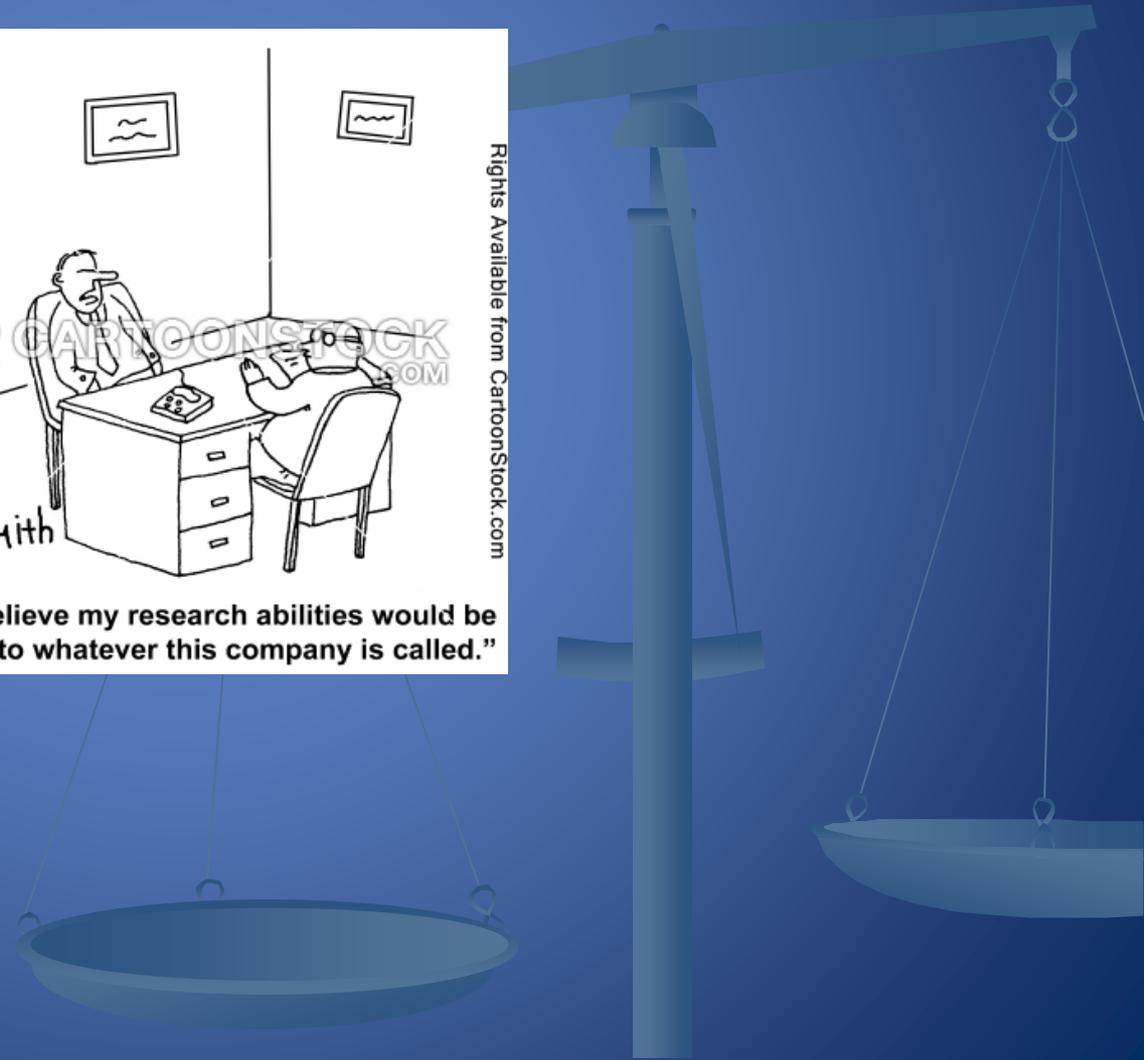
How to be successful: BE PREPARED

- Know the Organization & Industry
 - This is your “case”; these are your “clients” – you wouldn’t go into court without this knowledge
 - Know Yourself
 - If it’s on your resume or implied, it’s fair game
 - Know How to Present Yourself
 - Substance
 - Style
- 

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL: BE PREPARED



RESEARCH



RESEARCH



ORGANIZATION & INTERVIEWERS

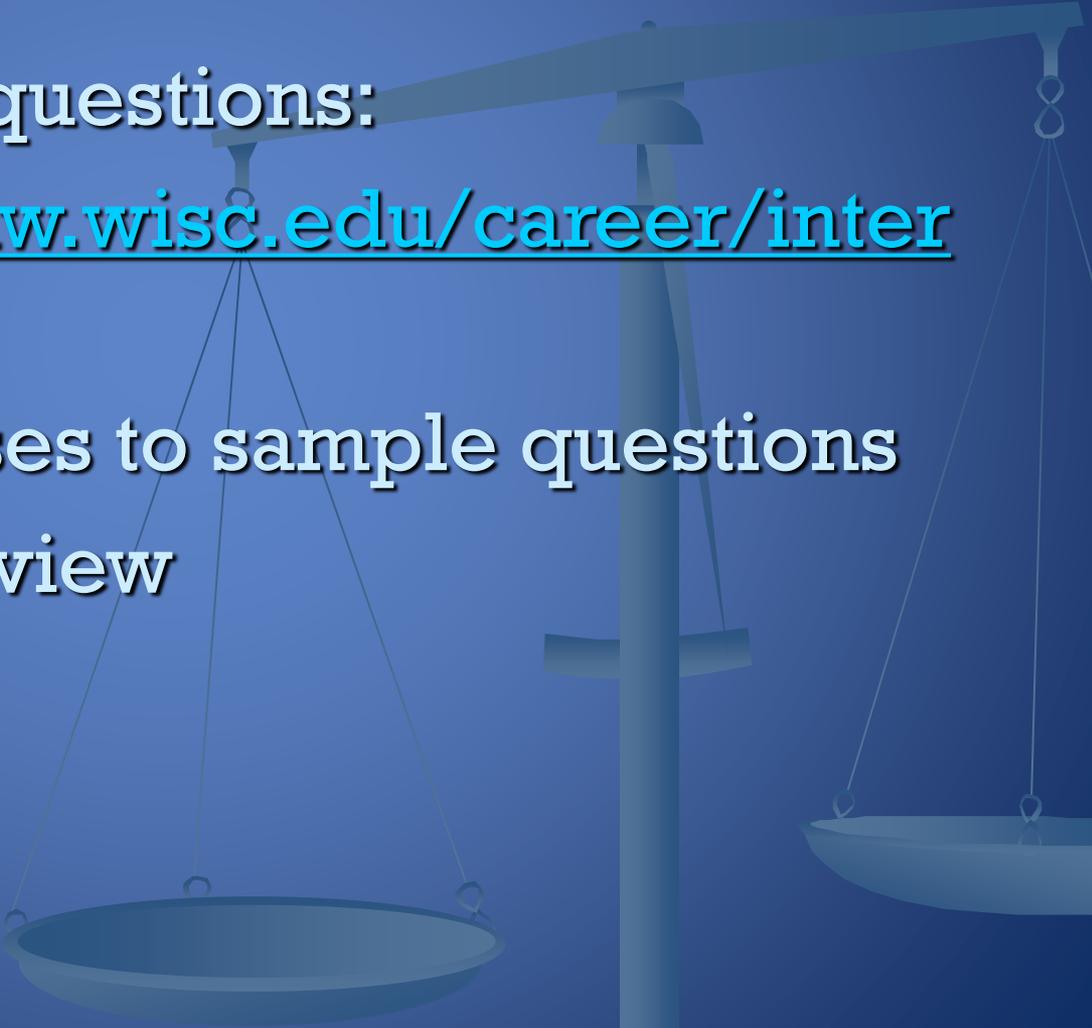
- ✓ Websites
- ✓ Recruiting Materials
- ✓ NALP Directory
- ✓ Name & Title of Interviewers
- ✓ Lexis and Westlaw
- ✓ Attorney bios

INDUSTRY

- ✓ Trade Journals & Current Trends
- ✓ Informational Interviews
- ✓ Martindale-Hubbell
- ✓ OCPD Team
(We know the scoop!)

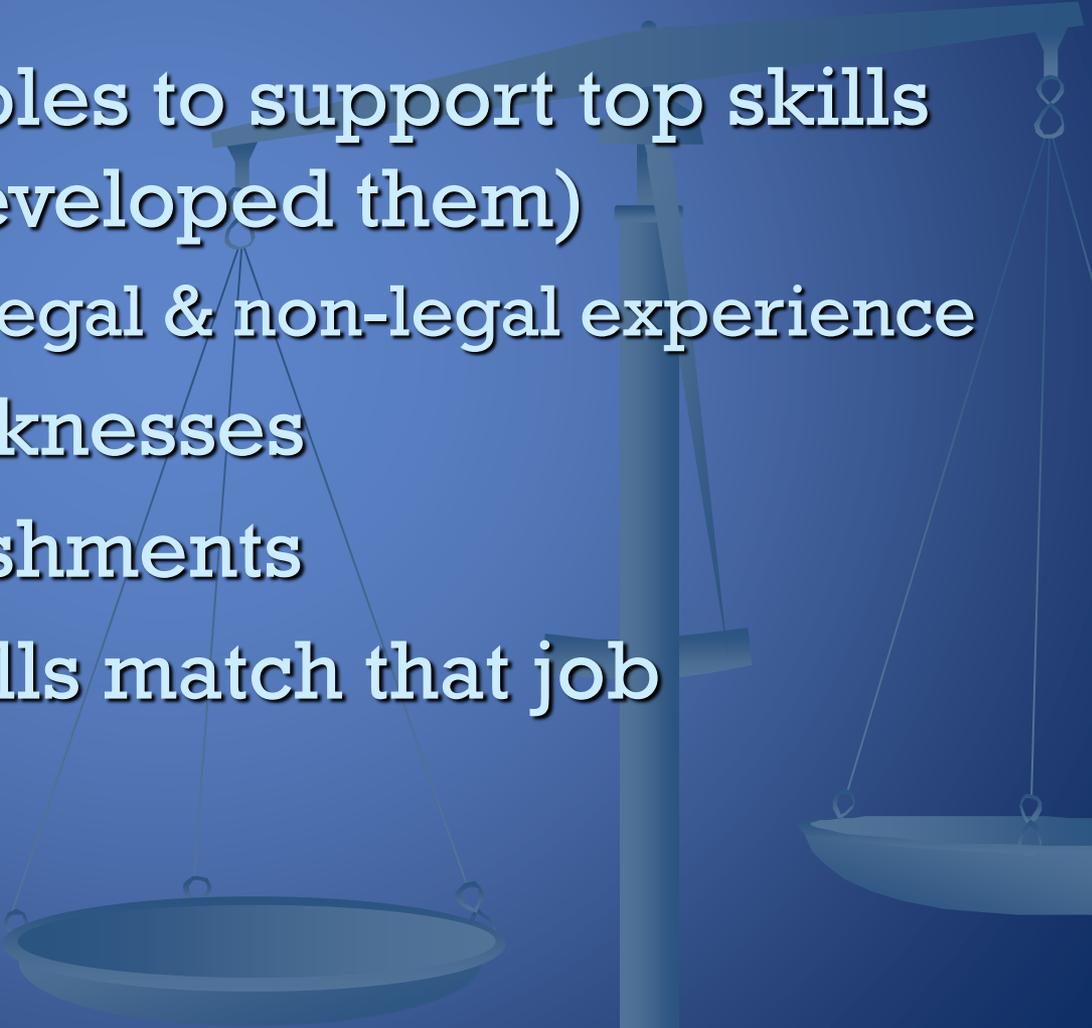
NETWORK!

Practice



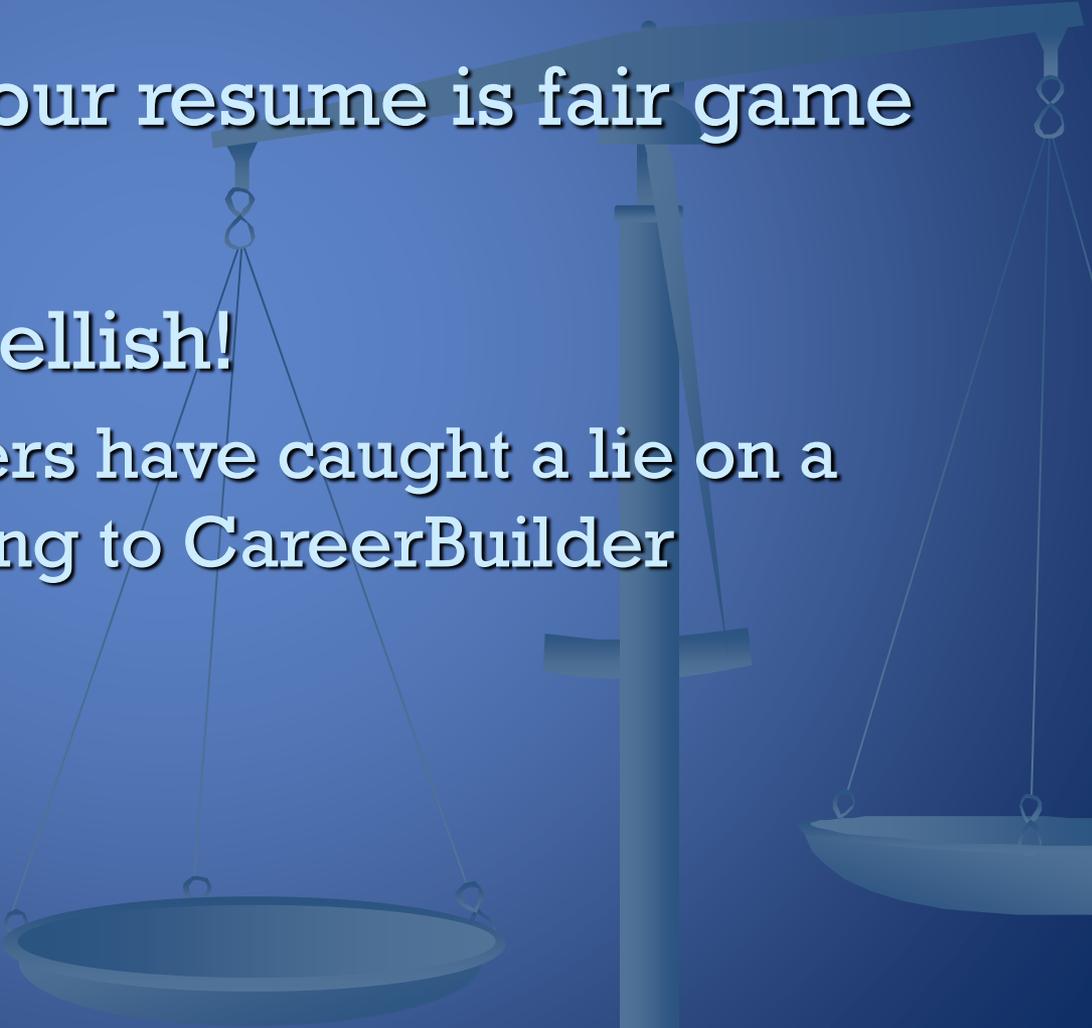
- Review sample questions:
 - <http://www.law.wisc.edu/career/interviews.html>
- Prepare responses to sample questions
- Do a mock interview

Know Yourself



- Concrete examples to support top skills (and how you developed them)
 - Consider both legal & non-legal experience
- Strengths & weaknesses
- Major accomplishments
- How do your skills match that job description?
- Future Plans

Know Yourself

- Everything on your resume is fair game
 - Don't lie or embellish!
 - 58% of employers have caught a lie on a resume according to CareerBuilder
- 

Your Interview “Cheat Sheet”

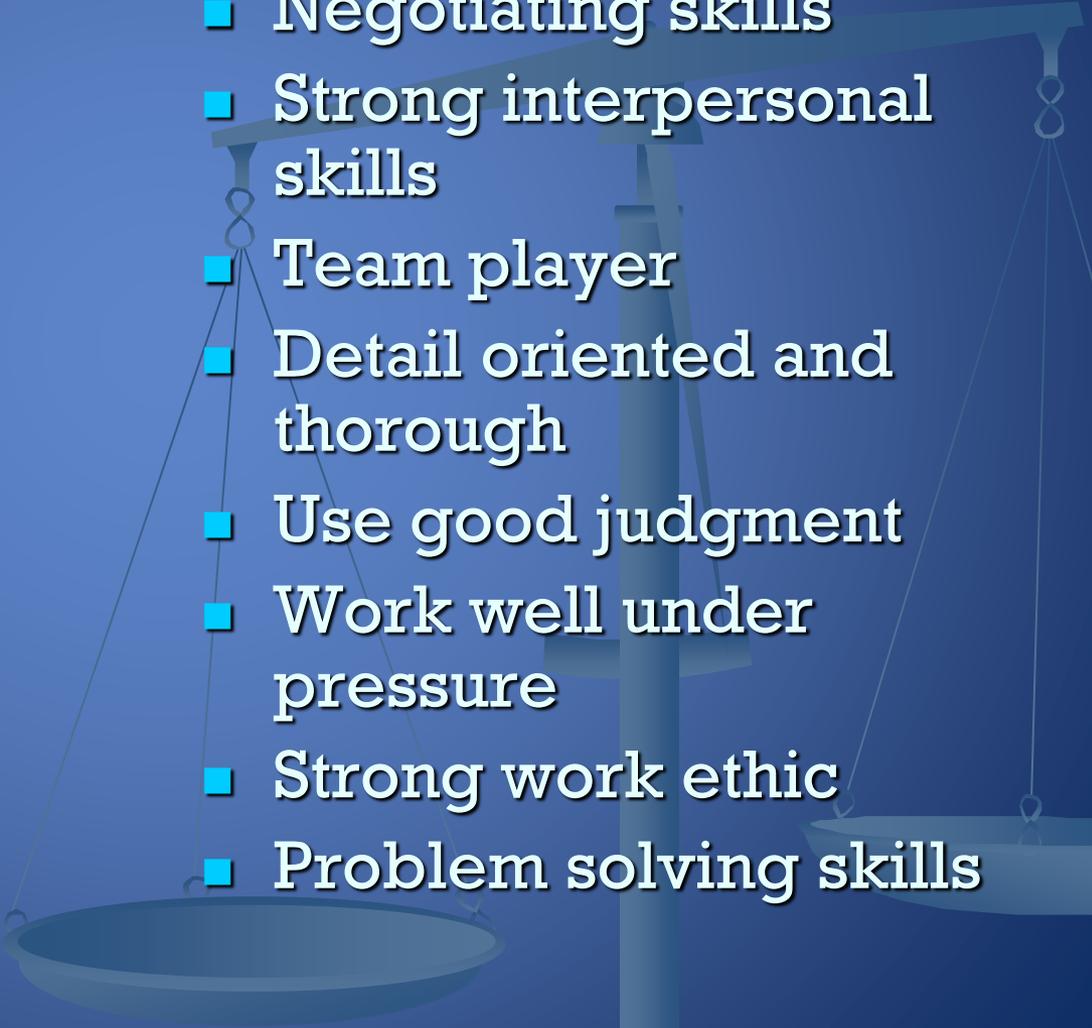


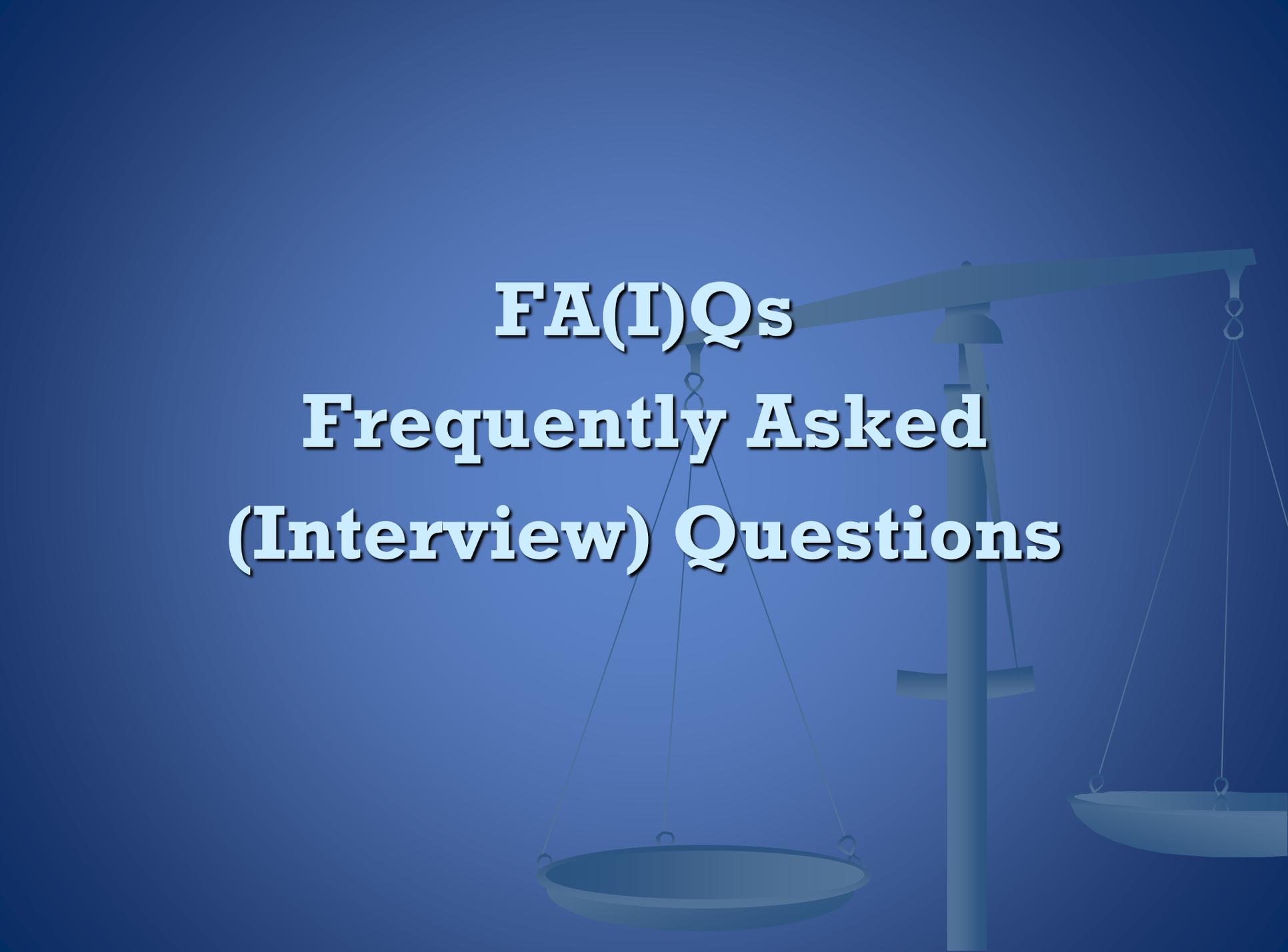
Use Your “Cheat Sheet” To:

- Build your brief introduction or pitch
- Practice answering questions
- When you get “stuck” on a question
- Summarize why you should be considered as a candidate at the end of the interview

* The cheat sheet is a great way to practice but it's best to know your information cold for the interview.

