

Client Interview Competition 2019

Workshop

CORRS
CHAMBERS
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lawyers

Structure of the Competition

- In each round clients are given a confidential memorandum. Judges will be provided with a score sheet and the client's confidential facts, which shows the legal problems to be identified in the interview.
- Each team will interview their client for **15 minutes followed by a 5 minute briefing** to the judge.
- The results of rounds will be announced the day following the completion of a round.
- The decision of the Competition Officers in relation the rules or execution of the Competition will be final.
- **The first round = practice round.....Everyone's a winner!**

Instructions to Teams

- The instructions will be released to competitors **24 hours before** the round begins.
- Competitors should be dressed in **business attire** and are to report to the LSS office (Level 2) 15 minutes before their interview is due to start.
- The interview is to last no more than 15 minutes.
- Judges provide brief feedback at the conclusion of the round but are not obliged to do so.
- Judges will be timing the interview and will give a **knock** when you have **five minutes** and **one minute** left. It is advisable that you also keep time as well. Judges are entitled to impose penalties if a time limit is breached.

Example Memorandum

Memorandum – Mike/Michelle Armstrong

To: Solicitor

From: Secretary

Re: Mike/Michelle Armstrong

Date: [#]

I received a call from Mike/Michelle Armstrong who has had an issue with some weights he/she recently acquired for exercise purposes and would like some advice on. He/she also has concerns about their employment. I have set up a meeting with him/her for you.

Kind Regards,

Secretary.

Greeting the client

- Welcome and settle the client. Shake their hand. Know which one of you will be saying the opening remarks (It sounds more professional if one person does the entire introduction).
- A good formal introduction may sound similar to this:

"Hello Mr/Mrs _____, it is a pleasure to meet you. Please come in and take a seat. My name is _____ and this is my colleague _____. This meeting will run for approximately 15 minutes and any information that you tell us is confidential. As this is your first consultation with us it is free of charge, however subsequent meetings may be charged. Would you mind if we take notes during this session?"
- Take care of the administrative matters (i.e. informing your client of the procedures; payment; reassure them that the info will be kept confidential; etc.)

During the interview

- Get an overview of their problem. Find out the client's objective. What are they trying to achieve through seeking your services?
- Adopt an open-ended questioning style.
- Accommodate your client's personal demeanour — Every client is different! Your client may be emotional, loud, shy, or rude, adapt and make them comfortable.
- Keep your client on topic — Don't let the client distract you with irrelevant information.
- **WORK AS A TEAM!**

Concluding the interview

Advice

Based on the information you have acquired; you should try to advise the client at this point in the interview about the next steps they might consider taking.

NB: This should not be legal advice!

Conclusion

Summarise the facts, the legal issues etc.

TIP: It's worth writing out a chronology as the client is relaying facts. This is an easy way to spot any inconsistencies in their story and weak spots where more questioning is required

Reflection

After briefly conferring with your partner, you will discuss the merits of your case with the judge (acting as the partner of the law firm). This requires intuition regarding the matter and the motivations of the client.

TIP: if you think the case has merit, tell the partner whether you think the client has capacity to pay

Any questions

- Please email Charlotte or Sophie at clientinterview@mulss.com