

Do you know what you want to do with your JD?

It's time to self-assess!

Know Yourself

- Your interests, personality strengths, values (political, social, religious), need for autonomy / support, lifestyle needs

What are your interests? Review your resume

- What volunteer work are you attracted to? What academic subjects excite you?
- What issues / topics do you like to read / talk about? Take a personality test; use a book or other resources that discuss career options for your personality type (e.g., Meyers-Briggs; *Do What You Are*; *Career Match*)

What are your Personality Strengths?

- Do you want to have more client contact? Yes → in-house counsel, small firm, administrative law, bankruptcy, employment, immigration, entertainment, family law
- Do you want to have more colleague contact? Yes → larger firm, government, environmental, energy, healthcare, insurance, IP, municipal, real estate, appellate litigation
- Do you enjoy public speaking? Debate? → litigation, general counsel
- Do you like to work alone? Yes → appellate practice, judicial clerkship, judiciary
- Do you prefer working with ideas more than working with people? Yes → appellate practice, judicial clerkship, environmental, healthcare, insurance, intellectual property
- Do you like to read and construe codes / regulations? Yes → administrative law, bankruptcy, corporate, employment, environmental, energy, healthcare, municipal, tax, appellate litigation

What are your values?

- Is it important to feel like you are helping society with your job? / Do you want to advocate for causes you believe in?
- Do you enjoy an intellectual challenge?
- Do you want to work for a well-known firm and/or earn a larger/income?

What are your needs for Autonomy / Support?

- Do you want a lot of responsibility and autonomy early in your career? Yes → small firm, solo practice, district attorney, public defender, JAG
- Do you want a more formal setting? Yes → large firm, government
- Do you want a more casual setting? Yes → small firm, public defender, solo practice
- Do you want access to more resources? Yes → large firm, mid-sized firm, government
- Do you want more personal interaction? Yes → ask the employer during the interview to see how much client and colleague interaction you would have
- Do you want to work independently? Yes → solo practice

What are your lifestyle needs?

- How much time do you want for friends, family, hobbies, etc.?
- How much control do you want over when you work and when you have time for other pursuits? How much money do you need to live comfortably?
- Geographically, where do you want to live? Do you want to work for an employer whose name people recognize?

Once you hone in on a few areas of interest...

- Attend attorney-panel events on campus, bar association practice area events, and arrange informational interviews with attorneys and alumni.
- Explore practice areas that seem appealing during school or over the summer
- Join student groups in intriguing practice areas.
- Compete in writing competitions.

Practice Area Chart

Practice Area	Appear before Administrative Agencies	Client vs. Colleague focus	Regulatory / Statutory / Compliance focus	Negotiation Heavy	Big or small firm focus?	Regionally Focused	Litigation heavy /adversarial	Other Perks / Cons	Emotional	Transactional / Contract Interpretation / Drafting Focus	Legal Research & Writing heavy	Good for Introvert or Extrovert ?	Project based	Finance based
Administrative	✓	High	✓	✓		DC, State capitals		Near center of power	No	✓				
Bankruptcy		High		✓			✓		No	✓				
Corporate		High	✓			NY- finance / banks, CA-venture capital		Positive happy client interactions, Collaborative, sophisticated parties	No	✓			✓	✓
Employment		High	✓	✓	Big		✓		Yes					
Immigration		High			Small, Big Cos use Big Firms			Feel good, reunite families	Yes		✓			
Environmental	✓	Low	✓				✓		No		✓			
Energy	✓	High	✓	✓		Texas, NY	Can be		No	✓			✓	
Entertainment		High		✓		CA, NY		Egos of stars	No	✓		Extrovert		
Family Law		High		✓	small		✓	At center of most important part of someone's life	Yes					
Healthcare		Low	✓			DC, State capitals	✓		Sometimes	✓				
Insurance		Low					✓	Ability to highly specialize, insurance company's position may be distasteful	No	✓		Introvert enjoys detail		
Intellectual Property	✓	Depends		✓		DC, Silicon Valley, Boston, other tech areas	✓	Patent Prosecution- help inventors get patents; Litigation can be very contentious as company's invention rides on litigation	No	✓			✓	
International trade Law	✓	High				DC	✓	Overlaps with IP	No					
Litigation-General		High					✓	Always learning something new	Maybe			Extrovert		
Municipal	✓	High	✓	✓	Small			Serve as in-house counsel for your client, generalist	No	✓			✓	✓
Real Estate		Medium		✓				Public policy focus	No	✓		Introvert	✓	✓
Tax		Low	✓				✓	Complex, ever changing	No	✓	✓	Introvert	✓	
Appellate Litigation			✓			LA, NY, DC focus	✓	Good for those who want to focus on a few issues	No		✓	Introvert	✓	