

# Example Interview Questions for a Legal Assistant Job

## Legal Assistant Career Interest Questions With Sample Answers

<p>Why did you decide to become a legal assistant?</p>	<p>Provide a brief yet compelling explanation of the "why" that has led you to want to work as a legal assistant, as opposed to pursuing some other kind of administrative or legal job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share a story or anecdote about what convinced you to become a legal assistant.</li><li>• Are you passionate about justice? Do you have a lifelong interest in the law?</li><li>• Do you have outstanding research skills that you want to apply to helping clients navigate legal concerns?</li></ul>
<p>Why do you want to work here as a legal assistant?</p>	<p>Your response to this question should demonstrate that you have done your research about the law firm or company, and that you have put thought into why you want to work there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If it's a brand new company, talk about your interest in helping a startup navigate legal compliance.</li><li>• If it's an established law firm that has been in business for centuries, talk about your desire to be part of a respected, traditional firm with deep roots in the community and an outstanding reputation.</li></ul>
<p>Which areas of law interest you the most?</p>	<p>Tell the interviewer what aspect of law interests you the most and what it is that you find fascinating about it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do some research about the law firm or company before you decide how you are going to answer this question.</li><li>• If their practice focuses primarily on corporate or real estate law, you probably shouldn't state that family law is your primary area of interest.</li></ul>
<p>Who is your legal hero?</p>	<p>If you're really passionate about the law, chances are, there's someone who you really look up to as a hero in the field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared to share who that is with the interviewer, and what it is about that person that makes you look up to them.</li><li>• Maybe it's one of the Supreme Court Justices or a senator or congressional representative whose name is on a law that is particularly meaningful to you.</li><li>• If you don't have a legal hero, now is a great time to look around and find one.</li></ul>

## Position Knowledge Questions With Sample Answers

<p>What is a typical day like for a legal assistant?</p>	<p>Make sure your answer reflects that you understand that legal assistants perform a wide variety of duties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your response should include things like being prepared for hectic days that require prioritizing tasks and adapting to changing needs.</li><li>• Most days probably include meeting deadlines, taking information from clients or attorneys, compiling letters and other documents, doing and summarizing legal research, preparing court filings, and more.</li></ul>
<p>What qualities are important for a legal assistant?</p>	<p>Your answer should show that you know what it takes to succeed in this type of job.</p> <p>Share examples that illustrate that you have these qualities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legal assistants need to be very organized and able to multitask, and they must consistently exhibit a professional demeanor and communicate effectively.</li><li>• Many legal matters are confidential and sensitive, so it's important for legal assistants to exercise discretion and be able to remain objective.</li></ul>
<p>What is challenging about working with attorneys?</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to make sure that you have a realistic idea of what it is like to be a legal assistant whose job is to support legal experts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sure the interviewer knows you realize that this will be a fast-paced, high-pressure work environment that involves tight deadlines and shifting priorities.</li><li>• Make it clear that you know that your job is to provide administrative support to attorneys and to help pave the way for their work to go as smoothly as possible.</li></ul>
<p>How would you handle a difficult client?</p>	<p>The interviewer will be looking to make sure you know that customer service is an important part of your job, and to get a sense of how you will react when faced with demanding or dissatisfied clients.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make it clear that you can maintain a professional demeanor, even with difficult and demanding clients.</li><li>• Explain that you'll listen to clients with empathy and communicate respectfully. Convey that you and the organization want to work with them in a way that will meet their needs.</li></ul>