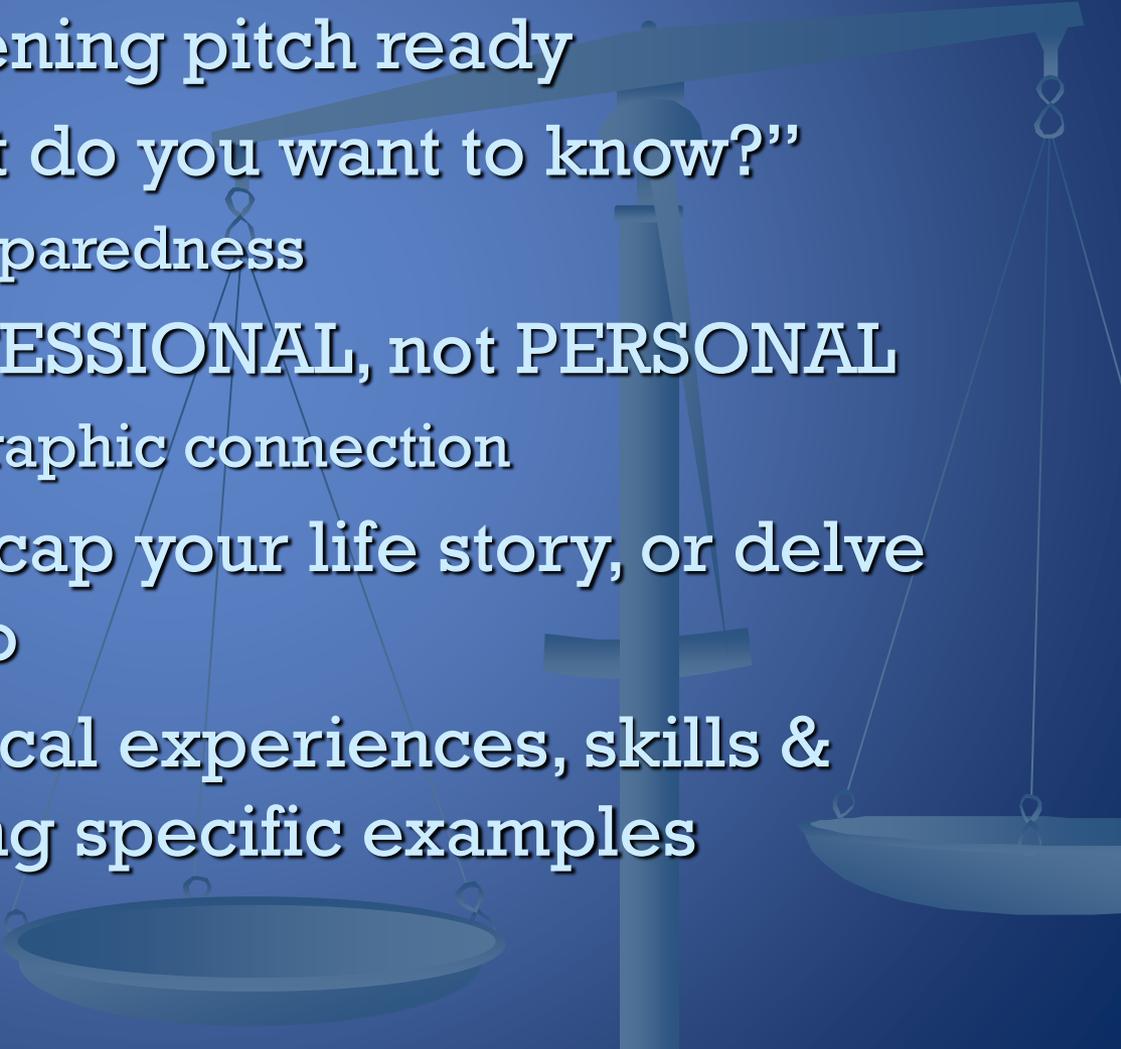
Experiences and Skills to Illustrate

- 
- Writing ability
 - Analytical skills
 - Research skills
 - Effective oral presentation skills
 - Organization/time management
 - Quick learner
 - Self starter with demonstrated initiative
 - Negotiating skills
 - Strong interpersonal skills
 - Team player
 - Detail oriented and thorough
 - Use good judgment
 - Work well under pressure
 - Strong work ethic
 - Problem solving skills



FA(I)Qs
Frequently Asked
(Interview) Questions

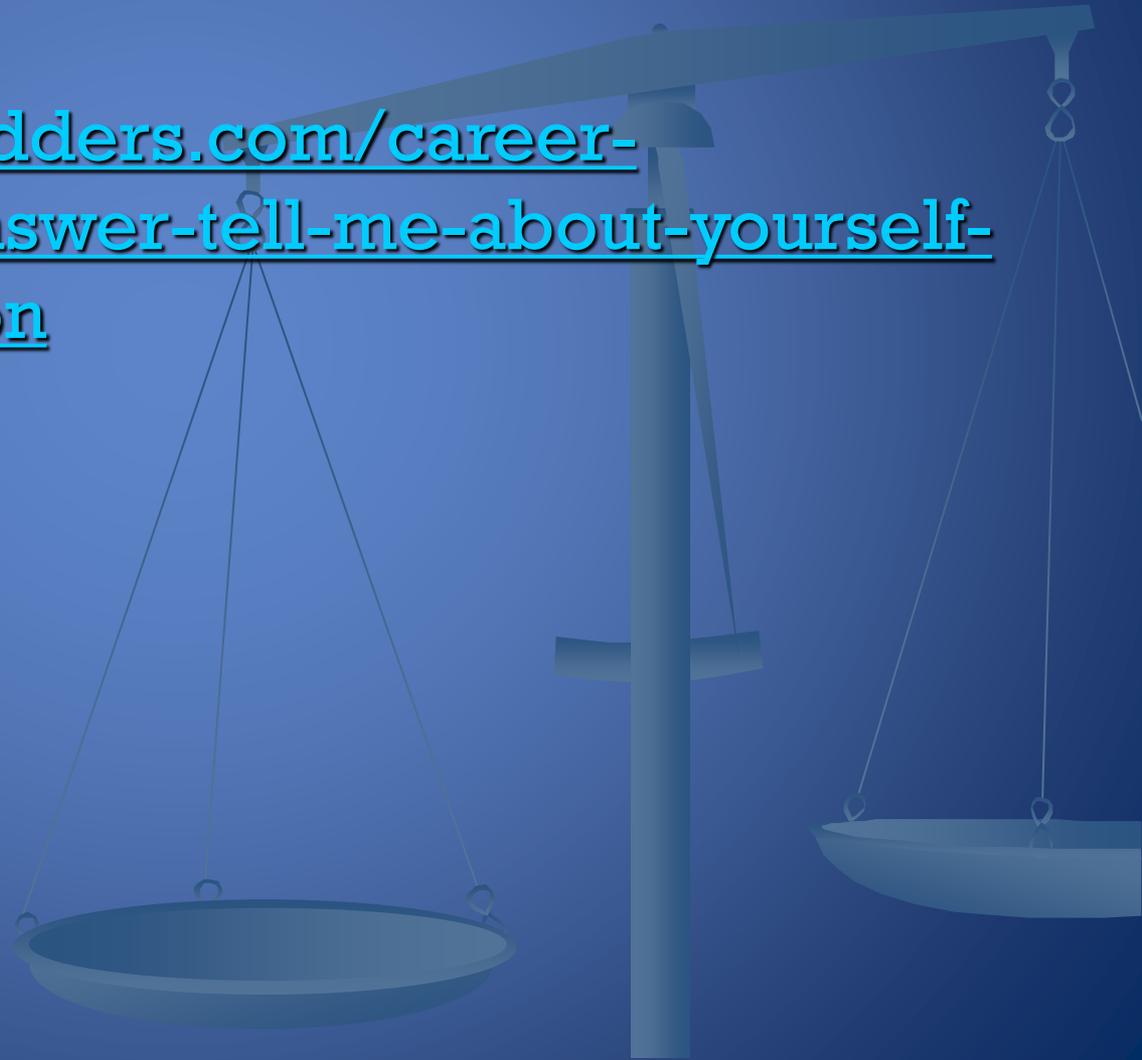
So, tell me about yourself...

- DO have your opening pitch ready
 - DON'T ask "What do you want to know?"
 - Shows lack of preparedness
 - Do focus on PROFESSIONAL, not PERSONAL
 - Exception: Geographic connection
 - DON'T ramble, recap your life story, or delve into irrelevant info
 - DO include practical experiences, skills & qualifications using specific examples
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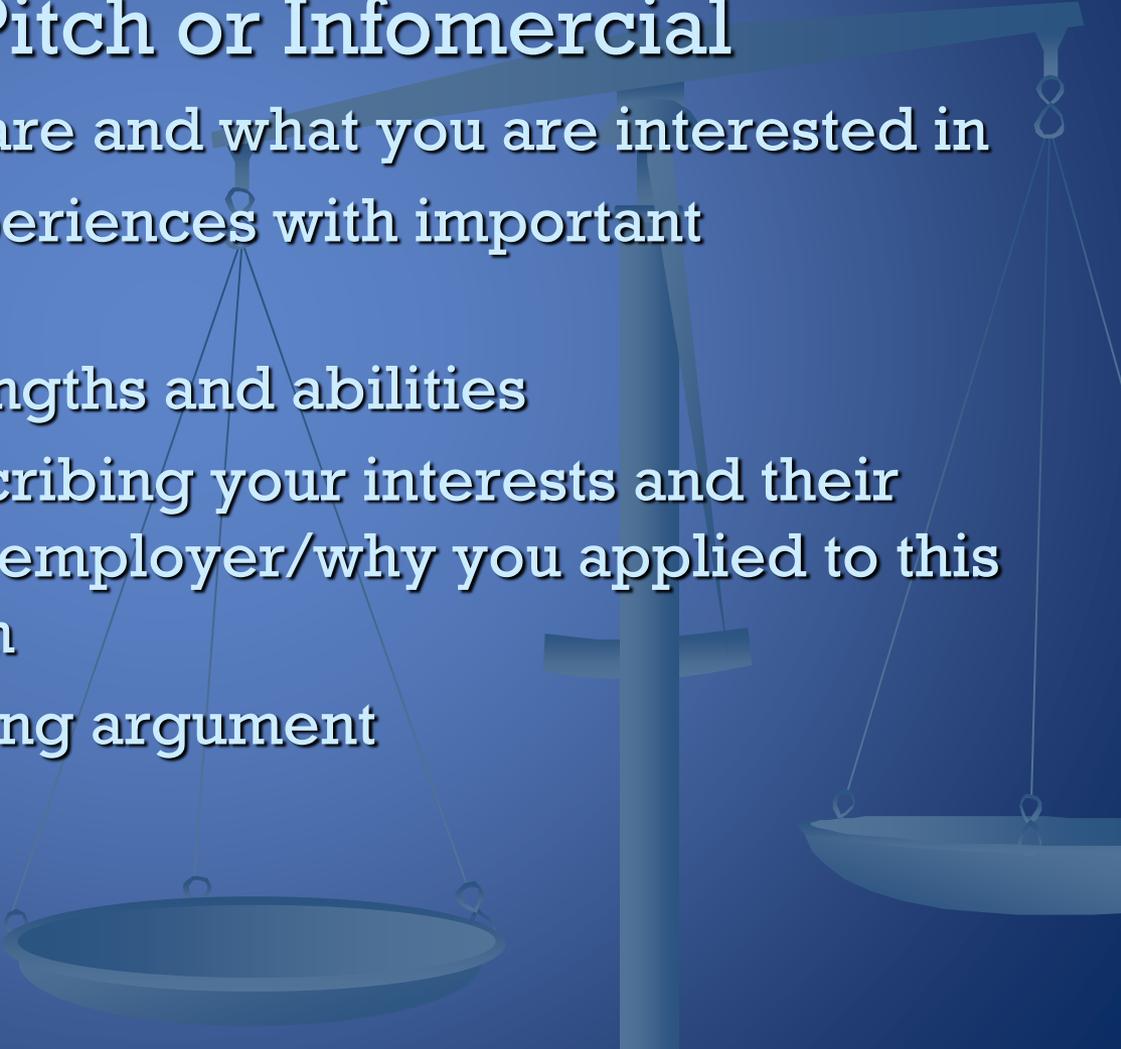
So, tell me about yourself...

- DO read this:

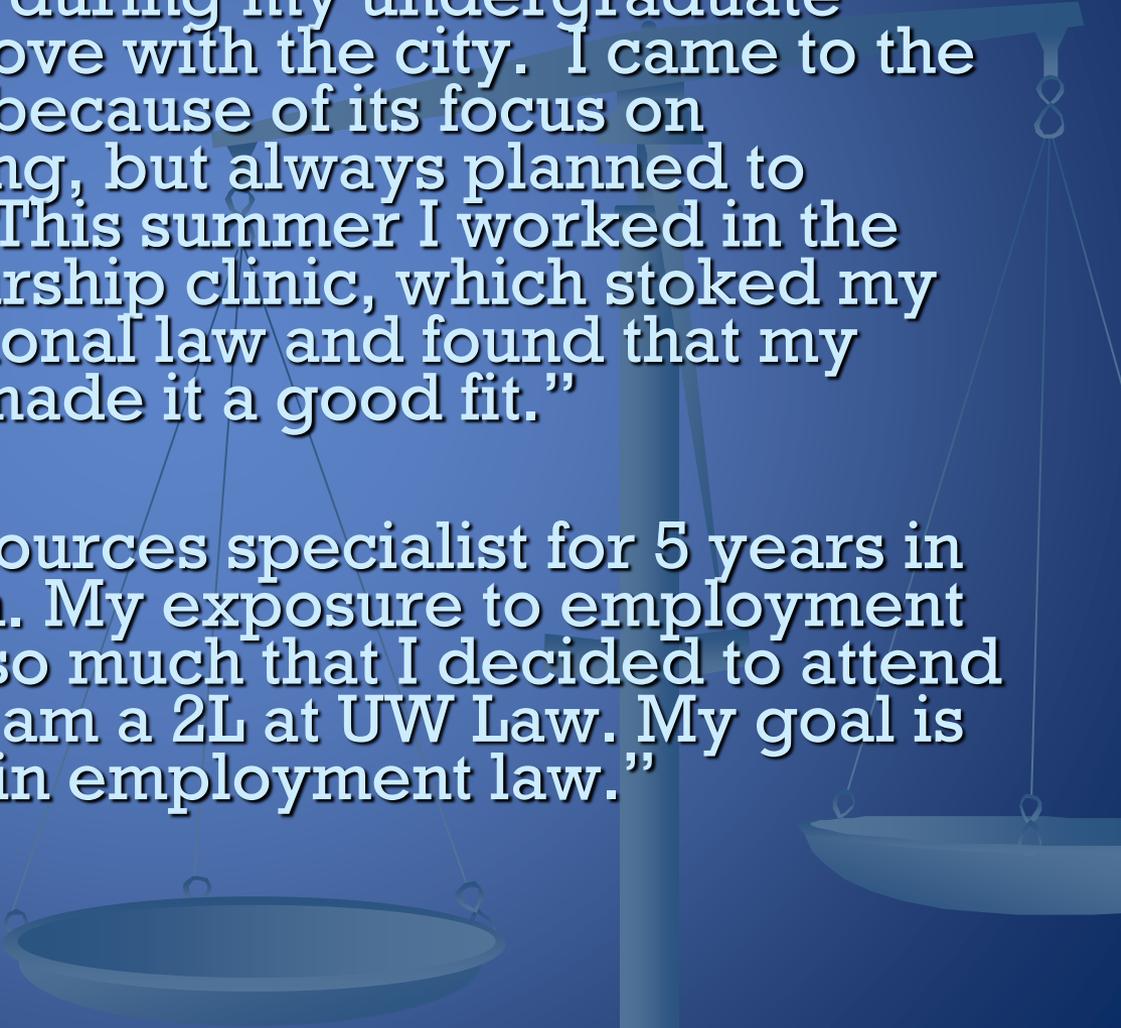
<http://www.theladders.com/career-advice/how-to-answer-tell-me-about-yourself-interview-question>



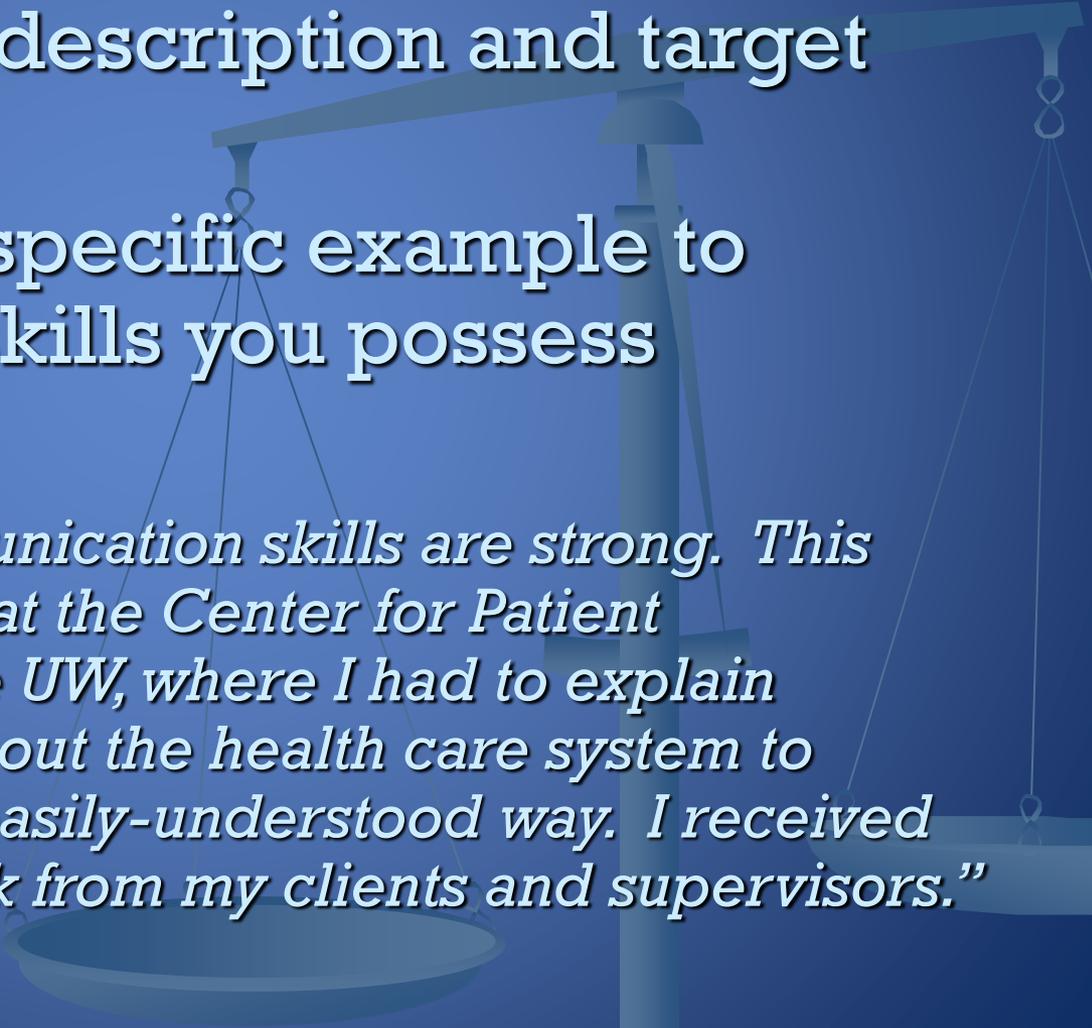
So, tell me about yourself...

- Your 2 minute Pitch or Infomercial
 - Explain who you are and what you are interested in
 - Illustrate past experiences with important accomplishments
 - Convey your strengths and abilities
 - Conclude by describing your interests and their connection to the employer/why you applied to this particular position
 - This is your opening argument
- 

So, tell me about yourself...

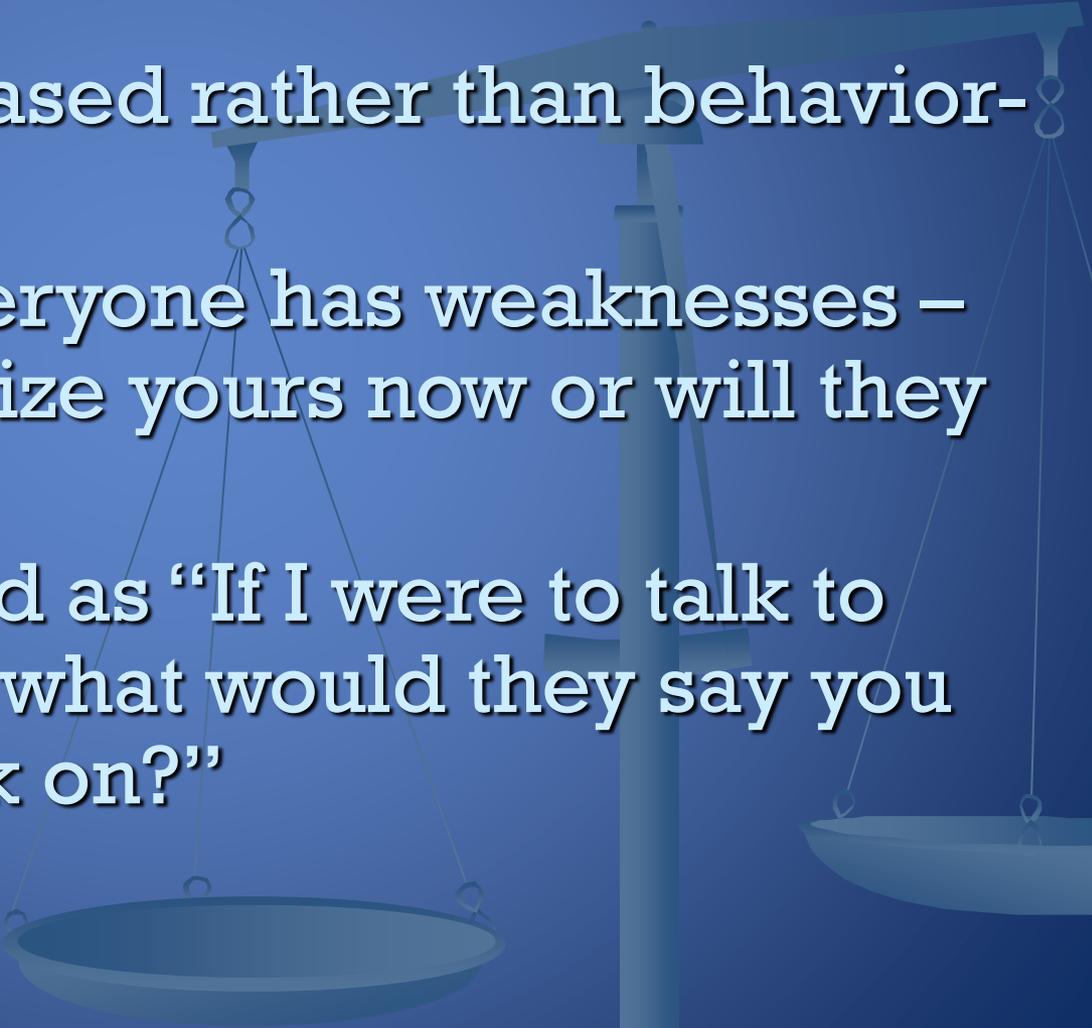
- “I lived in Chicago during my undergraduate studies and fell in love with the city. I came to the UW for law school because of its focus on experiential learning, but always planned to return to Chicago. This summer I worked in the Law & Entrepreneurship clinic, which stoked my interest in transactional law and found that my attention to detail made it a good fit.”
 - “I was a human resources specialist for 5 years in a large corporation. My exposure to employment law interested me so much that I decided to attend law school where I am a 2L at UW Law. My goal is to pursue a career in employment law.”
- 

What are your Strengths?



