How do I Conduct a Mock Interview?

Ask the same questions and evaluate the student just as you would evaluate a job candidate. However after the mock interview, share your evaluation with the student and provide candid feedback with advice for improvement.

How long?

The entire mock interview process can be conducted in 30 minutes, and is usually divided into three parts: a 2-3 minute discussion of scenario and expectations, an actual simulation of 20 minutes, and time for review and constructive suggestions.

How can I provide the most effective advice?

Try to give substantive and candid advice for improvement. While we understand that many law firm interviews include marketing information about the firm, our students have told us that firms who focus on marketing over providing interview advice make the least favorable impression.

- What should I look for? Resume
  - Professional and clear format with no grammatical or spelling errors
  - Vague or questionable entries? Gaps in employment?

- General Impressions, Articulation and Non-verbal cues
  - Firm (but not too firm) handshake?
  - Poise, confidence and eye contact vs. nervous fidgeting
  - Appropriate attire?
  - Were you able to hear and understand the candidate?
  - Did (s)he speak easily and at a conversational pace?

- Responses
  - Did the student answer the questions posed?
  - Did the student use accomplishments and achievements as a way to provide examples of important skills?
  - Did the student demonstrate a logical thought-process in making professional or personal decisions?
  - Does (s)he demonstrate an understanding of and interest in the law/practice area?

What type of feedback should I give?

- Be specific, clear and descriptive.
- Try to identify positive aspects first.
- Identify areas of possible improvement and ideas for change.
  - If the student did not answer the question you asked,
    - Explain what they missed, and what sort of answer you were expecting.
    - Why did an answer fall short? Was the answer lacking in substance? Did the answer sound rehearsed?
If you failed to get a clear sense of the student’s interest in law school or the practice of law, explain why and also why that is important.

Did you feel like you had a conversation, or conducted a cross-examination?
  - Encourage the student to add more details to their responses to add interest to their descriptions, spurring the opportunity for follow up questions.

Would you remember the candidate?
  - If the answers seemed prosaic, encourage the student to add personal details and experiences, and tell a story.