## Past Experience Questions With Sample Answers

<p>Which school subject did you like the most? Why?</p>	<p>There isn't a right or wrong answer to this question. No matter what you say, though, it's a good idea to express your answer in the context of how that subject can help you succeed as a legal assistant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maybe you loved math because you are detail-oriented and like checking your work to verify accuracy.</li><li>• Maybe you loved English, especially learning how to write clearly and use proper grammar, skills that are critical to editing and proofreading legal documents.</li></ul>
<p>How has your education prepared you for this job?</p>	<p>Provide specific examples of how your education has prepared you to fulfill the duties of a legal assistant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A legal assistant's job description typically includes things like taking accurate notes at meetings, summarizing the content of conversations or meetings, conducting legal research, ensuring that documents are accurate, and organizing complex information schedules.</li><li>• Give some examples of how your experience in school taught you to use these types of skills.</li></ul>
<p>How have your past jobs prepared you for this one?</p>	<p>The way you respond to this open-ended question should demonstrate that you have put some thought into how your past work experience has prepared you to work as a legal assistant for this organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To help decide how to respond, reflect on skills you have acquired and lessons you have learned in your past work in light of what this job will require.</li><li>• Verbalize how you believe they have uniquely prepared you to succeed in the legal assistant job for which you are now interviewing.</li></ul>
<p>How do you approach prioritizing work?</p>	<p>Be prepared to give some specific examples from your past experience that illustrate that you have the ability to effectively prioritize your work, even when you are juggling multiple (or even conflicting) priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You may want to explain your approach to time management, as well as how you set deadlines and how you adapt when priorities have to be shifted unexpectedly.</li><li>• The interviewer will be looking to see how adaptable they can expect you to be on the job.</li></ul>

## Skill-Specific Legal Assistant Questions With Sample Answers

<p>How do you deal with sensitive or confidential information?</p>	<p>Rather than asking a "yes" or "no" question about whether you can keep things confidential, the interviewer will probably ask an open-ended question about confidentiality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared to give a relevant example of a situation in which you were entrusted with confidential information.</li><li>• Without revealing that information, explain what you did (and continue to do) to keep the information confidential. Emphasize that you are able to maintain confidentiality and exhibit discretion.</li></ul>
<p>How do you approach proofreading your work?</p>	<p>Because legal assistants are responsible for making sure that documents are error-free, expect to give an example of what you do to check for errors before finalizing a document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They're looking to be sure that you don't just rely on spell-check, so share any proofreading strategies you use.</li><li>• For example, maybe you read documents out loud or from back to front before finalizing them, or maybe you use a software service like Grammarly to check for syntax issues.</li></ul>
<p>How do you go about setting up a case file?</p>	<p>Since legal assistants are usually responsible for setting up and updating case files, the interviewer is probably going to ask you to walk them through the steps you would go through in order to set up or finalize a case file.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared to explain what goes in a case file, how you would go about obtaining the necessary information, how you'll organize and store it.</li><li>• You should also be able to list the various types of documents that are included in a case file.</li></ul>
<p>How strong are your computer skills?</p>	<p>Give specific examples of computer applications that you know how to use that are relevant to a law firm or legal department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List things like word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and database software, as well as legal research applications such as Westlaw or Nexis.</li><li>• Share examples of how you have used these applications and whether you have a high level of expertise with them. Be prepared to answer specific questions about how to do certain tasks in the ones you mention.</li></ul>

## Work Style Preference Questions With Sample Answers

<p>Do you prefer to work on your own or with a team?</p>	<p>Tell the truth, but keep in mind that legal assistants do not work autonomously. By definition, they are on a team because they provide assistance to one or more attorneys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Even if you prefer to work on your own, explain how this type of job fits into your preferred working style.</li><li>• If you like to work collaboratively on a team, make sure the interviewer knows that you are aware that your role is to support the attorney or legal team rather than to challenge their expertise.</li></ul>
<p>Do you prefer one project at a time or multitasking?</p>	<p>Legal assistants rarely, if ever, have the luxury of finishing one project before moving on to another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When an interviewer asks this question, they are looking to see that you will be comfortable working in the fast-paced, multitasking-oriented environment that is part of every law firm and corporate legal department.</li><li>• Be prepared to give specific examples that illustrate you are a masterful multitasker.</li></ul>
<p>How would you describe your ideal job?</p>	<p>Interviewers ask this very open-ended question to get you talking about what you'd really like a job to be like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The interviewer will be listening to get a sense of how closely the job you're interviewing for aligns with your ideal job.</li><li>• Before your interview, ponder this question in light of what's involved in this job. Make sure that the story you tell will help the interviewer realize that the job they need to fill closely resembles your dream job.</li></ul>
<p>What are your long-term career goals?</p>	<p>When an interviewer asks about career goals, they're typically looking to see if the job aligns with your interests, and if you're someone who might be interested in growing with the firm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You don't have to say that you want to be a legal assistant forever, unless that is actually your goal.</li><li>• You should ideally phrase your long-term goals in a way that indicates that you may have an interest in pursuing a long-term career with the organization in some capacity.</li></ul>