- Look at the job description and target your answers
- Back up with a specific example to illustrate what skills you possess
- Example:
 - *“My verbal communication skills are strong. This summer I worked at the Center for Patient Partnerships at the UW, where I had to explain complex issues about the health care system to clients in a clear, easily-understood way. I received excellent feedback from my clients and supervisors.”*

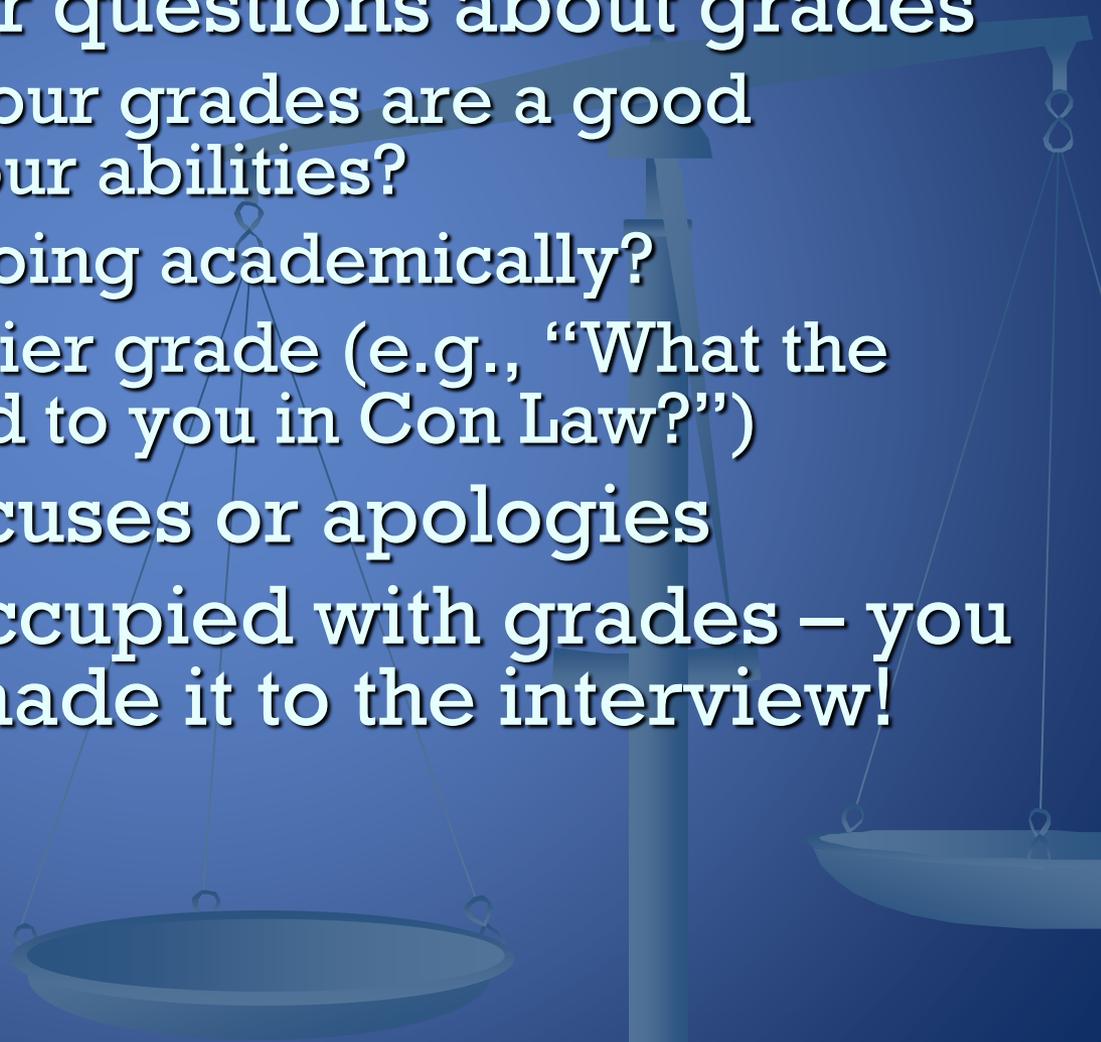
What about your weaknesses?

- Make it skill-based rather than behavior-based
 - Be honest! Everyone has weaknesses – Do you recognize yours now or will they surface later?
 - Could be asked as “If I were to talk to your last boss, what would they say you could still work on?”
- 

Weaknesses (cont)

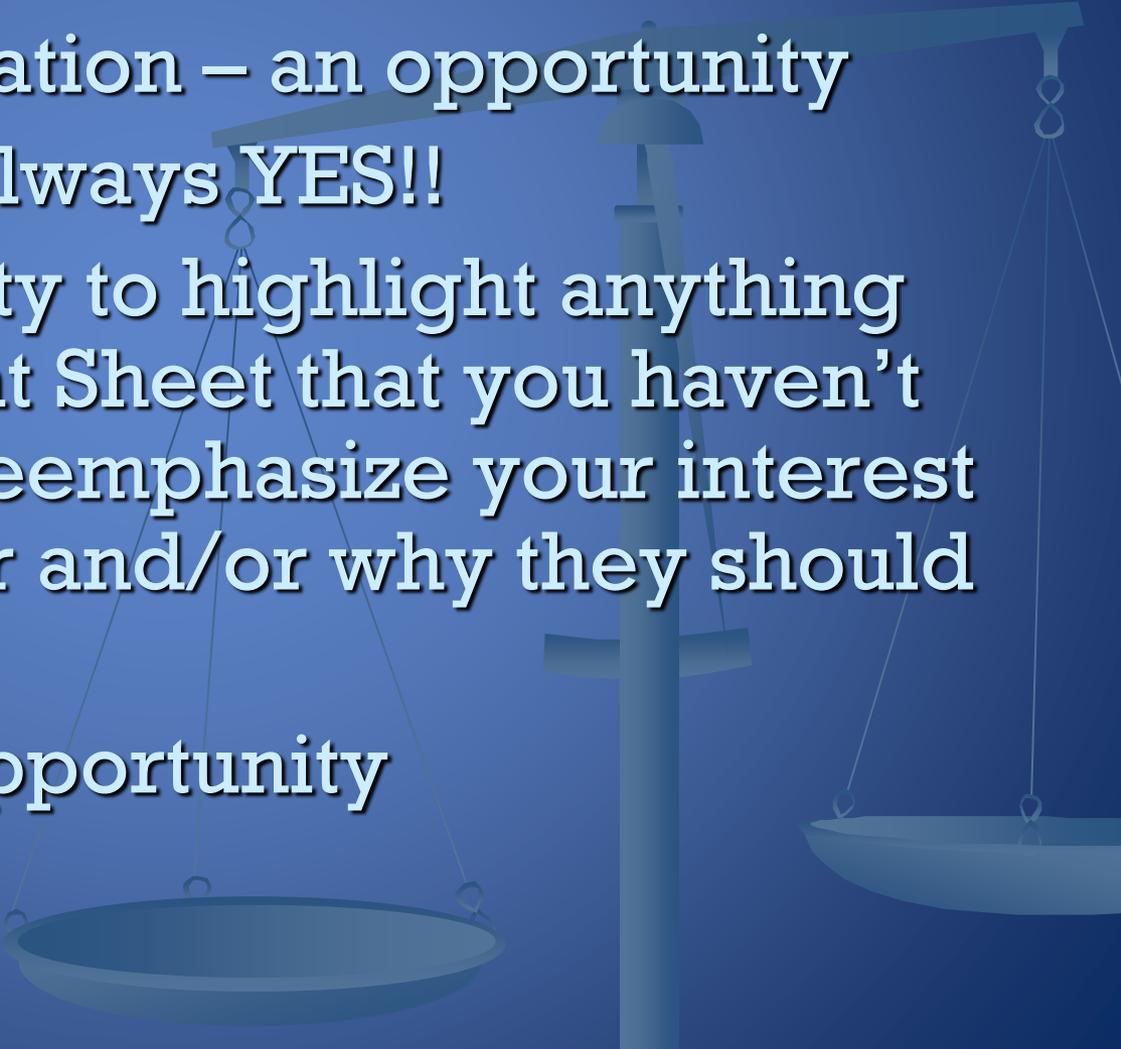
- Turn a negative into a positive: Sandwich Technique
 - “Time management has sometimes been a challenge for me, but I participated in a organizational course and now I keep a daily planner which has helped me to become more effective at scheduling my events and responsibilities.”
- Beware of “canned” responses
 - *“I’m a perfectionist.”* Translation: *You are difficult to work with!*
 - *“I’m very detailed oriented and will work to make something as good as I can.”* – And the weakness is?
 - DON’T be Michael Scott:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPeVlduKfyU>

Questions about Grades

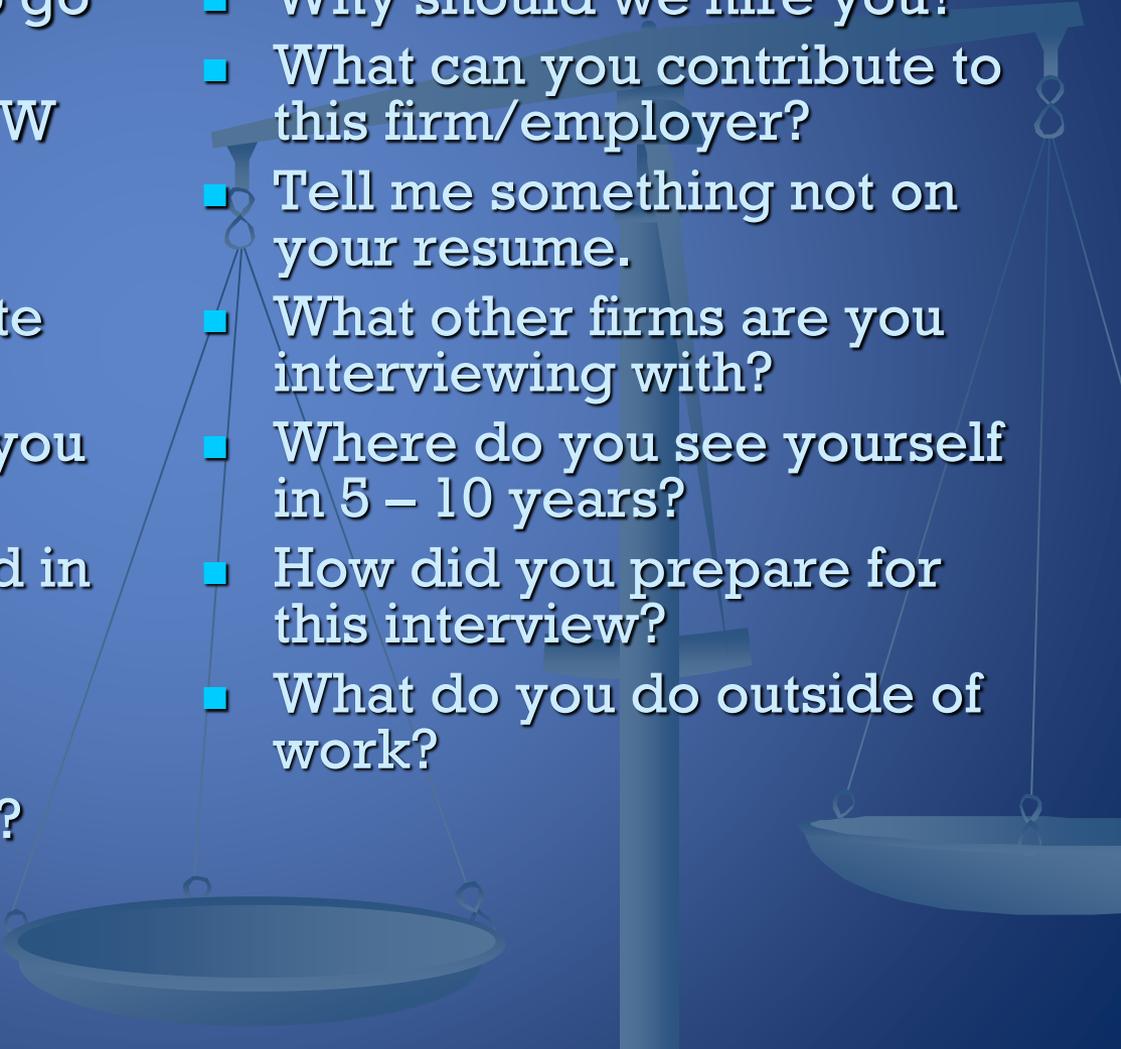


- Be prepared for questions about grades
 - Do you think your grades are a good reflection of your abilities?
 - How are you doing academically?
 - Explain an outlier grade (e.g., “What the heck happened to you in Con Law?”)
- Don't make excuses or apologies
- Don't get preoccupied with grades – you have already made it to the interview!

Anything else we should know?

- Not an interrogation – an opportunity
 - The answer is always YES!!
 - Your opportunity to highlight anything from your Cheat Sheet that you haven't covered or to reemphasize your interest in the employer and/or why they should hire you
 - “No” is a lost opportunity
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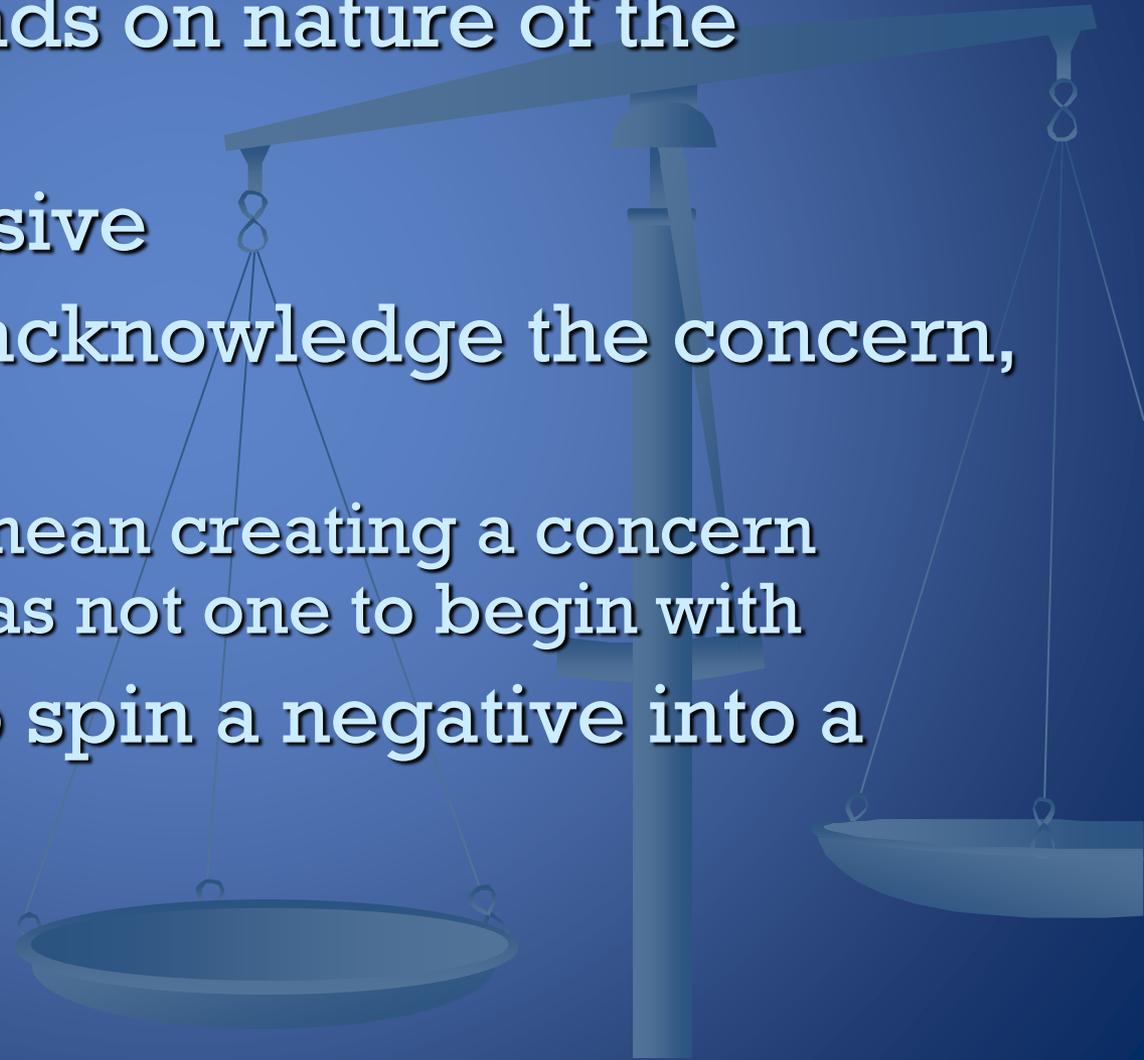
Other Questions



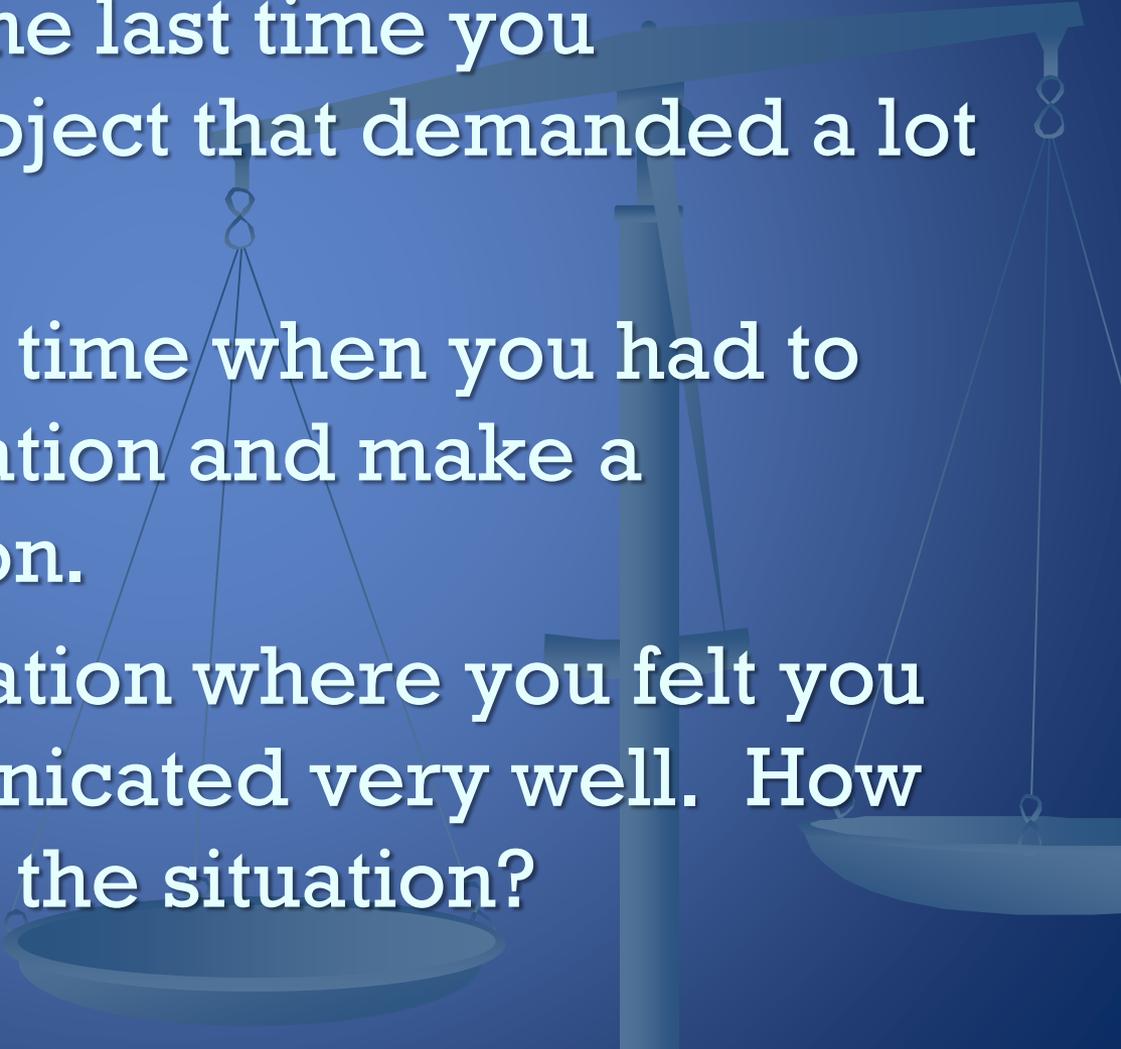
- Why did you decide to go to law school?
- Why did you choose UW Law School?
- How do you like it?
- What were your favorite classes?
- What areas of law are you interested in? Why?
- Why are you interested in this opportunity?
- What office(s) are you interested in?
- Why [employer's city]?
- Why should we hire you?
- What can you contribute to this firm/employer?
- Tell me something not on your resume.
- What other firms are you interviewing with?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 – 10 years?
- How did you prepare for this interview?
- What do you do outside of work?

