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Career Corner

Career Tips

Interviewing Segues

By: Pamela Hyland, Assoc. Director for Career Development

During a job interview, you often need a good way to segue into the points you want to make about yourself. The graceful segue is a wonderful art.

The way to achieve the smooth segue is to know cold the points you want to make and to be alert for opportunities to move into them. Think about your own personal strengths, skills and experience, and prepare stories or evidence to illustrate them.

For example, should you be asked a tough question about your grades, you might say, "My grades are admittedly not my best selling point - what distinguishes me is the great experience I got last summer when I was able to \_\_\_\_\_." Note how gracefully you can downplay a weakness and turn it into an opportunity to talk about your strengths.

How about turning a wacky question to best advantage: "If you were a tree, what kind would you be?" You might say, "Interesting question! I'm tenacious as an advocate; I never give up working for my client, so I guess I'd be a pine tree clinging steadfastly to a cliff, even in the face of strong winds."

You can handle the interviewer who fills your interview time with chat about the firm and himself, but

doesn't leave you much time to talk about your sterling qualities. When he pauses for breath, you can interject, "How interesting! I can see how you would be interested in my experience with \_\_\_\_\_ where I learned \_\_\_\_\_."

Any interview question can be an opportunity to speak about your strengths. For example, even to an aggressive question such as, "Why did you work for the Public Defender last summer when you tell me you want to be a DA?" you might reply, "I'm interested in criminal law and I was happy to get experience going to court and doing research about criminal cases. I learned a lot from seeing how the judges react to different attorney styles and it was a great experience even though I was working for the other side. Also, seeing the daily work of that office really convinced me that I'm cut out to be a DA - I'm much happier prosecuting!"

To practice your segues, think about the questions you most dread and how you could turn them neatly into a chance to show what you can do rather than focusing on the negative. Often, employers are even more interested in the poise and self possession you display when you answer a question and the positive tone of your answers than they are in the content.

Put a positive spin on any interview question by practicing your transitions from the negative to the positive. If you can't think of a good way to do so, make an appointment with one of the CSO counselors - we are masters of the artful segue!

Want to make an appointment with a career counselor?

Call the CSO Front Desk at (415) 565-4619.

Everyday, the Career Services Office receives new listings. Log onto [HastingsCareersOnline.com](http://HastingsCareersOnline.com) and check often for new postings. Just a few highlights:

### SUMMER 2008

**ESRI** (Redlands, CA). Summer Legal Intern, Full time/10-12 weeks, **Years Required:** 1L, 2L, 3L. All applicants must be currently enrolled law students at an ABA accredited law school who have completed courses in the following areas: Contracts, Torts, Corporations/Business Transactions, M&A, Securities, Intellectual Property, Computer/Internet Law, Export Control, and/or Licensing is

### Alumni Mentor Program Orientation

Wednesday, 2/20  
12:40 – 1:30 p.m.  
Room 312, 198 Bldg.

#### Advance Sign Up Required!

Sign up on:  
[www.HastingsCareersOnline.com](http://www.HastingsCareersOnline.com)

(AMP orientations are scheduled every week)

interest in the high tech industry; corporate law; computer software, hardware, or programming; GIS; or a business, science/computer science, or engineering background is desirable. Unpaid. **Materials Requested:** Submit a resume and cover letter to: Michael Johnson, ESRI Internship Manager, at [interns@esri.com](mailto:interns@esri.com). **Deadline:** 3/31/08

**Environmental Law Foundation** (Oakland, CA). Intern. ELF's legal interns will assist in all aspects of litigation on ELF's docket. Interns will be conducting legal research and drafting memos, briefs, discovery and/or pleadings. The interns will also attend hearings and settlement meetings. Interns will work closely with a staff attorney who will supervise their work and provide feed back. Unpaid. **Years Required:** 2L. **Materials Requested:** Resume, cover letter and writing sample. **Contact:** [envlaw@envirolaw.org](mailto:envlaw@envirolaw.org). **Deadline:** 5/31/08

**First Amendment Project** (Oakland, CA). First Amendment Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the fundamental civil liberties of freedom of speech, of the press and to petition the government for a redress of grievances to its core constituency of activists, journalists and artists. **Years Required:** 1L, 2L. **Materials Requested:** Resume and cover letter. **Contact:** By mail or email: David Greene, 1736 Franklin St., 9<sup>th</sup> Fl., Oakland, CA 94612; [fap@thefirstamendment.org](mailto:fap@thefirstamendment.org). **Deadline:** 5/31/08

**Community Legal Services** (East Palo Alto). Summer Internship. Full time/10 weeks. Unpaid. Summer law student interns will work under

the supervision of Program Directors on cases in our Immigration, Housing, Predatory Lending and consumer law programs. Interns will be assigned to work in one of the agency's main program areas, namely Housing or Immigration for the duration of the internship. Interns will have extensive client contact, from initial interviews to ongoing work with our clients. Interns are responsible for many phases of legal work ranging from initial issue spotting to substantive case work under attorney supervision. Interns may be expected to conduct legal research and write legal memorandums when appropriate. Although not required, spoken and/or written Spanish language capacity is helpful. **Years Required:** 1L, 2L, 3L. **Materials Requested:** Resume, cover letter and transcript. **Contact:** By email: [Candice@clsepa.org](mailto:Candice@clsepa.org). **Deadline:** 6/14/08

### This Week's Events:

#### Non-Traditional Legal Career Options

Tuesday, 2/19  
3:40 - 4:30 p.m.  
Panel/Room F

#### Small Firm Job Search

Wednesday, 2/20  
12:40 – 1:30 p.m.  
Workshop/Room K