

Prelaw Guru

P.O. Box 17946 Seattle WA 98127 • 206-370-1496 • www.prelaw-guru.com

Making the Most of a Law School Fair or Forum

Law fairs and forums are great opportunities to talk to admissions deans, directors, and recruiters for various law school. These people are the gatekeepers for their respective law schools. Follow these step-by-step tips and you'll learn valuable information about each of your prospective law schools while also making a great impression on the admissions reps.

ONE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT

Check the law fair's web site to see which schools will be at the fair.

Make a list of the schools you're thinking of applying to.
I recommend a diverse list of 10 schools: 2 safeties, 5-6 targets and 2-3 dreams.

Get an 8.5"x11" notepad or a spiral notebook.

Write the name of one school at the top of each page. Write down 2-3 questions that you want to ask each school. You usually don't have time for more than a few questions. Leave enough space in between each question so you have room to jot down answers.

DO NOT ask questions that are already answered on the law school's web site.

DO NOT ask what their median LSAT and GPA are, whether they give out application fee waivers, or what kinds of classes they offer. All of these should be posted on the school's site.

DO ask questions that are open-ended.

DO ask questions about things you researched on their site but you still aren't clear about.

Some ideas for questions to ask:

Q: How would you describe the student community or culture at your school?

Q: What does your school have in place to foster collegiality between students?

Q: What is the faculty culture at your school?

Q: How does the dean communicate or meet with students? How often?

Q: What does your career services staff do to help your students gain an edge in the job market?

Q: What programs does your school have to support law students who are (fill-in-the-blank)...?

Q: (If the law school is located in a different city or state than where you live) What do you like most about (city)? What do you like least about (city)?

The following question can be helpful to ask if you are a "splitter": low GPA/high LSAT or high GPA/low LSAT, or if you're at the 25th percentile for either GPA or LSAT.

Q: I'm majoring in _____. My GPA is ____ and my LSAT score is _____. I know you can't tell me if I'll get in or not but I wanted to get your take on my situation. What do you think? Any tips?

THE DAY BEFORE THE EVENT

- Pick out your favorite business casual outfit and shoes. Iron your clothes. Polish your shoes. Wear nice but *comfortable* shoes—avoid brand-new shoes.
- Pack a nice-looking tote bag, large purse or messenger bag. You will want an easy-access bag to carry all your brochures and free pens. Pack your notepad of questions, a bottle of water, breath mints, phone, wallet, keys and two pens.

THE MORNING OF THE EVENT

- Eat breakfast and brush your teeth after. Don't drink coffee or smoke after you brush.
- Leave early. Remember your tote bag! Give yourself time for parking and walking to the event. I recommend arriving about 10 minutes before the fair opens.

AT THE EVENT

- Check-in at the front desk and get a map of the event. Start with safety schools first.
- SMILE, shake hands with the rep and introduce yourself. "Hi, I'm Peg. Nice to meet you." As an icebreaker, the rep will likely ask you what you're majoring in and what year you are in school. While you're conversing, avoid taking too many notes. Stay in the present, engage, listen, and make eye contact. Ask only your top two questions if there are people in line behind you. If no one's in line, then feel free to ask more questions.
- At the end, shake hands, SMILE again, and thank the rep. "Thank you—you were very helpful. It was nice meeting you." Remember to write down the rep's name or get his or her business card.
- After you're finished conversing, step away from the table. Find a spot away from the crowd and quickly jot down anything that's memorable on your pad. Do it NOW while your thoughts are still fresh. Take time to do this! You will be glad you did.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Within 24 hours, send an email to each of the reps that you met. Let him or her know that you enjoyed meeting him or her. State briefly what you appreciated learning from him or her. If you have any other questions, include them in your email. If you are going to apply to this school, let the rep know that.
- Revise your list of schools. It's normal to change your mind about some schools after attending a law fair or forum. Sometimes schools you didn't consider very seriously end up being a top pick and a dream school ends up turning you off. Feel free to revise and adjust your list of schools—it's all part of the process.

For more tips on applying to law school, visit www.prelaw-guru.com