Answering Difficult Questions

- Strategy depends on nature of the question
- Don't be defensive
- If appropriate acknowledge the concern, then dissolve it
 - This does not mean creating a concern where there was not one to begin with
- Do your best to spin a negative into a positive



Behavioral Based Questions



- Tell me about the last time you undertook a project that demanded a lot of initiative.
- Tell me about a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation.
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated very well. How did you correct the situation?

Behavioral Based Questions

■ Challenge

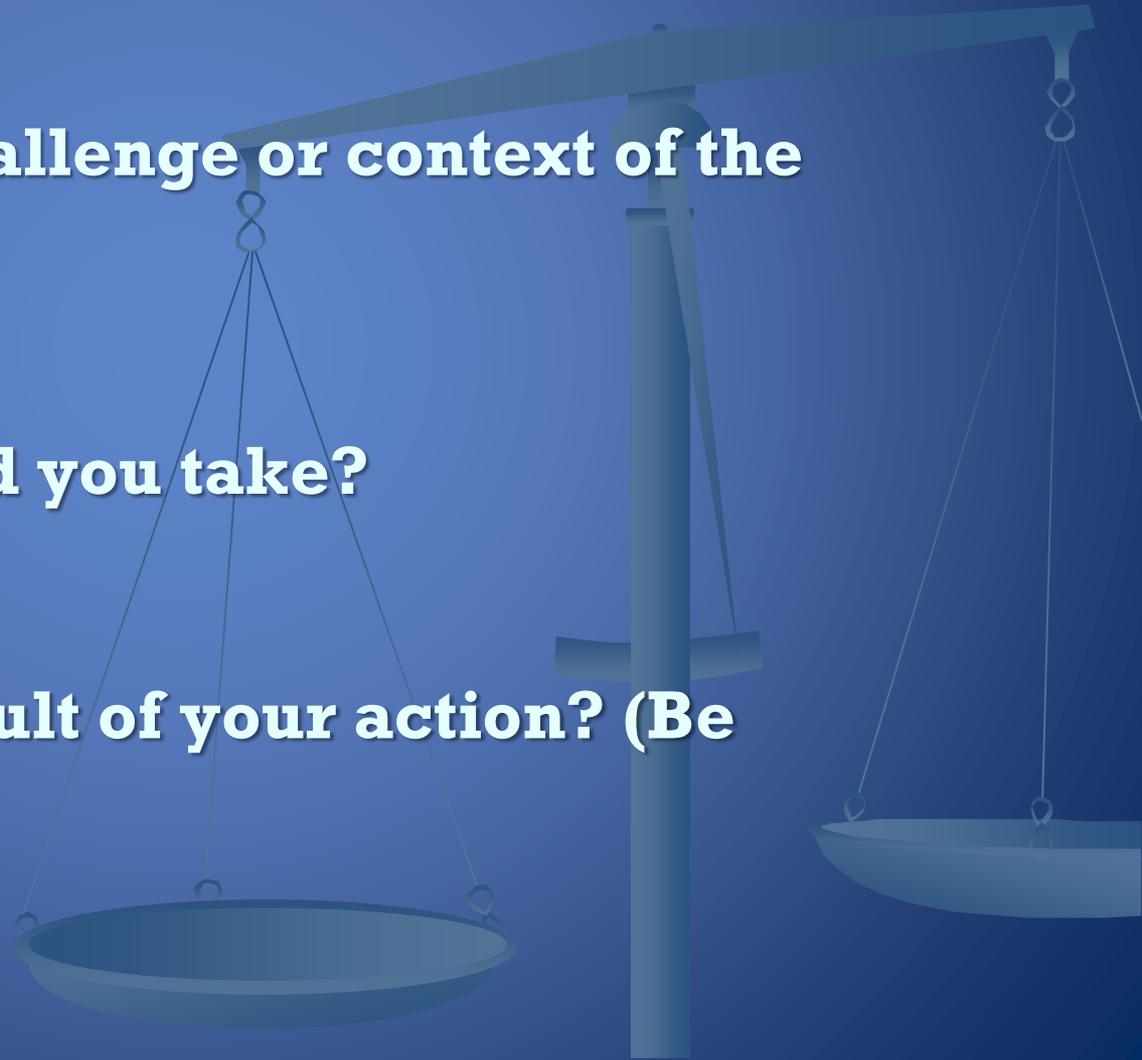
- Identify the challenge or context of the situation

■ Action

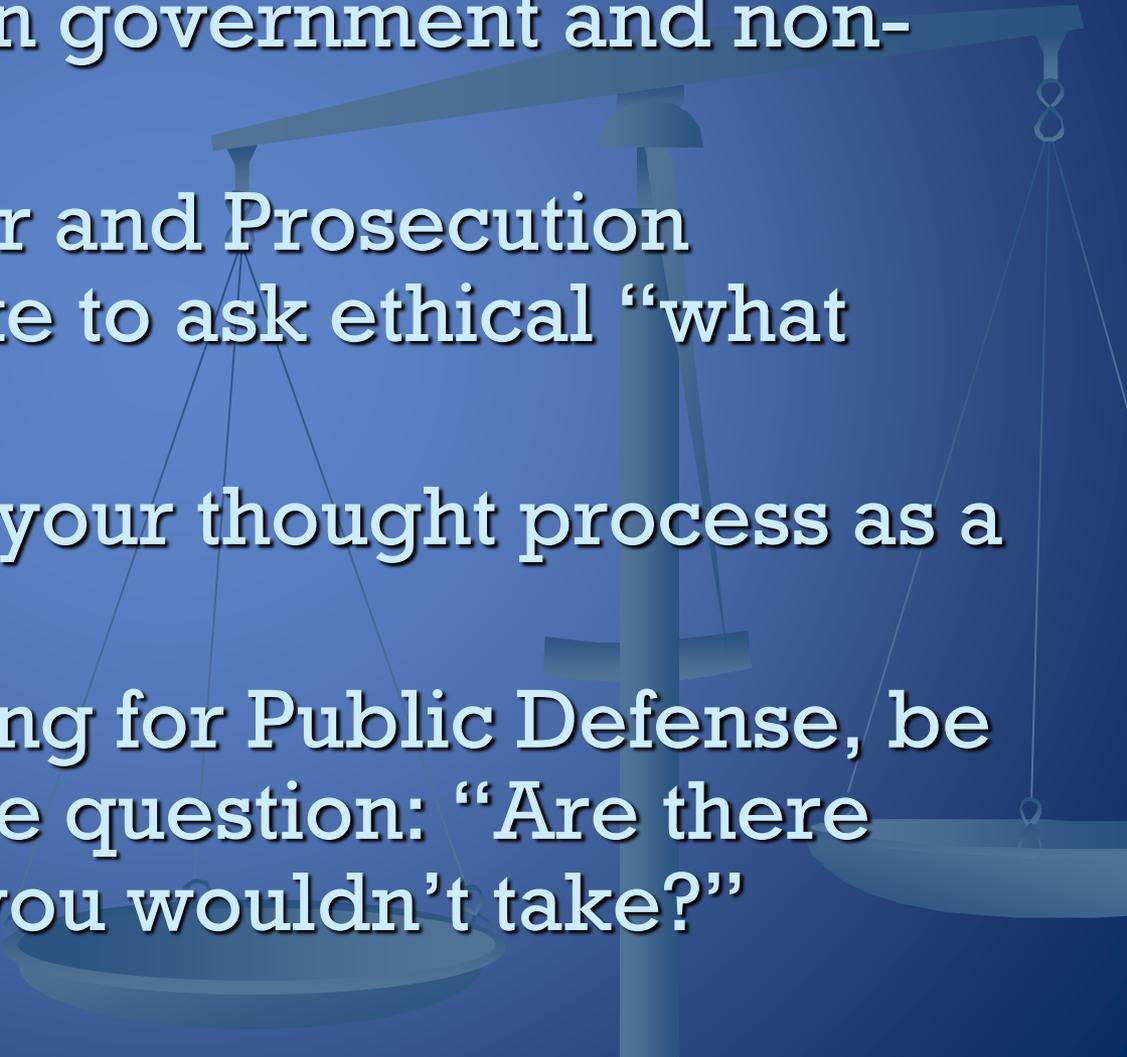
- What action did you take?

■ Result

- What is the result of your action? (Be positive!)

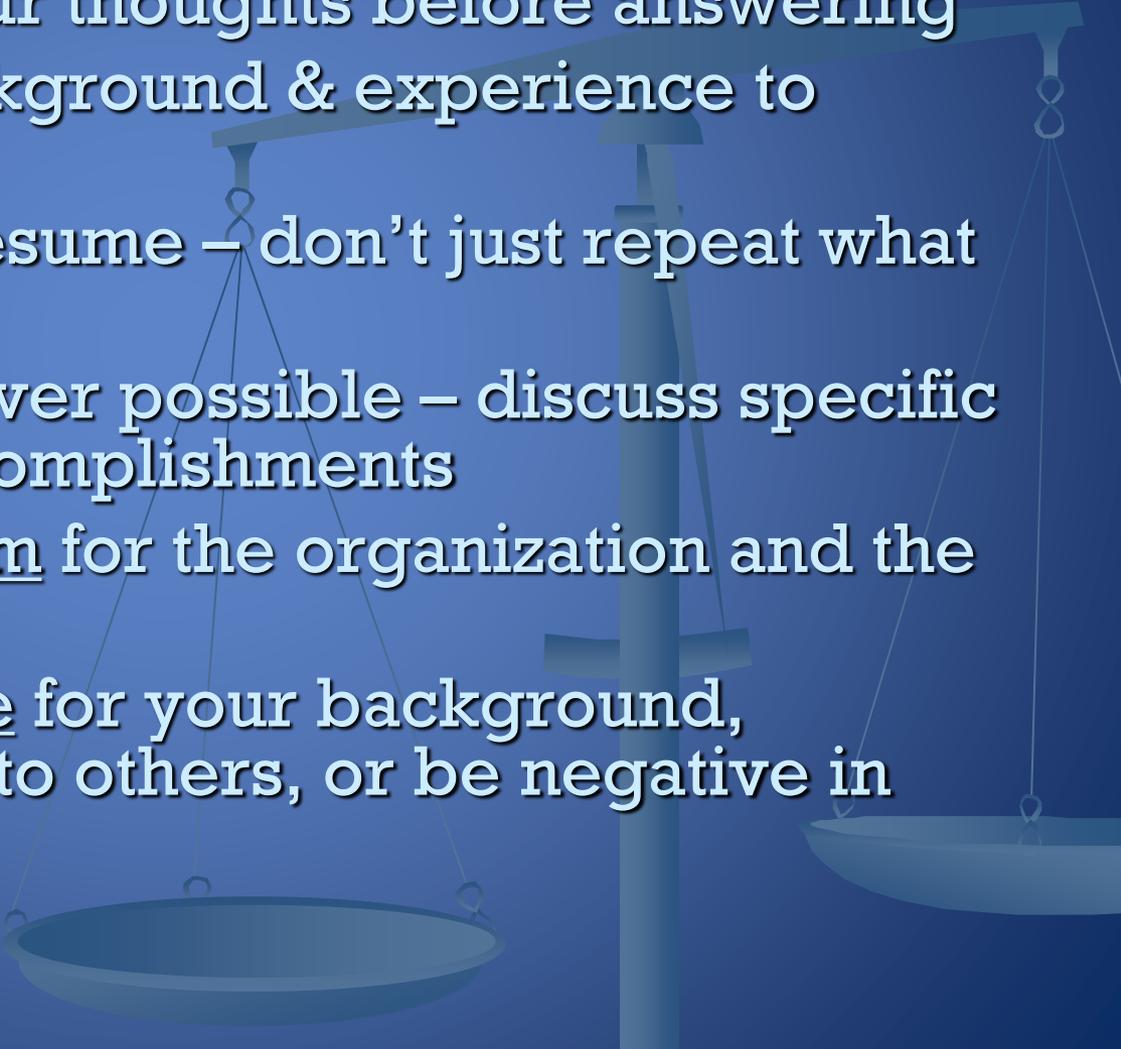


Hypothetical Questions

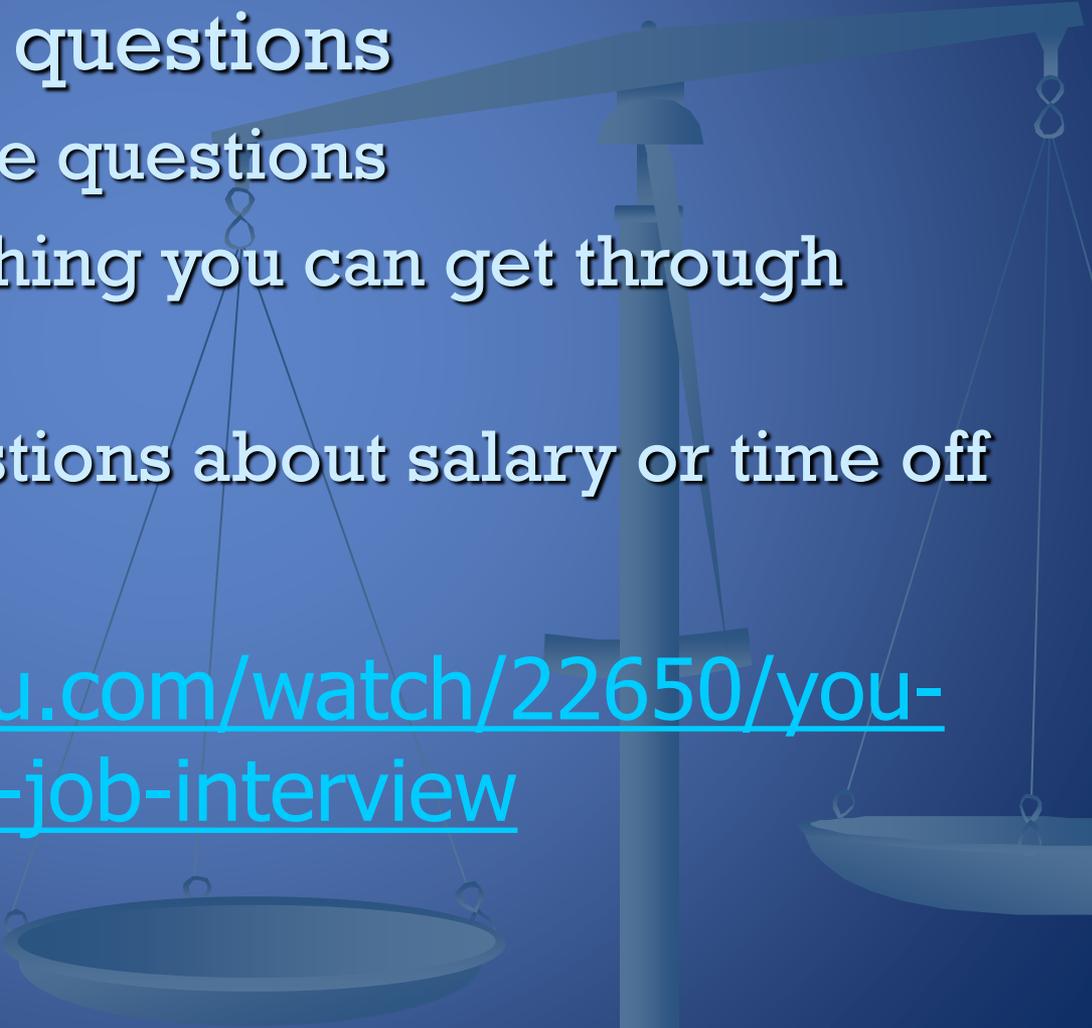


- Most common in government and non-profit hiring
- Public Defender and Prosecution interviewers like to ask ethical “what ifs...”
- As much about your thought process as a “right” answer
- If you’re applying for Public Defense, be prepared for the question: “Are there any cases that you wouldn’t take?”

Think about Your Answers

- Pause – gather your thoughts before answering
 - Connect your background & experience to employer's needs
 - Expand on your resume – don't just repeat what they can read
 - Be specific whenever possible – discuss specific examples and accomplishments
 - Convey enthusiasm for the organization and the work
 - DO NOT apologize for your background, compare yourself to others, or be negative in any way
- 

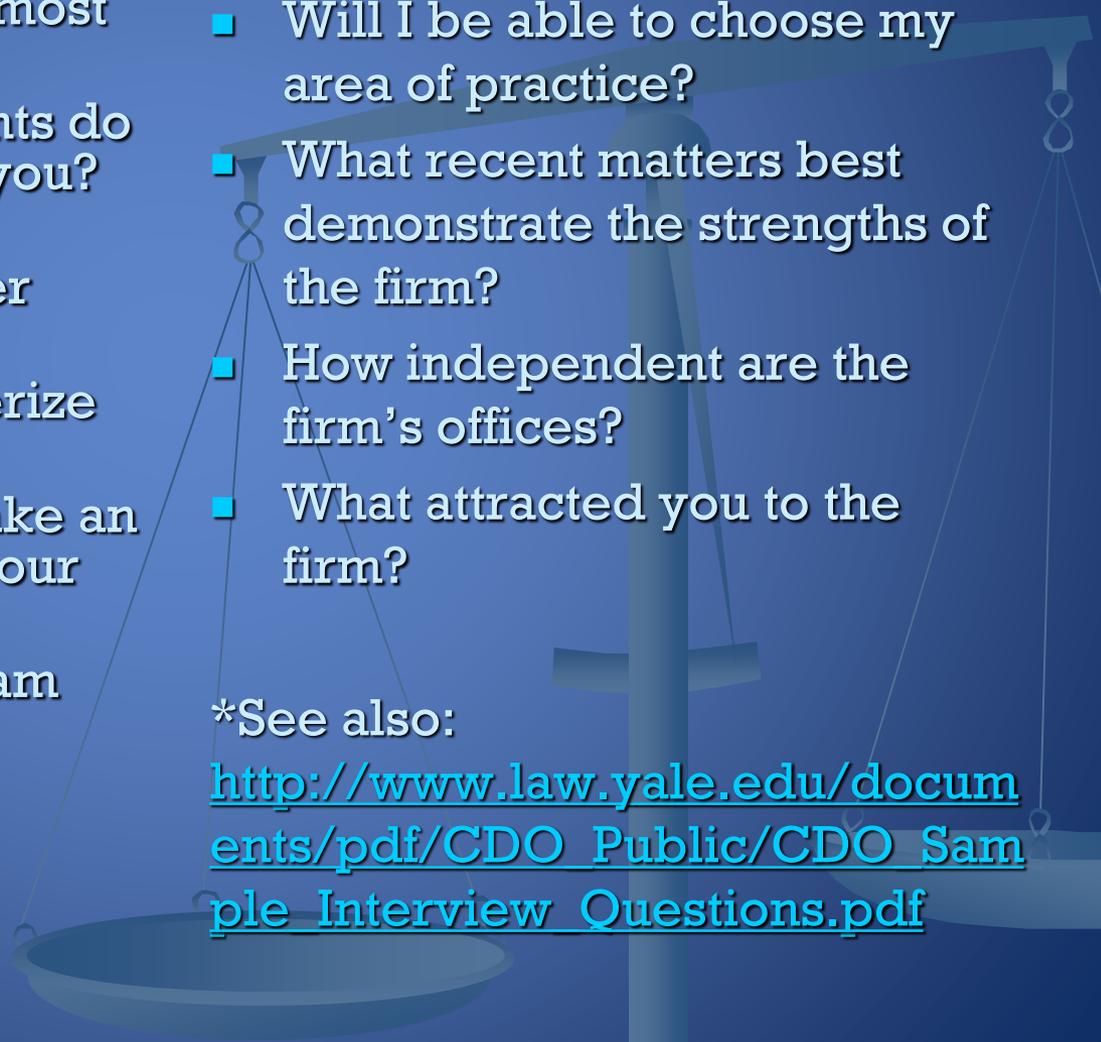
Closing the Interview



- Ask intelligent questions
 - Do ask genuine questions
 - Don't ask anything you can get through research
 - Don't ask questions about salary or time off
- Avoid:

