



SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: SOLO PRACTICE

General

- Are you glad you made the decision to become a solo practitioner? What has been the most rewarding aspect?
- Is there anything about working as a solo that you did not expect when you first started? What has been the most challenging aspect?
- Is there anything about your practice that you would have done differently in hindsight? Are there any personality traits that you think do/don't lend themselves to solo practice?

Daily Activities

- How do you spend most of your time?
- How do you decide to divide your limited time and energy (e.g., among legal work, marketing/business development, administrative issues, etc.)?
- What would you say is the most productive use of time in the first six months of solo practice?

Practice Details

- How do you decide what kinds of work to accept/reject? What matters do you handle/like to handle, and why?
- Do you have a view as to the merits of having a very broad practice versus branding yourself as a specialist?
- Has your focus changed since you started working as a solo (in a small firm)? Is serving as local counsel a big part of your practice?

Administrative & Other Support

- Do you do your own _____ (filing/document retention/calendaring) and if not, how/to whom do you delegate?
- Do you do all your own legal research and writing, and if not, how/to whom do you delegate? Have you ever considered joining forces with another lawyer to start a partnership?
- Do you have a network of other lawyers with whom you can bounce ideas around?
- Are there any Bar associations, organizations or networking groups that you recommend I explore? What kinds of support do you have/need/wish you had (e.g., social, administrative, intellectual, manpower)?
- Do you work "in the cloud" / virtually, and if so, what is that like in terms of running a practice?

- What technology platforms do you find critical to your practice? What do other solos you know use with good results?

Marketing & Business Development

- How did you decide to brand yourself as a ____ lawyer? How do you get your clients?
- What is your top source of business?
- Do you have any rough percentage estimates of the sources of your business?
- What marketing efforts do you find to be most/least fruitful in terms of getting clients or referrals? Have you ever gotten on a panel from the ____ court for work? Are there any similar court panels that you would either recommend or not recommend?
- What criteria do you use in deciding whether or not to represent certain clients? Are you part of a referral network?

Expenses

- How did you make the decision to locate your office ____ (in this shared space, at home, etc.)? How do you handle cash flow issues in your practice?
- Besides the obvious (salary, benefits, taxes, office space and supplies, malpractice insurance, Bar dues, others on the list above) what other expenses should a solo/small firm practitioner expect?

Billing & Collections

- How do you charge for your time? Hourly? Contingency? Flat fee? How did you decide your billing rates?
- Do you have only one rate, or do you ever discount or vary it?
- Have you found getting paid to be a challenge? How do you handle that?
- Do you have a sense of the earning range that a new solo/small firm lawyer might realistically expect for the first year or two? Five years? Ten years?