

On Campus Recruiting — 1979

On some days the line begins forming as early as 10:30 a.m. although sign-up sheets are not posted until 11:55 a.m. On these popular days, when the appointed hour arrives, fifty or sixty second and third year students will be waiting for the opportunity to arrange a brief interview with one or more of the employers visiting the Law School two weeks later. The sign-up session ends more quickly than it begins, and within a few minutes the crowd has dispersed for another day.

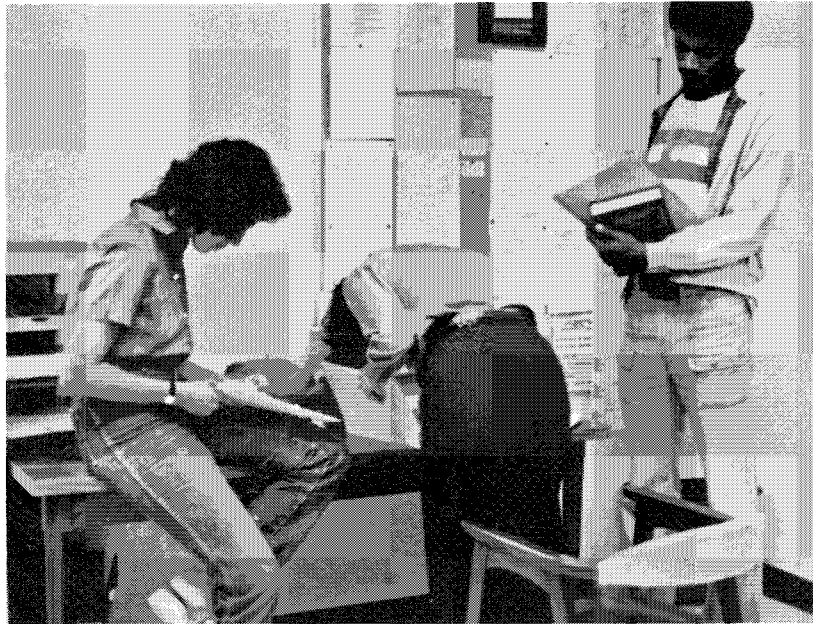
This scene is repeated each day for at least the five or six peak weeks in fall interviewing season. On an average day during this period, four employers will conduct recruiting interviews at the Law School. More than 100 individual interviews will be conducted, some students interviewing each of the employers during that day. This is the showiest part of placement although in any given year no more than one-third of our graduates will be placed as a result of on-campus interviewing.

The number of employers visiting our school this fall has set a new record. With first semester interviews continuing the number approaches 120. Included are many of the countries most prominent law firms, governmental agencies and in a growing number corporate law departments. Some on-campus recruiting is done by small Wisconsin law firms, but during the fall interviewing season private practice is represented primarily by large law firms from around the country. They come from Honolulu, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Philadelphia, Washington, New York, Chicago and Minneapolis. They look for a few outstanding third year students but concentrate their efforts on second year law students who will serve as summer clerks. More and more employers are relying on these summer clerkships as their principal means of recruiting permanent employees. Over the course of the summer employers have an unusual opportunity to observe the work product of the potential employee as well as to form an

opinion about how that individual will fit into their practice.

On the day of the employers visit, candidates wait anxiously for their appointed times. Every half hour or twenty minutes the interviewer welcomes a new applicant. There are a wide variety of interview techniques, but the most common approach is for the interviewer to question the applicant about their training background and interests, provide some information about who they are and what they are looking for and finally allow the candidate an opportunity to ask questions. A few employers will feel confident enough of their impressions of the applicant during these brief interviews to make a decision on the spot. For most candidates, however, the best that can be hoped for is an invitation to a second interview usually held in the office of the employer. While the expense of sending an interviewer to a number of campuses is substantial, the process of bringing applicants into the office tends to be even more expensive. If a large firm anticipates hiring 15 to 20 summer clerks, they may invite twice that number for all day interviews in a city far removed from Madison. One East Coast firm estimates that it spends in excess of \$100,000 per quarter in recruiting activities, much of this expended to bring candidates for on-site interviewing.

If each of the employers recruiting on campus sought only top grades, there would not be enough qualified candidates to satisfy the demand and justify the continued expense. Most employers, however, are more sophisticated in their recruiting than merely to demand outstanding grades. Grades are and will remain one of the criteria in the selection process, but the difference in ability between a person in the upper third of the class and one in the upper ten percent is difficult to measure. Consequently employers have other criteria to use. One of these is to measure the candidates writing ability. Those students who have published in the Law Review are presumed to have such



ability, while many others prove their ability by writing done in the course of employment or as part of their class work. Part time and summer employment leads to another measure of the candidate: practical skills. While large firms do not place particular emphasis on practical skills, they do find candidates' exposure to practice as at least a measure of their practice interests. Finally, and in many cases most importantly, the personality of the candidate as it

is shown during the interviewing process is very important to the potential employer. It is absolutely essential that the applicant demonstrate an ability to relate to the interviewer and to other employees. Given two otherwise equally qualified applicants, naturally the employer will seek that individual who will be most pleasant to work with.

It is accurate to say at least when referring to the large firms and agencies that do on campus

recruiting, that every student has an equal chance for employment. There are no longer discernible prejudices for or against any particular group of students. Each competes for positions on his or her own merits. This is the only way in which the employer can be certain of finding the best employee, since that person can exist among any of the groups making up the student body of the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Fall Semester 1979-80 Interviews

Type of Employer		Locations	
Accounting firms	5	Wisconsin	49
Corporations	11	Milwaukee	23
Law firms	88	Madison	7
District attorneys	2	Out of State	
Legal aid	2	Illinois	20
Federal government	11	District of Columbia	13
		Minnesota	8
		Michigan	6
		California	4
		New York	3
		Ohio, Iowa and Colorado	2 each
		Arizona, Texas, Connecticut,	
		Hawaii, Pennsylvania, Nevada	
		and Georgia	1 each