<http://www.hulu.com/watch/22650/you-me-and-dupree-job-interview>

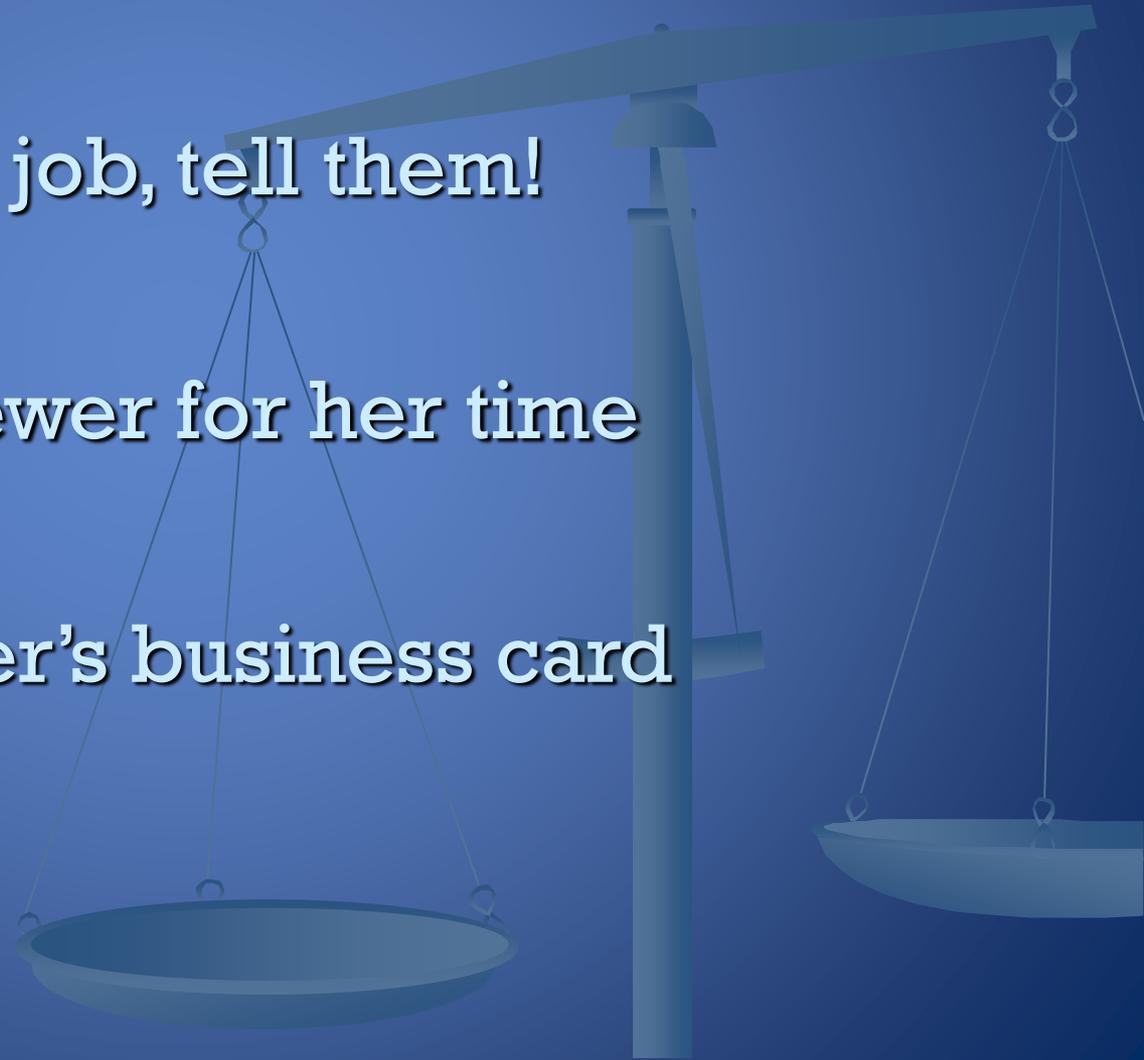
Closing the Interview



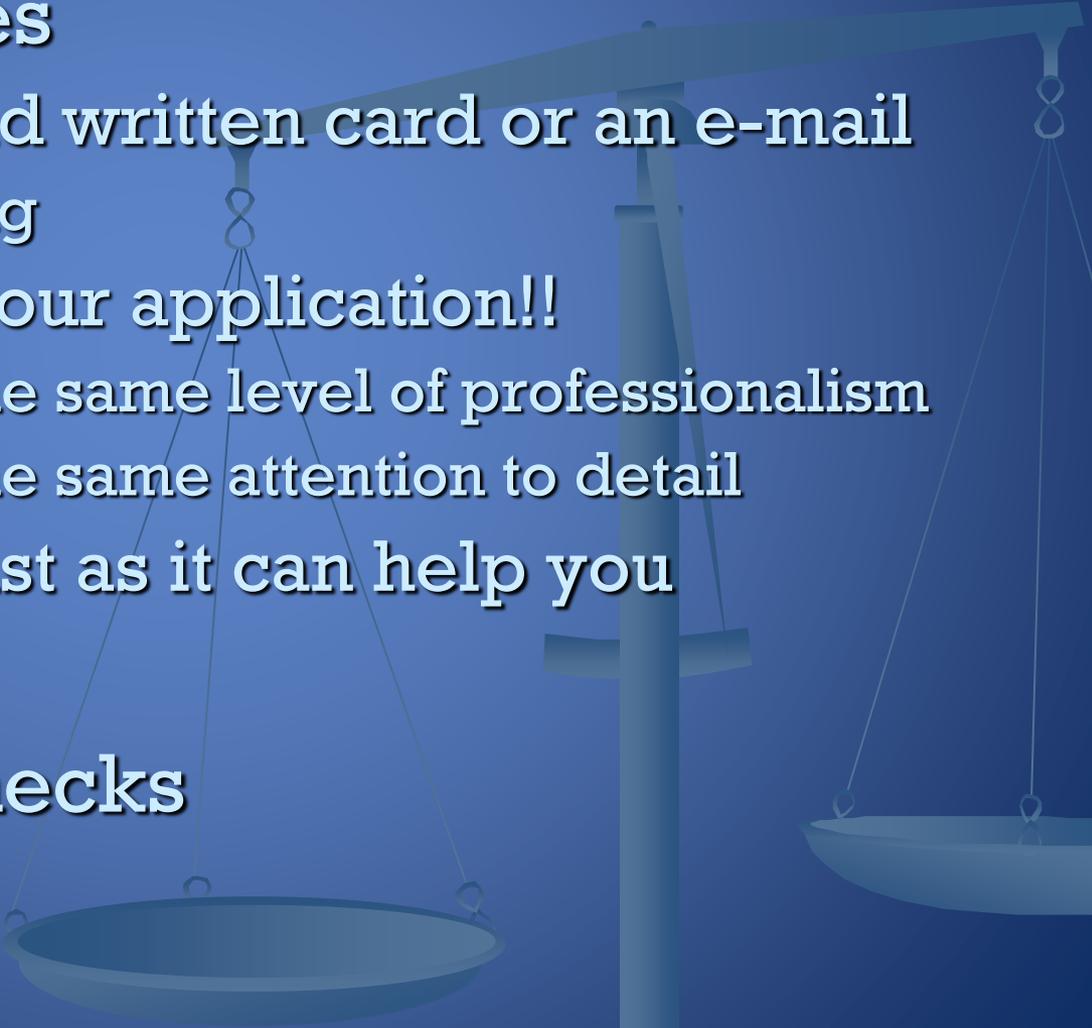
- Of what project are you most proud?
 - What kinds of assignments do junior associates do for you?
 - Describe a few typical projects done by summer associates.
 - How would you characterize the firm's personality?
 - What qualities would make an associate a good fit for your firm?
 - Does the summer program have a mentor system?
 - What kind of training to associates receive?
 - How will I be reviewed?
 - Will I be able to choose my area of practice?
 - What recent matters best demonstrate the strengths of the firm?
 - How independent are the firm's offices?
 - What attracted you to the firm?
- *See also:
http://www.law.yale.edu/documents/pdf/CDO_Public/CDO_Sample_Interview_Questions.pdf

Closing the Interview

- If you want the job, tell them!
- Thank interviewer for her time
- Get interviewer's business card

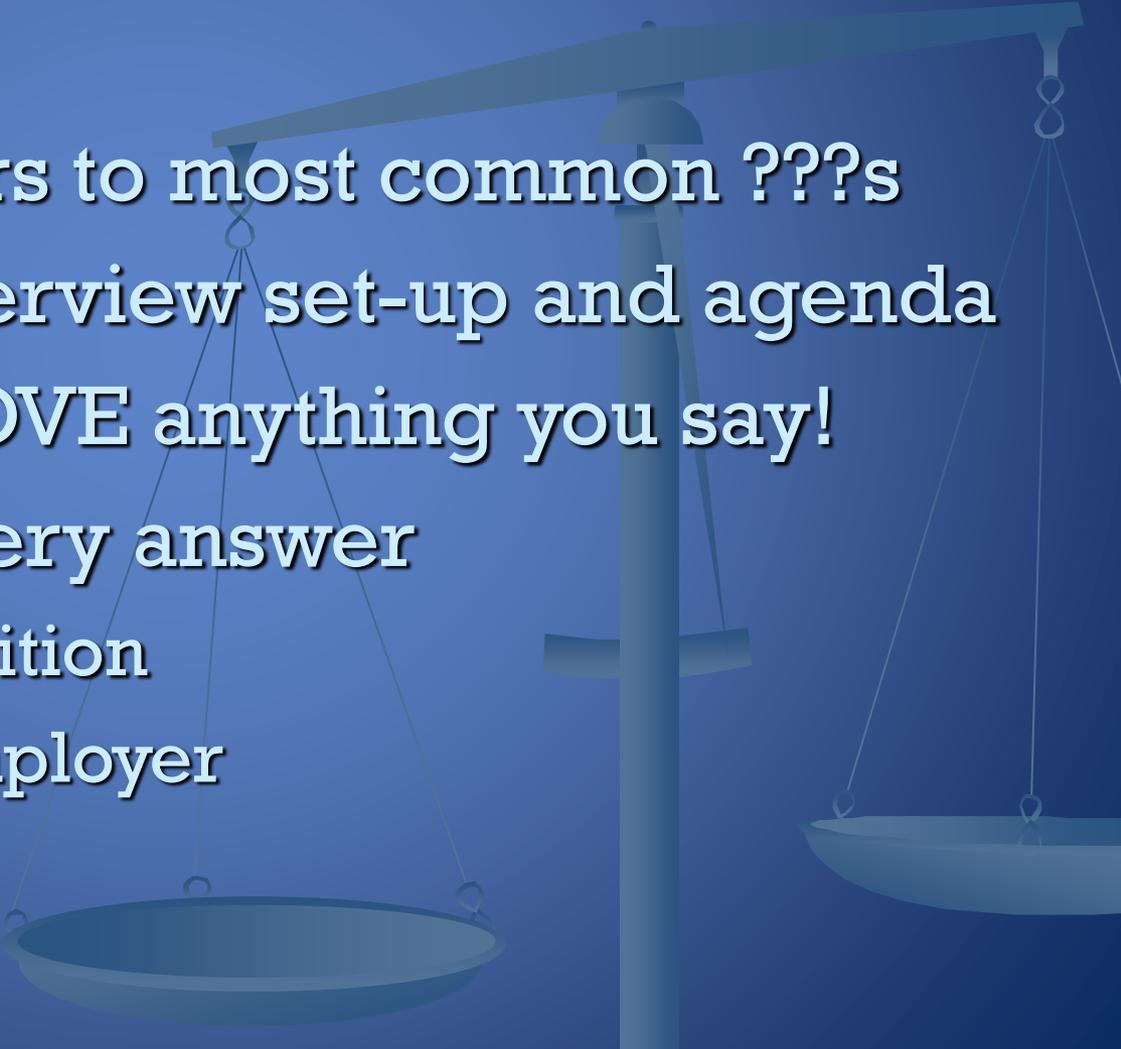


After the Interview

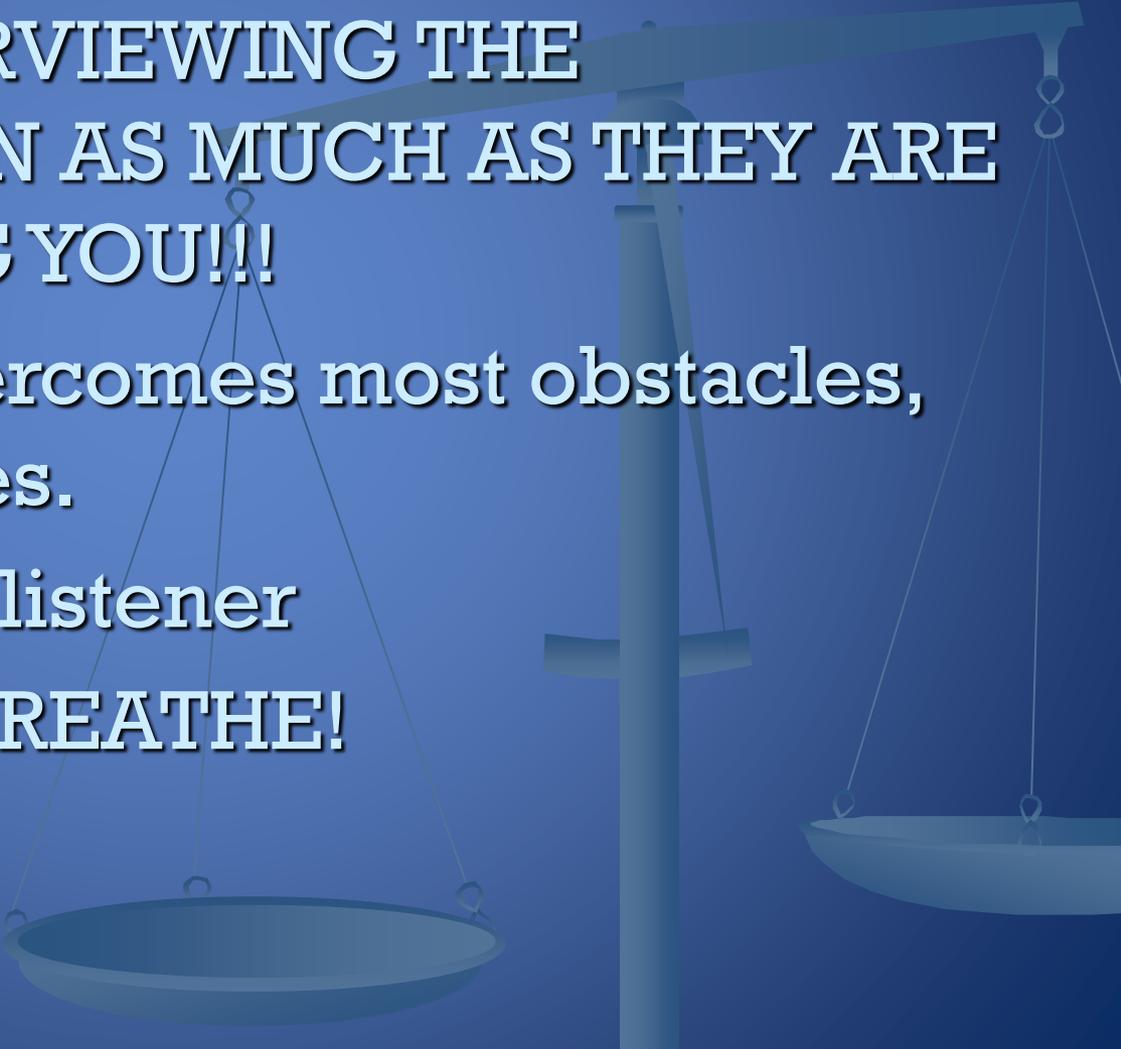


- Thank You Notes
 - Could be a hand written card or an e-mail
 - Consider timing
 - This is part of your application!!
 - All REQUIRE the same level of professionalism
 - All REQUIRE the same attention to detail
 - Can hurt you just as it can help you
- Social Media
- Background Checks

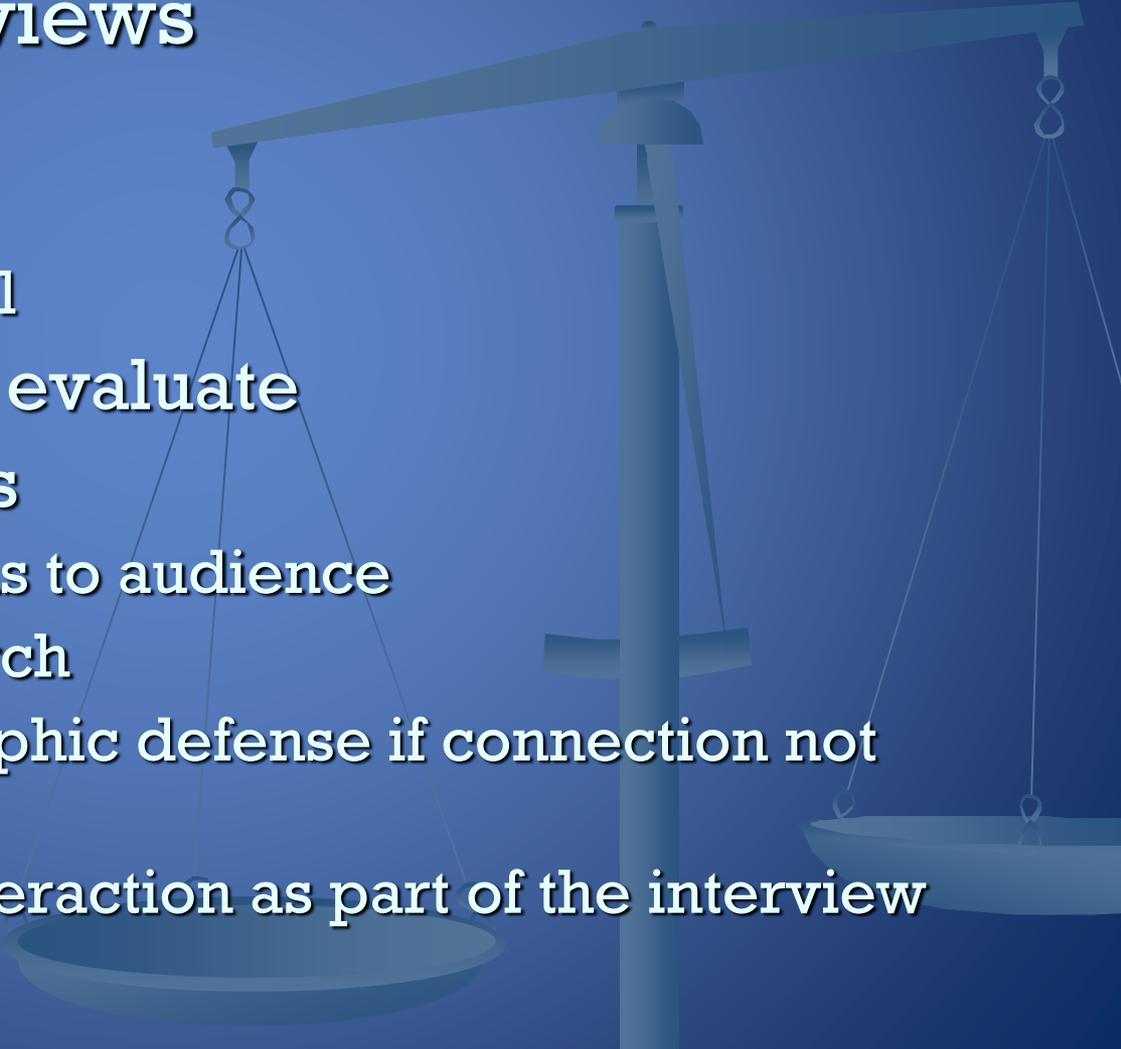
Interviewing Recap

- RESEARCH!
 - Practice answers to most common ???s
 - Understand interview set-up and agenda
 - Be ready to PROVE anything you say!
 - 2 “rules” for every answer
 - Relevant to position
 - Value to the employer
- 

Interviewing Tips

- YOU ARE INTERVIEWING THE ORGANIZATION AS MUCH AS THEY ARE INTERVIEWING YOU!!!
 - Preparation overcomes most obstacles, including nerves.
 - Be an engaged listener
 - Remember to BREATHE!
- 

Next Steps



■ Call Back Interviews

■ Formats:

- Traditional
- Interview Panel

■ Your chance to evaluate

■ Tips for success

- Tailor questions to audience
- Do your research
- Have a geographic defense if connection not obvious
- Treat every interaction as part of the interview

Next Steps

■ Offers

- In this current economy, if you get an offer take very little time to accept.
- NALP Guidelines (Apply only to NALP Firms)
 - Students who receive an offer from an org for which they haven't previously worked:
 - Should reaffirm interest in offer within 14 days
 - Should respond to offer within 28 days
 - For more specifics, talk to OCPD
- BUT be prepared for "Exploding Offers"

Style of Interviewing

**Learn how to dress, walk
& talk during interviews**

Part II

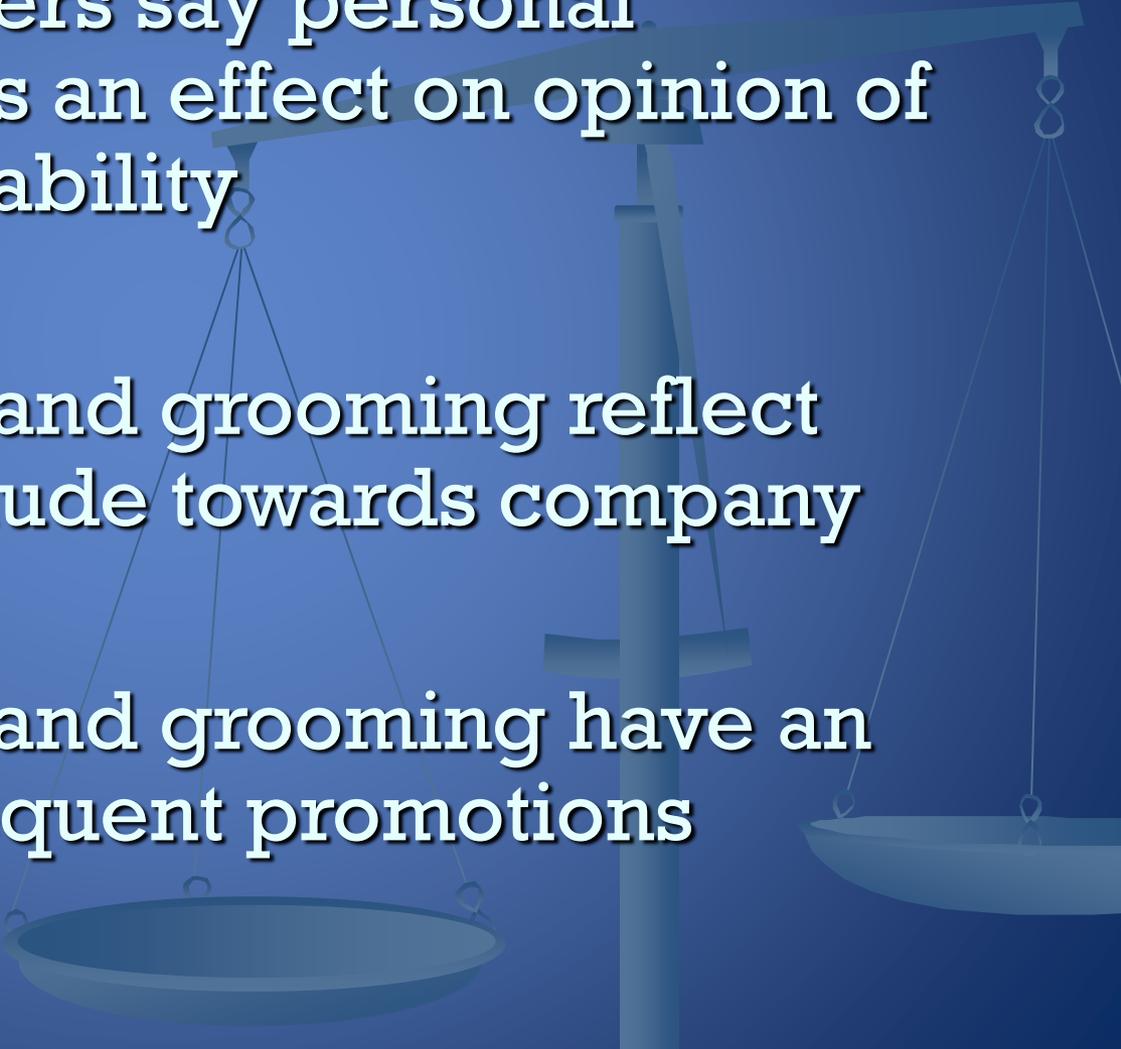


Interview Day

- Dress
- Arrival
- Introductions
- Non-Verbal & Verbal Traps

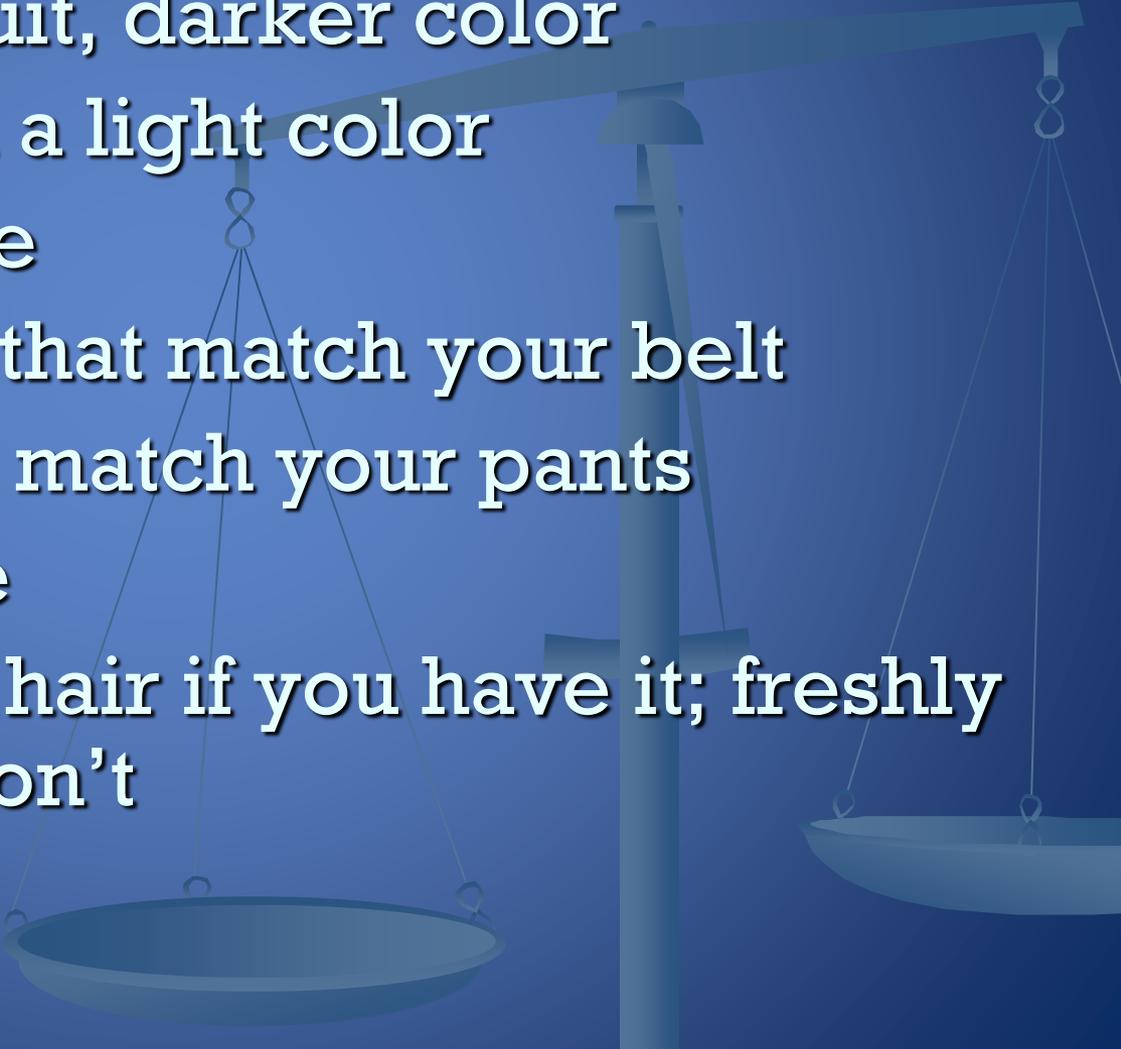


Dress: What Employers Say

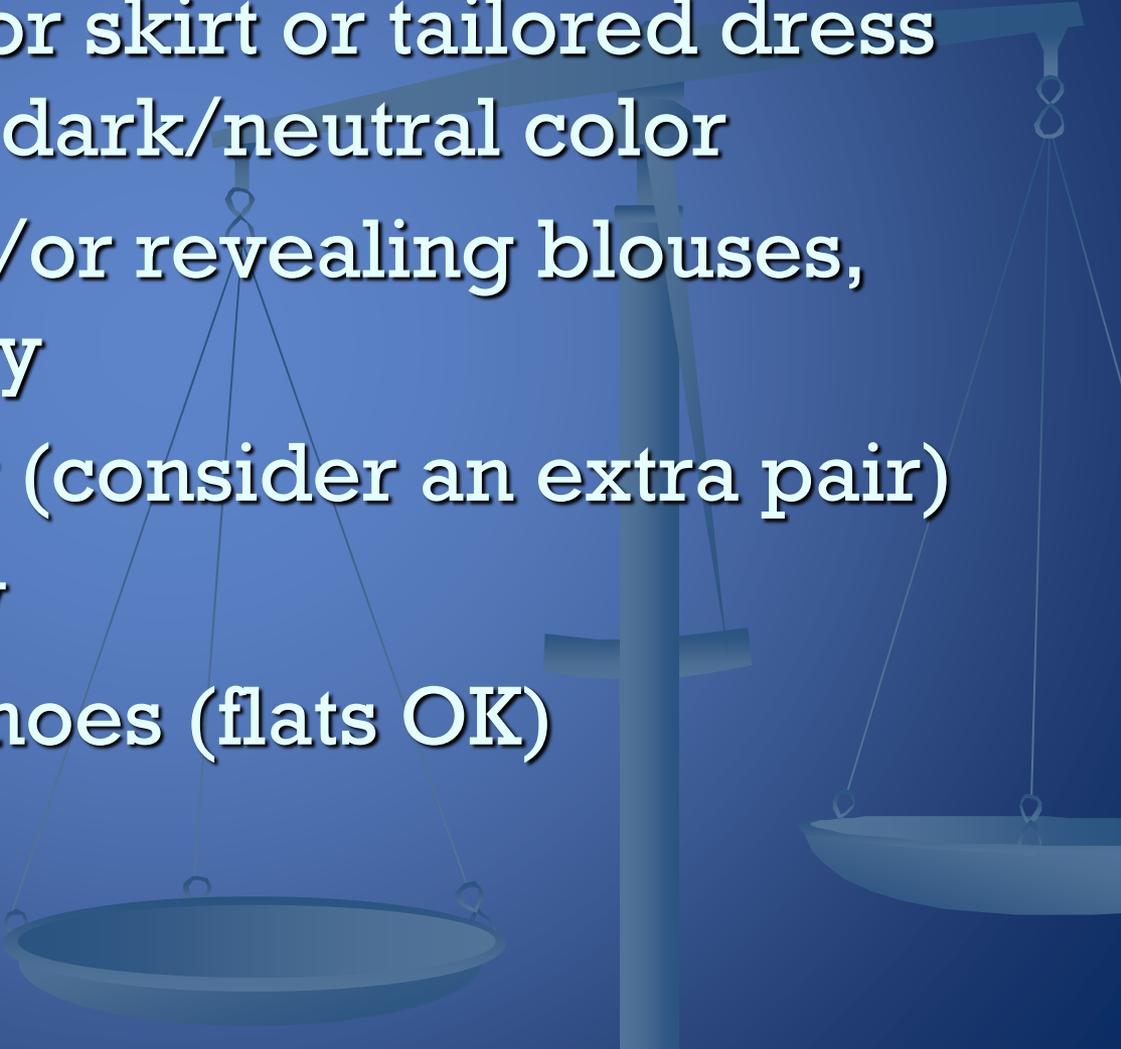


- 95% of employers say personal appearance has an effect on opinion of applicant's suitability
- 91% say dress and grooming reflect applicant's attitude towards company
- 61% say dress and grooming have an effect on subsequent promotions

Best Bets: Men

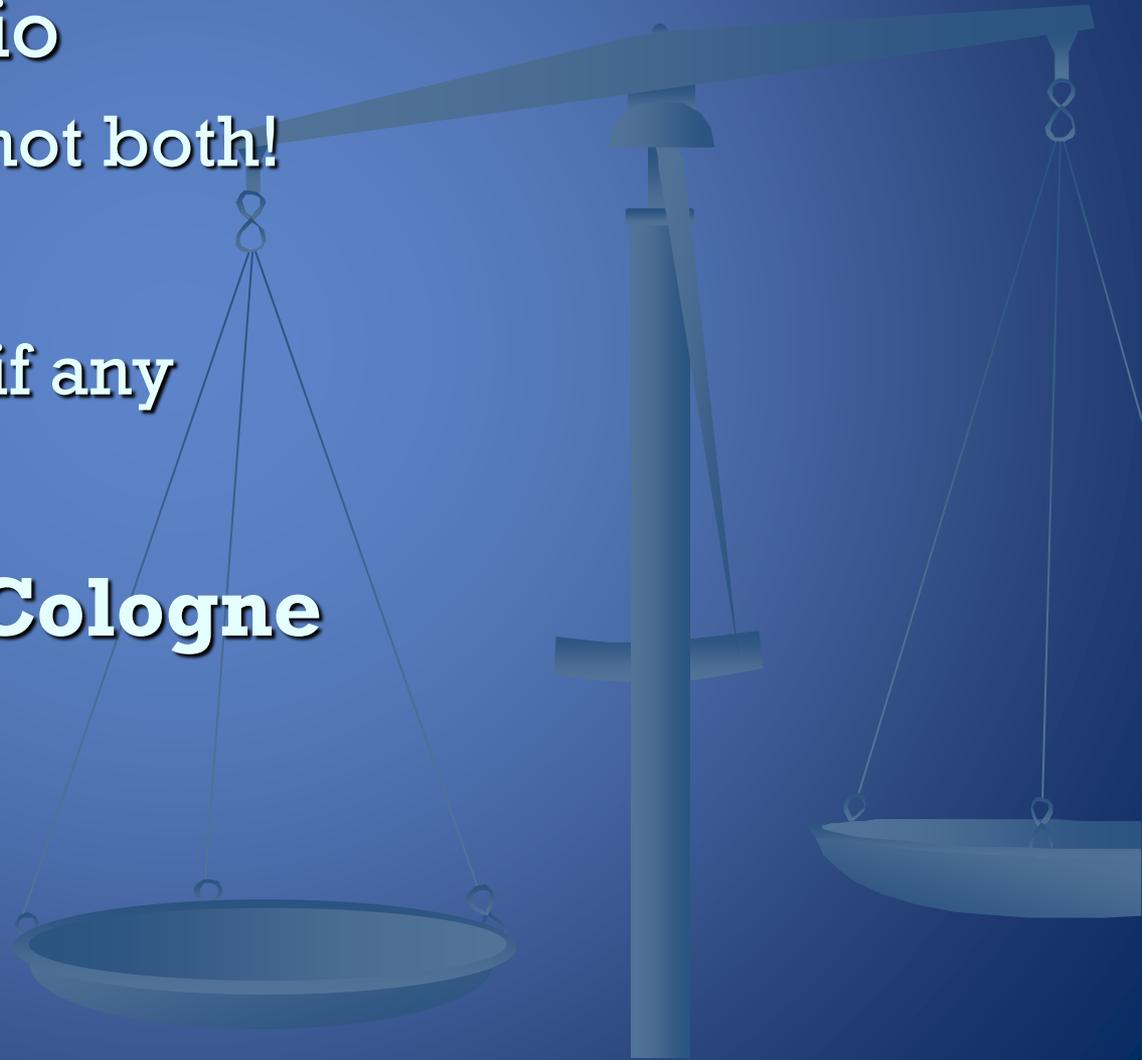
- Conservative suit, darker color
 - Pressed shirt in a light color
 - Conservative tie
 - Polished shoes that match your belt
 - Dark socks that match your pants
 - No wallet bulge
 - Trimmed facial hair if you have it; freshly shaved if you don't
- 

Best Bets: Women

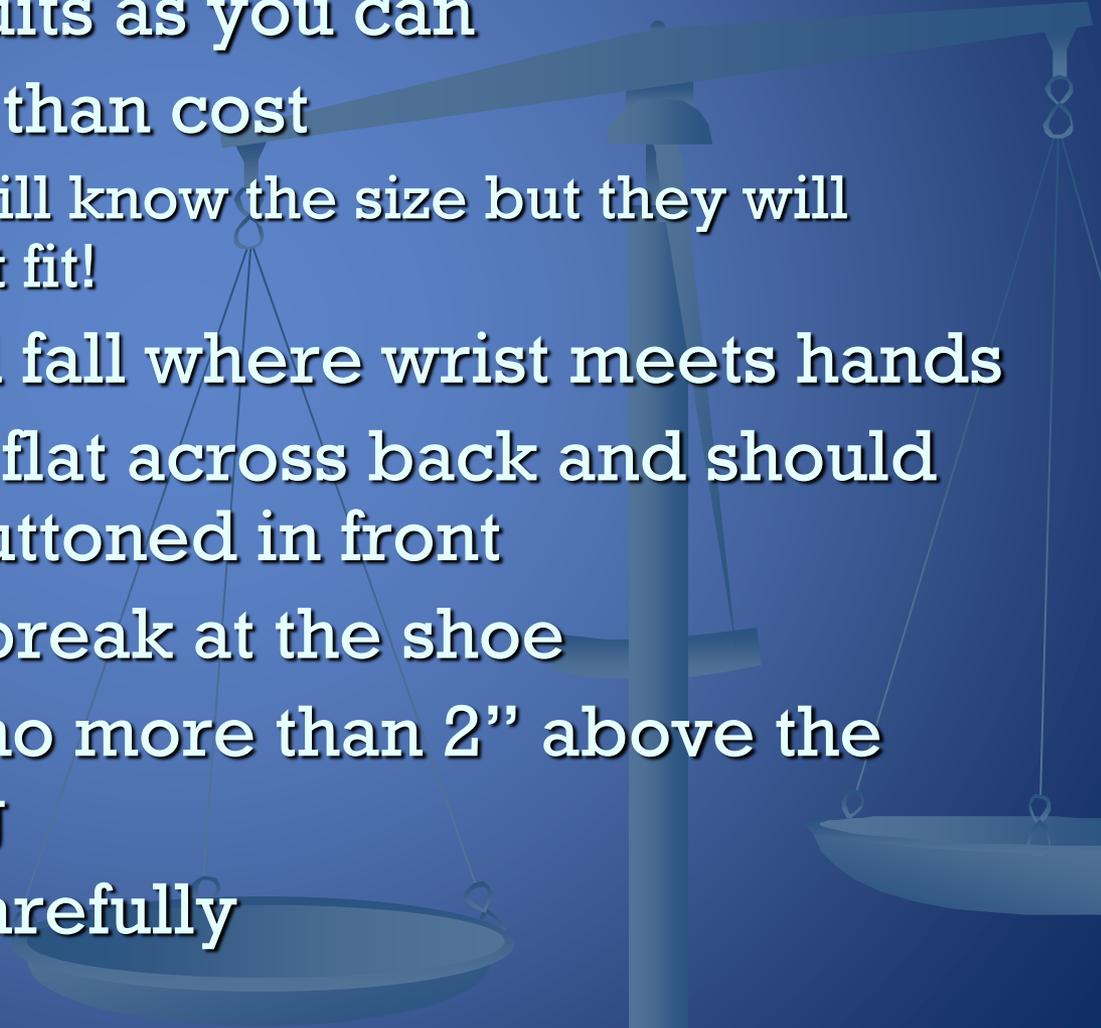
- Suit with pants or skirt or tailored dress with jacket in a dark/neutral color
 - Avoid loud and/or revealing blouses, but color is okay
 - Neutral hosiery (consider an extra pair)
 - Limited jewelry
 - Conservative shoes (flats OK)
- 

Best Bets: Everyone

- Attaché/Padfolio
 - OR Purse, but not both!
- Neat nails
 - Neutral polish if any
- Neat Hair
- **NO Perfume/Cologne**

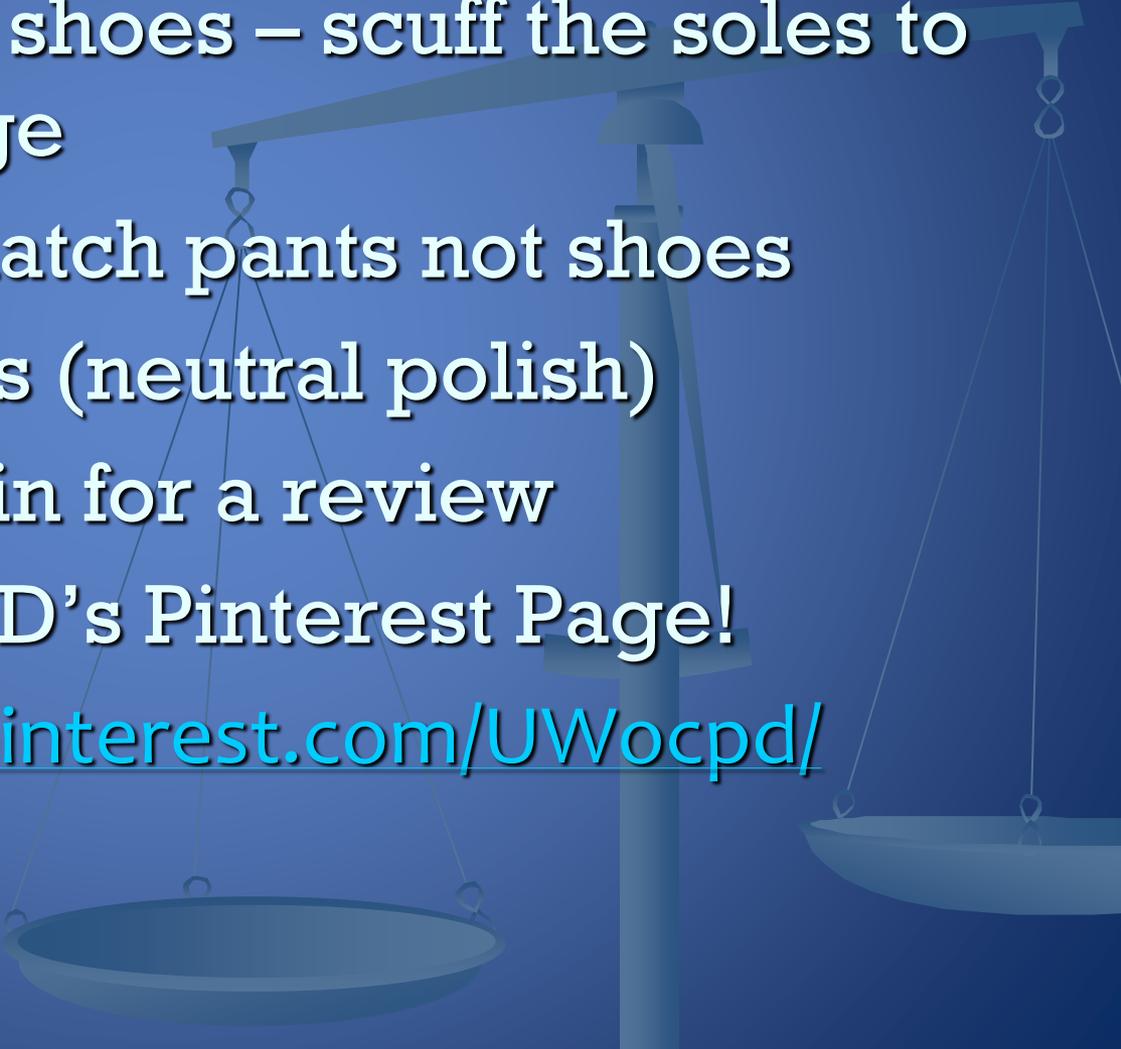


Picking Out a Suit



- Try on as many suits as you can
- FIT matters more than cost
 - No one but you will know the size but they will notice if it doesn't fit!
- Jacket cuff should fall where wrist meets hands
- Jacket should fall flat across back and should not gape when buttoned in front
- Trousers should break at the shoe
- Skirts should be no more than 2" above the knee when sitting
- Choose fabrics carefully

Don't forget

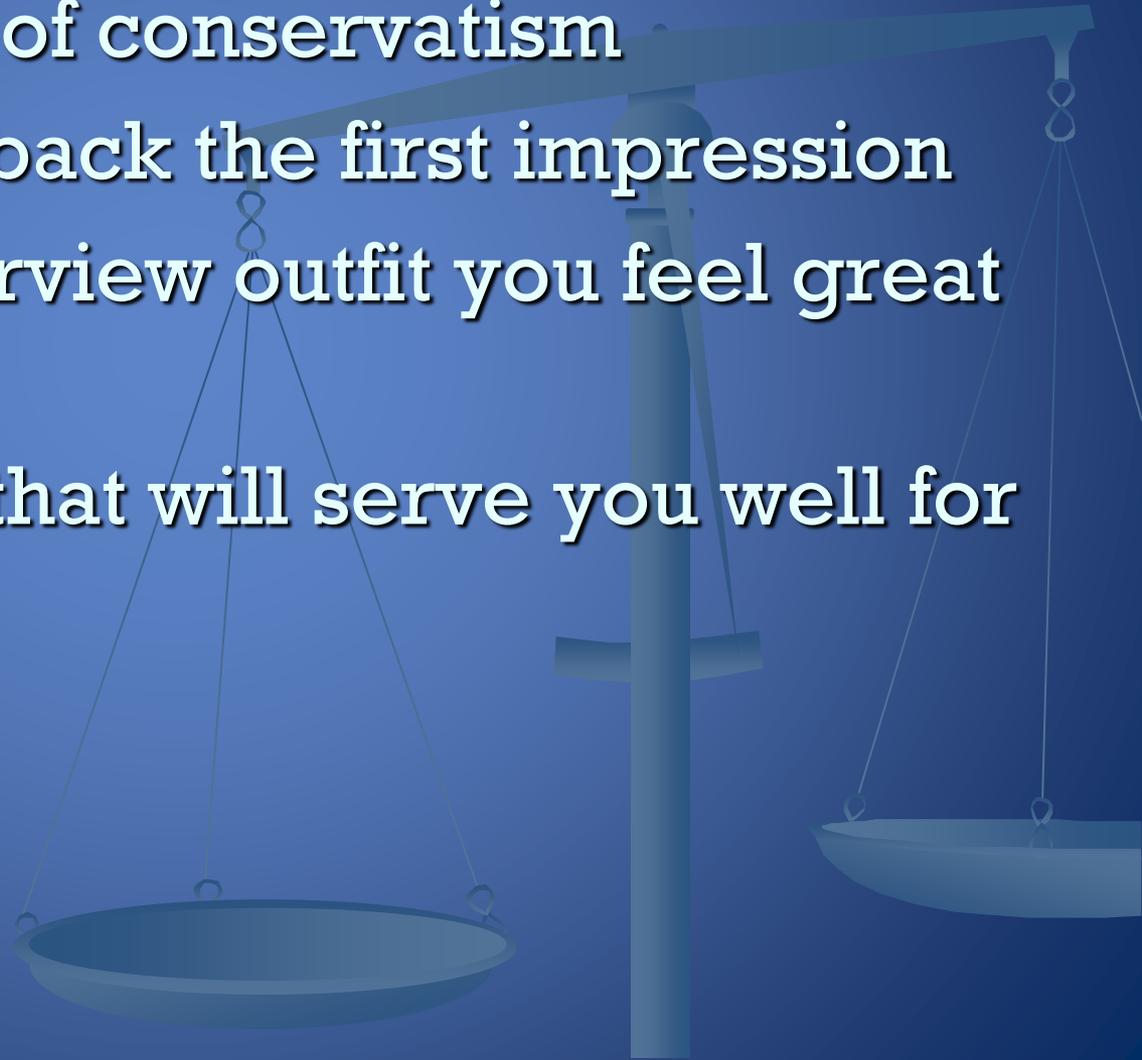


- Test drive your shoes – scuff the soles to prevent slippage
- Socks should match pants not shoes
- Clean your nails (neutral polish)
- Bring your suit in for a review
- Check out OCPD's Pinterest Page!

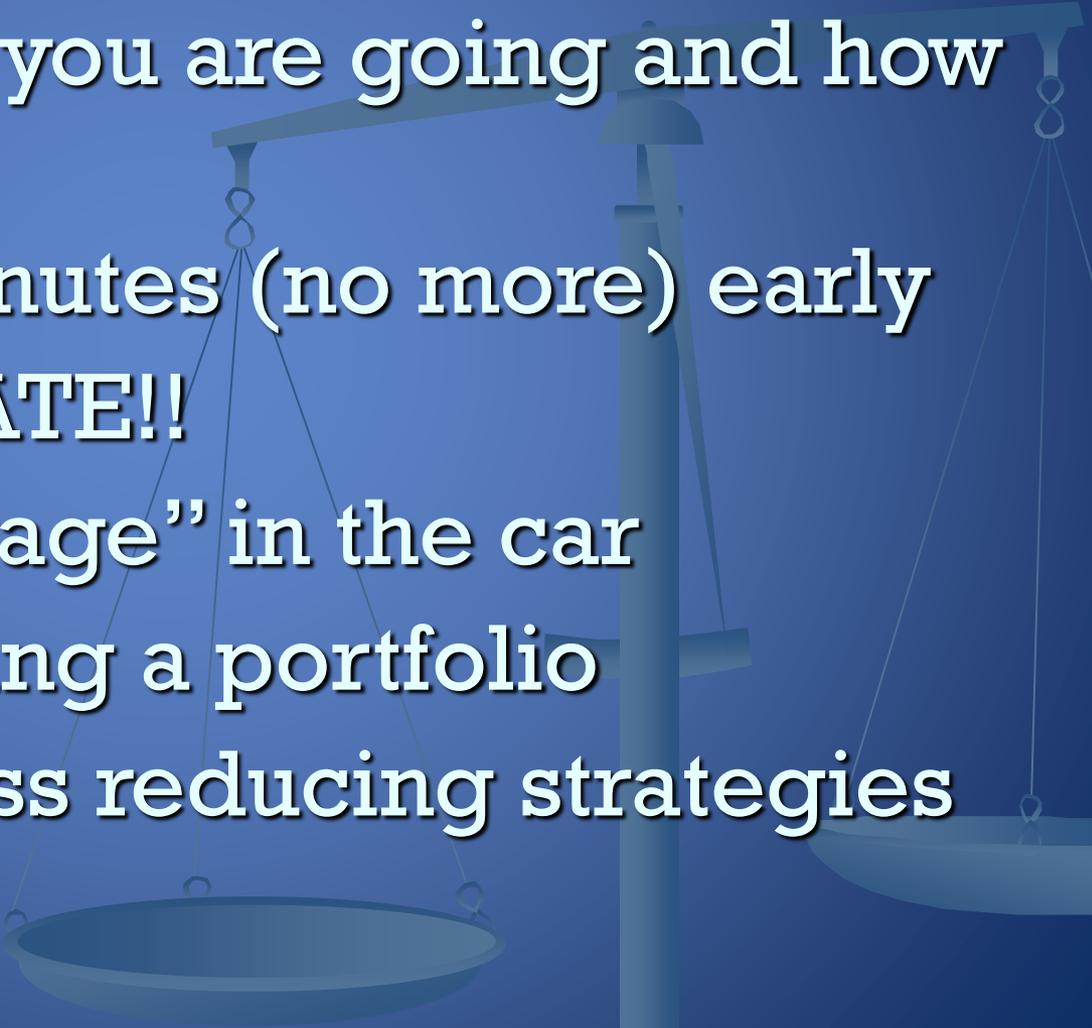
<http://www.pinterest.com/UWocpd/>

Final Notes on Dressing

- Err on the side of conservatism
- You can't take back the first impression
- Choose an interview outfit you feel great wearing
- Invest in a suit that will serve you well for years to come

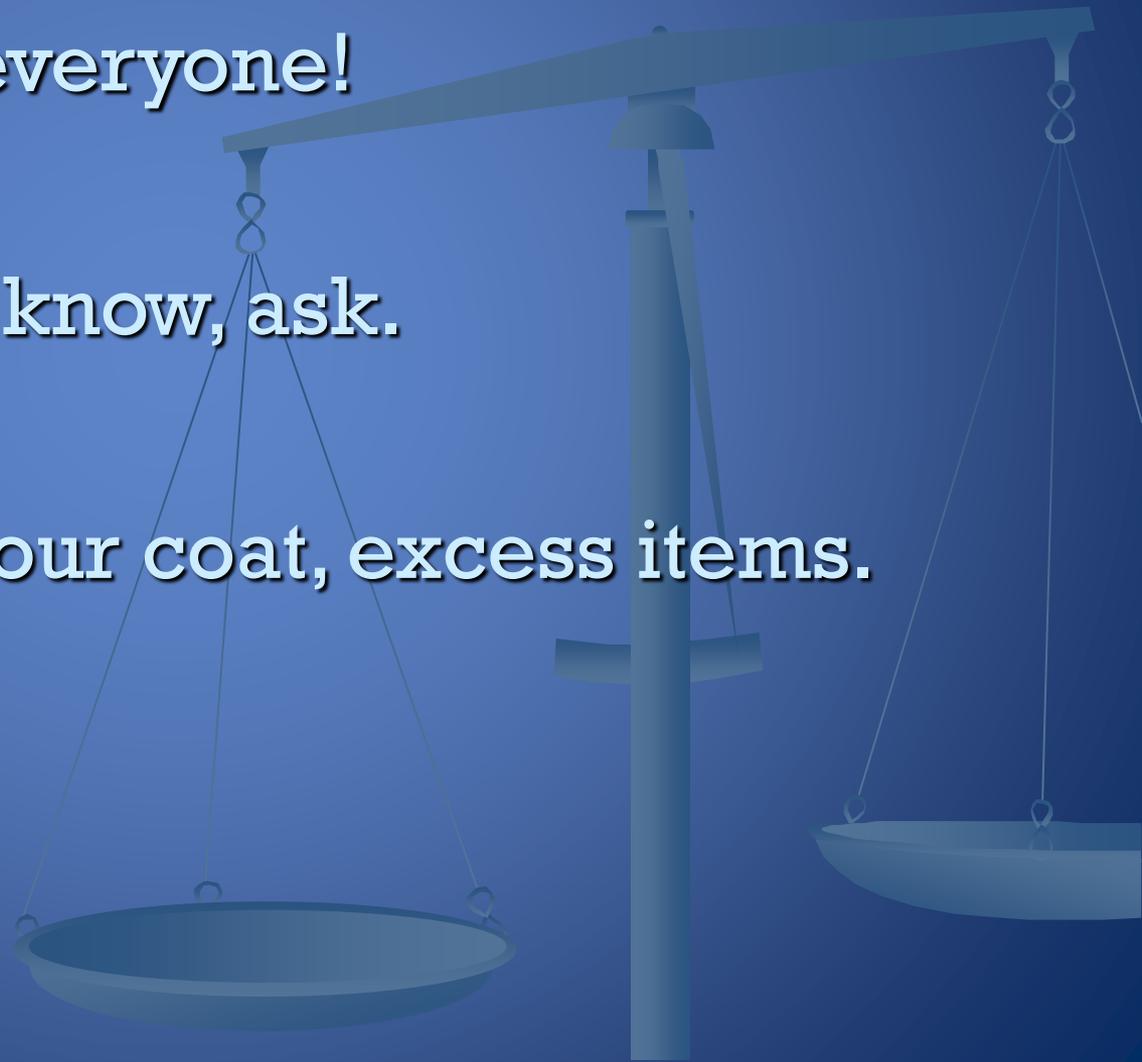


Getting There

- Know where you are going and how to get there
 - Arrive 10 minutes (no more) early
 - **DON'T BE LATE!!**
 - Leave “baggage” in the car
 - Consider using a portfolio
 - Practice stress reducing strategies
- 

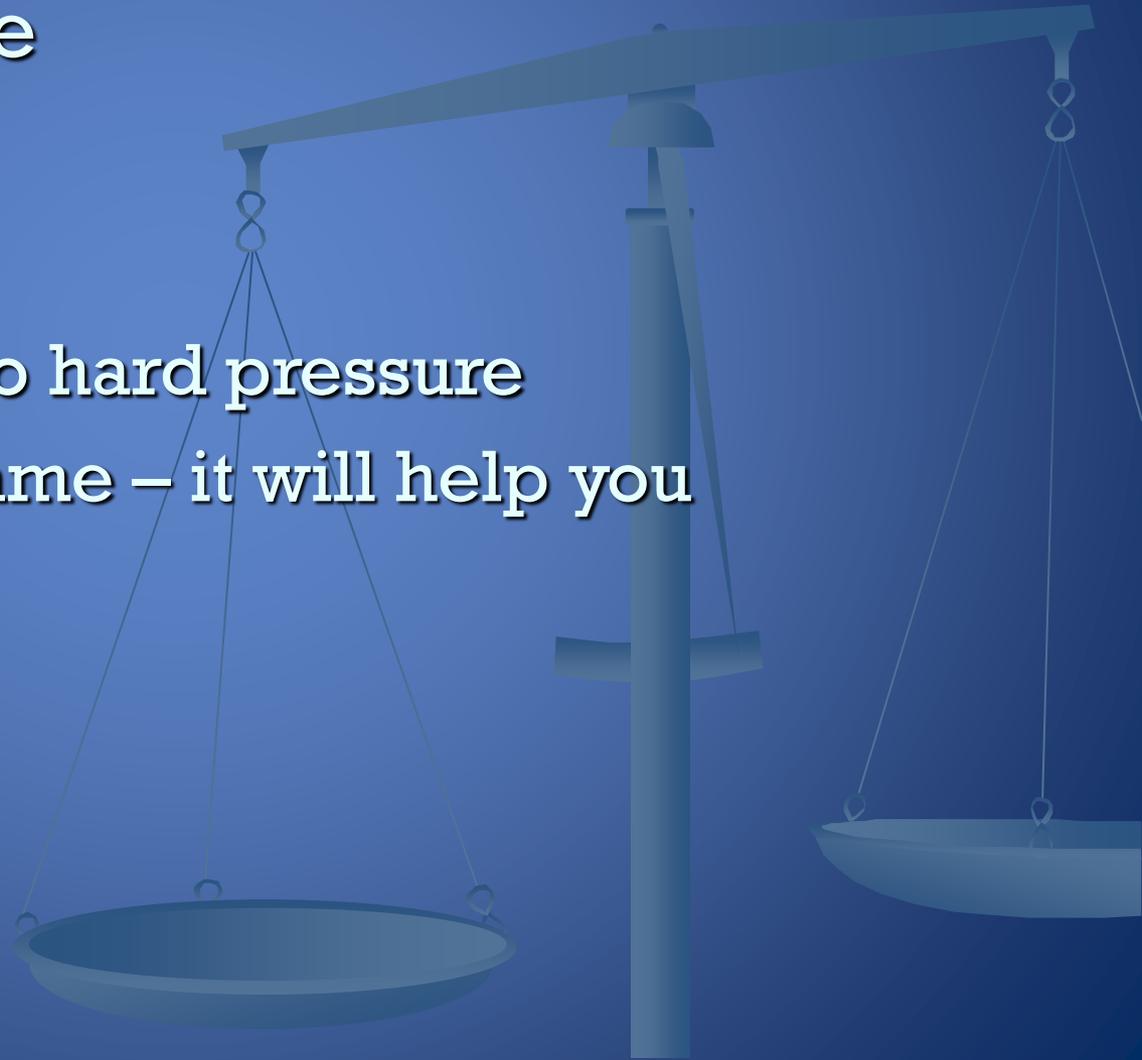
Checking In

- Be kind to everyone!
- If you don't know, ask.
- Get rid of your coat, excess items.
- BREATHE!!



It's nice to meet you...

- The Hand Shake
- Remember
 - Eye contact
 - Firm but not too hard pressure
 - Repeat their name – it will help you remember!
- Let's practice

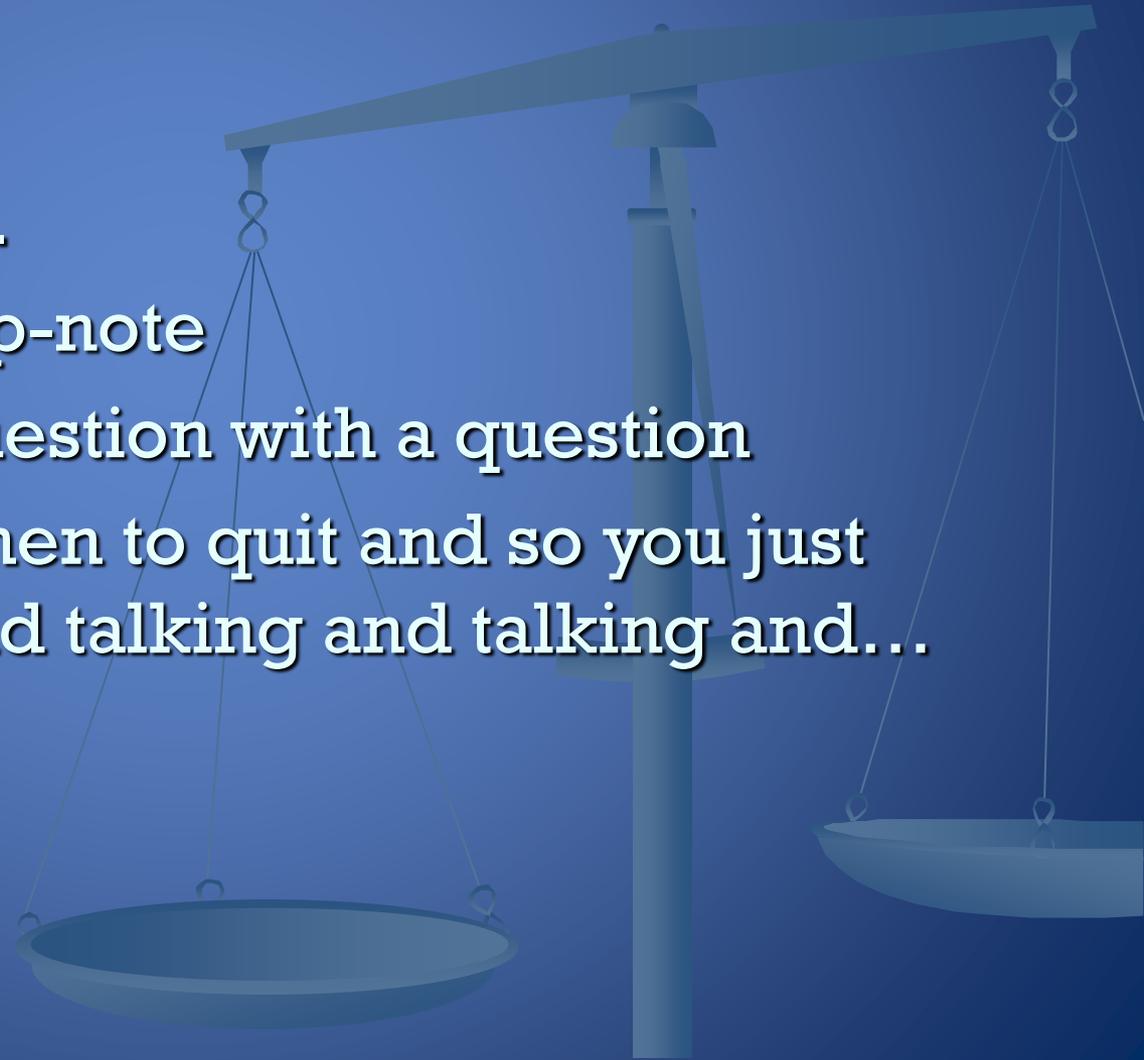


It's nice to meet you...



Verbal Communication Traps

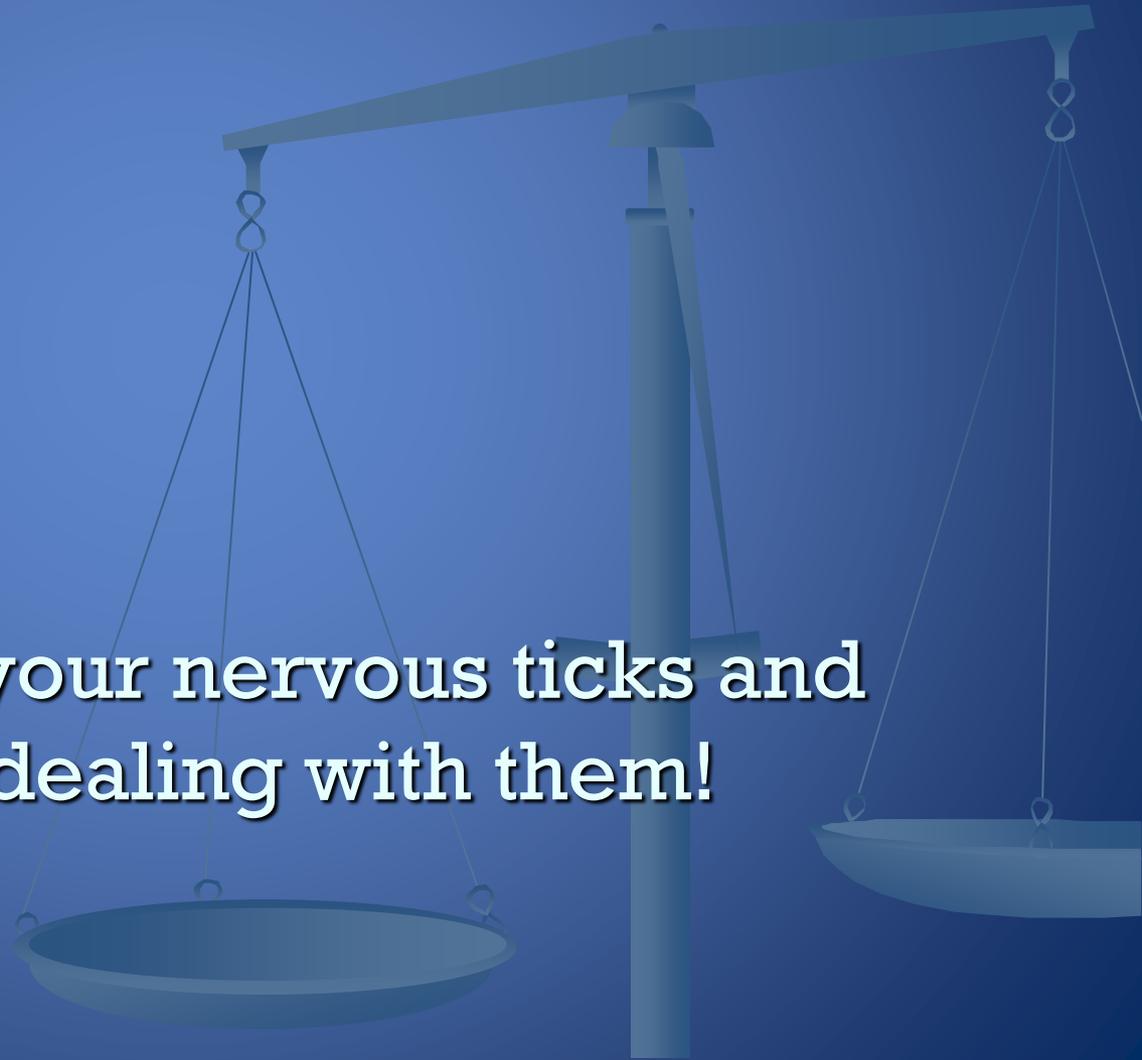
- Rushing
- Speaking softly
- Trailing off.....
- Ending on an up-note
- Answering a question with a question
- Not knowing when to quit and so you just keep talking and talking and talking and...
- Pauses are OK



Are you nervous?

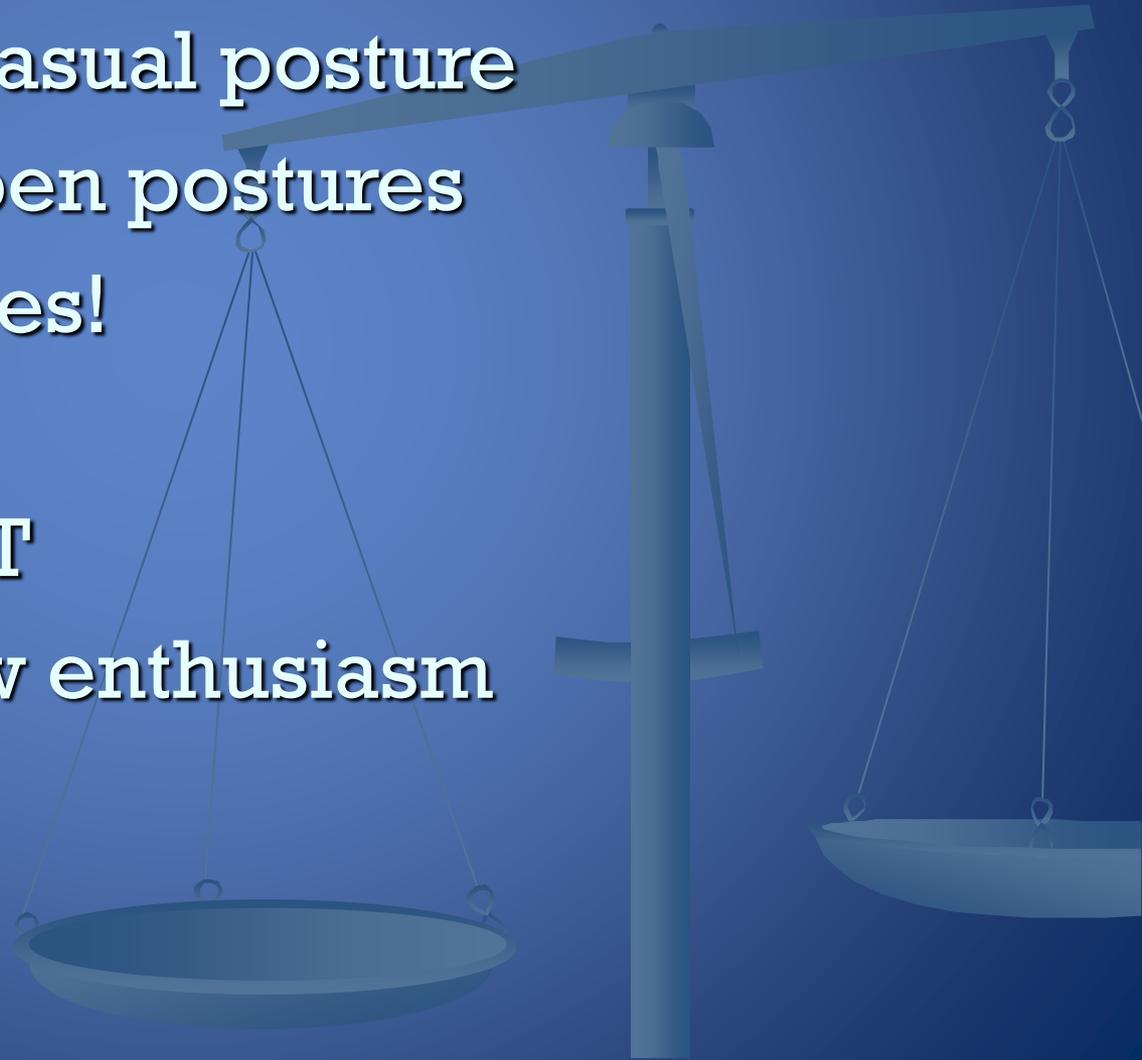
- Talk Fast
- Voice Quivers
- Palms Sweat
- Knees Shake
- Stammer

Be aware of your nervous ticks and practice dealing with them!



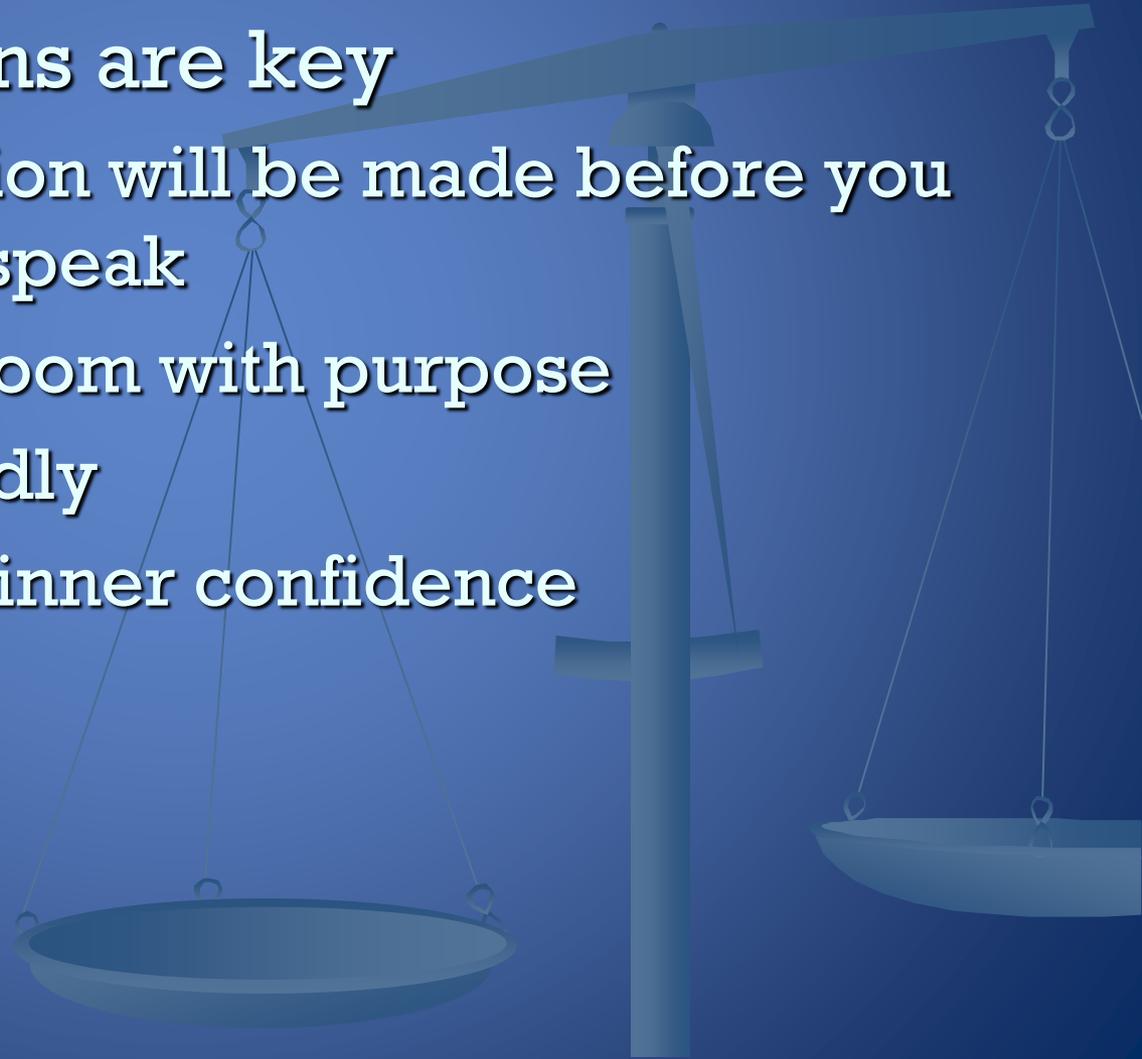
Non-Verbal Traps

- Slouching or casual posture
- Closed and open postures
- Wild extremities!
- Sighing
- EYE CONTACT
- Be alive – show enthusiasm

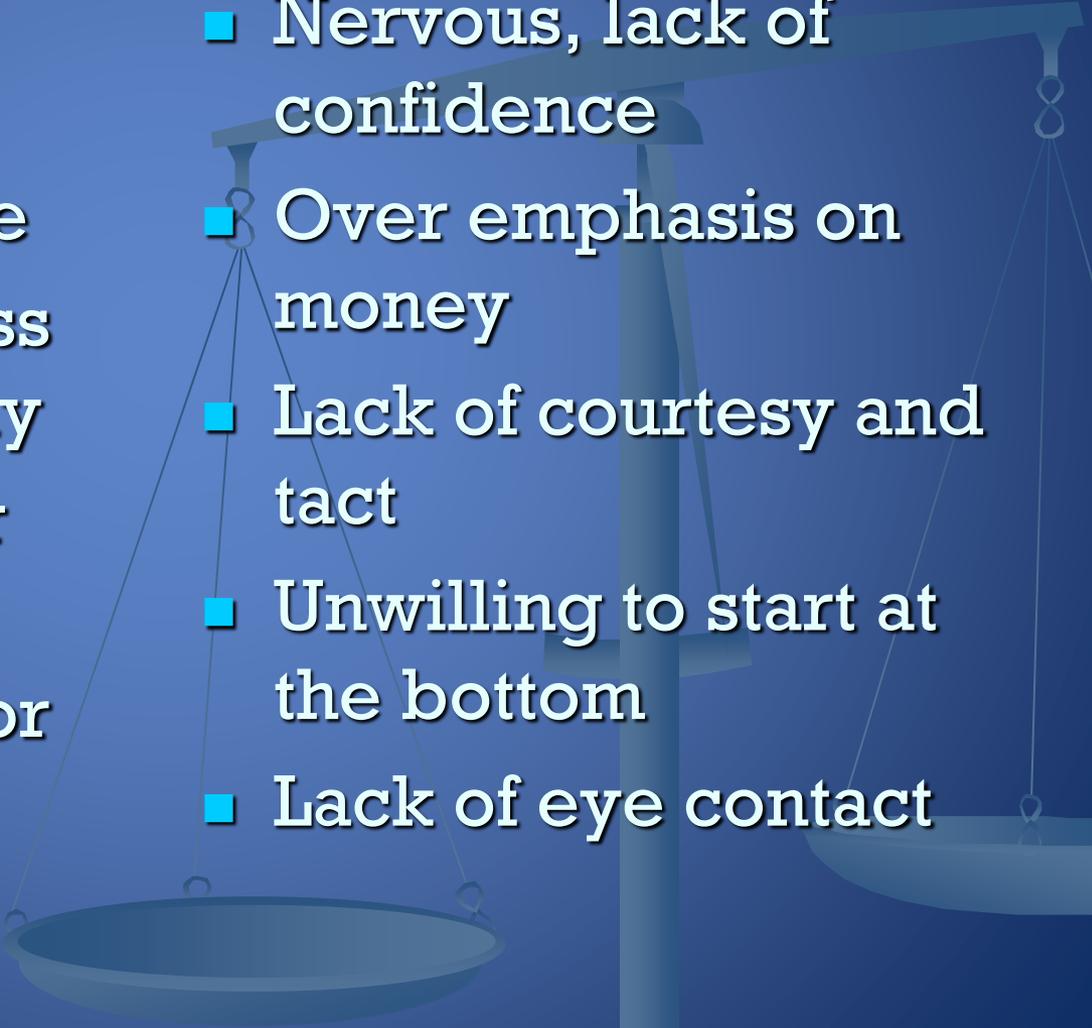


Your Interview Style

- First impressions are key
 - A first impression will be made before you even begin to speak
 - Walk into the room with purpose
 - Smile, be friendly
 - Embrace your inner confidence

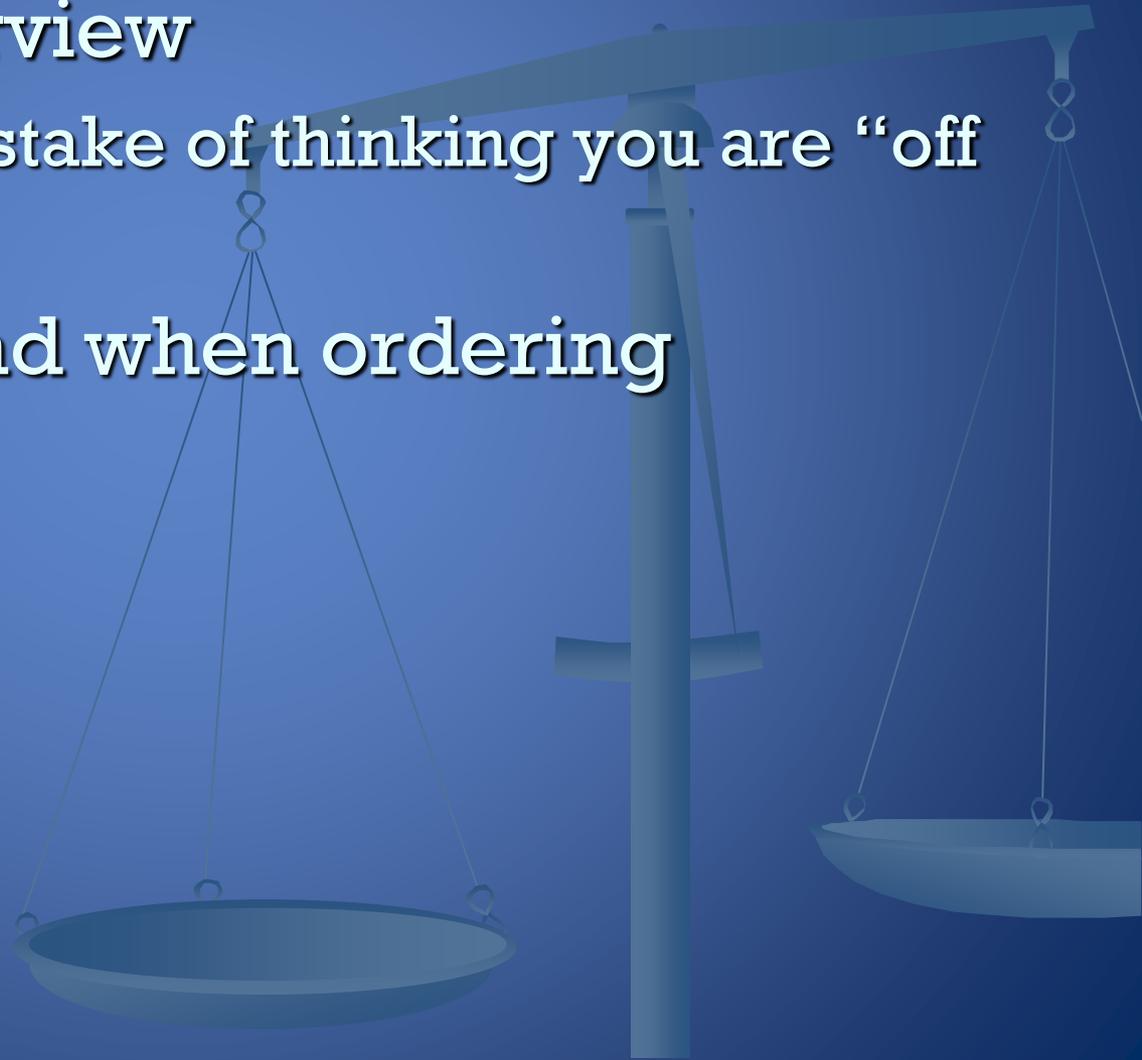


Reasons People Don't get Hired

- 
- Poor personal appearance
 - Overly aggressive
 - Inability to express information clearly
 - Lack of interest or enthusiasm
 - Lack of practice for interview
 - Nervous, lack of confidence
 - Over emphasis on money
 - Lack of courtesy and tact
 - Unwilling to start at the bottom
 - Lack of eye contact

Dining Etiquette

- Part of the interview
 - Don't make mistake of thinking you are “off the record?”
- Follow their lead when ordering

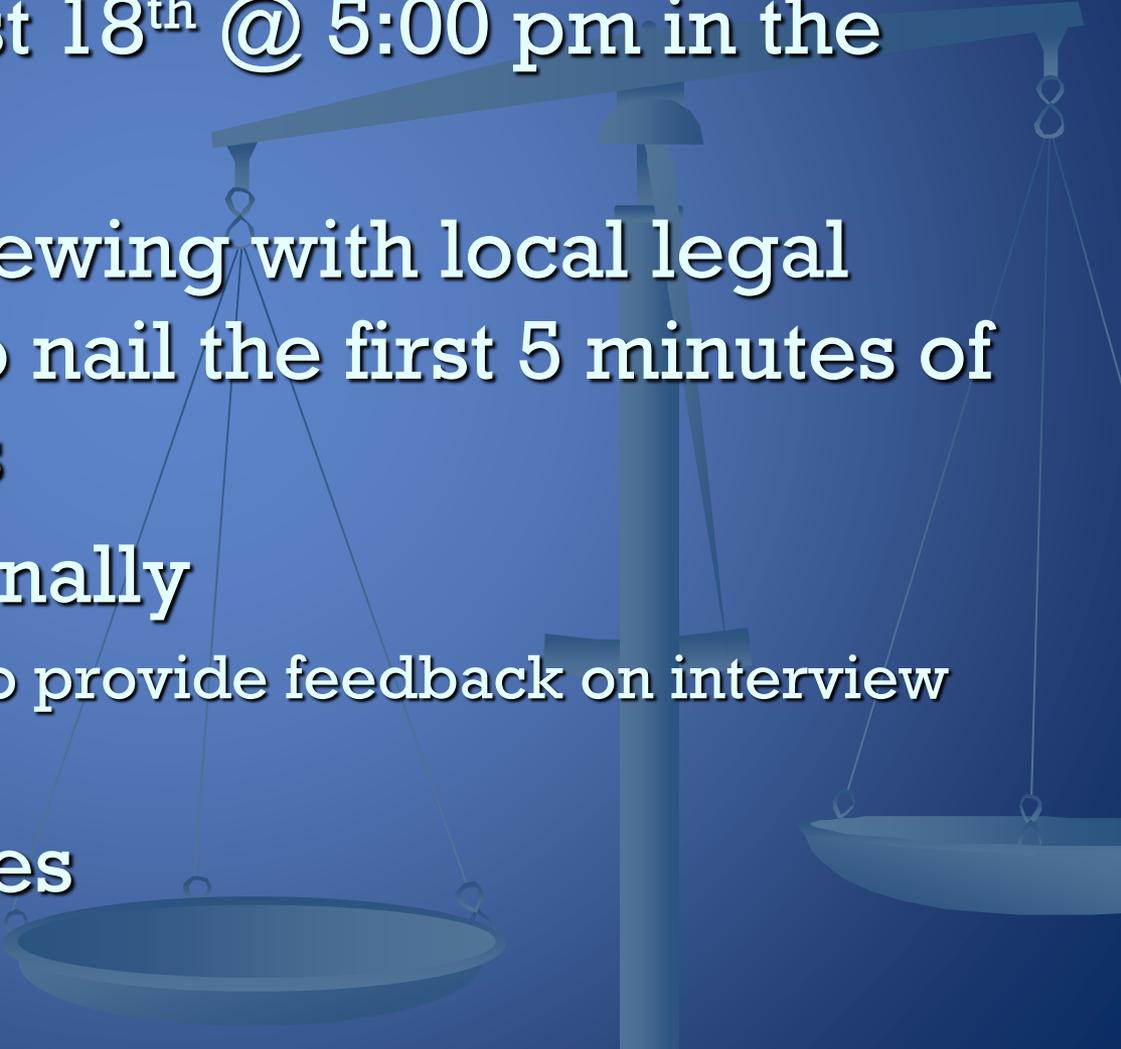


Your Turn...

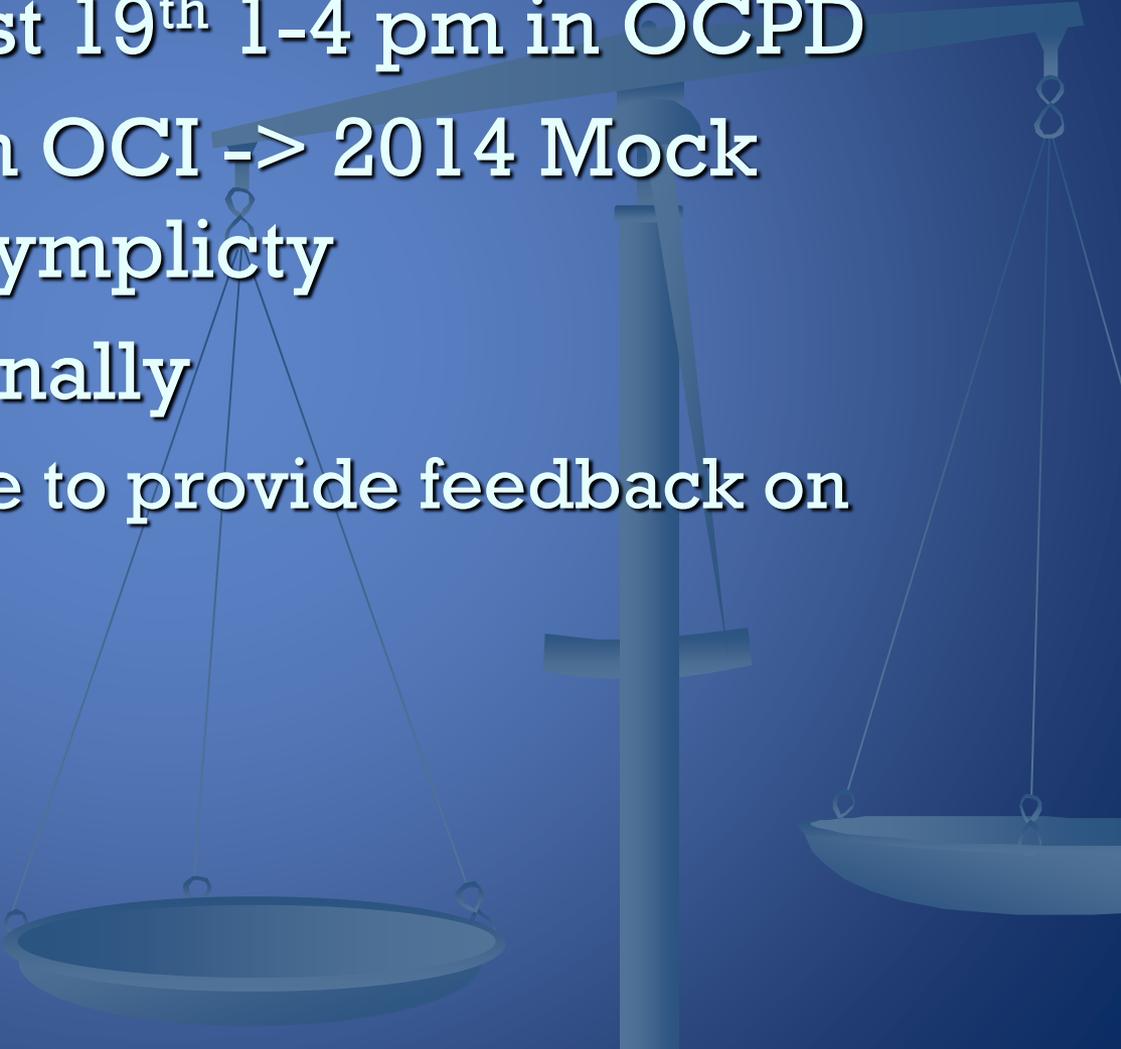
ANY QUESTIONS?



Speed Interviewing Event

- Monday, August 18th @ 5:00 pm in the Atrium
 - Practice interviewing with local legal professionals to nail the first 5 minutes of your interviews
 - Dress Professionally
 - OCPD available to provide feedback on interview attire
 - Bring 10 resumes
- 

Mock Interviewing



- Tuesday, August 19th 1-4 pm in OCPD
- Sign up through OCI -> 2014 Mock Interviews on Symplicity
- Dress Professionally
 - OCPD available to provide feedback on interview attire
- Bring a resume

Utilize Your Career & Professional Development Team

- Mock Interviews with OCPD throughout the semester
- Interview attire review

Bring on your questions!

