



# Core Competencies in the Workplace: How to Hit the Ground Running With Your First Summer Legal Position

# Introduction

[www.quarles.com](http://www.quarles.com)



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# Core Competencies

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- What does “core competencies” mean?
- Why are they important?
- How do you figure out your employer’s core competencies
- Tips to impress (starting with summer jobs).



# What are the “core competencies”?

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- Every employer/firm is different
- Not all-inclusive (merely a beginning road-map)
- Business Drivers
- Skills
- Personal Attributes
  - Being a lawyer is not all about the legal stuff



# “Core Competencies” Skills

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1. The “no-brainers”
  - a. Legal acumen
  - b. Analytic ability
  - c. Putting good product on paper (writing)
  - d. Verbal skills
  - e. Diverse portfolio
  - f. Do not check out



# “Core Competencies” Skills Cont.

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## 2. The not-so-obvious

### a. Client/business/industry savvy

- (i) Means different things at different points in your career
- (ii) Strong correlation to business development

### b. Ability to supervise/delegate

## 3. Value

- a. Especially important in current economic climate



# “Core Competencies” Personal Attributes

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- Teamwork
- Judgment
- Ownership
- Curiosity
- Loyalty
  - Confidentiality



# Why are the “core competencies” important?

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- For you:
  - Hiring
  - Advancement
  - Fulfillment
- For your employer:
  - Success – individually and the organization
  - Goodwill in the community
  - Career development





# How do you figure out your employer's "core competencies"?

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- Orientation
- Posted on-line (pre-interview tip)
- Posted on the internal internet (after you start your job)
- Talk to partners/associates at your firm
  - Initiative and questions
- Evaluations



# Tips to Impress – Summer Associate

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- Strong Work Ethic
- Positive Attitude
  - Be sincere
  - Humility
    - Goes both ways (for you and the organization)
  - Confidence (show it off in the right ways)
- Communicate
  - Colleagues (other summer associates)
  - Colleagues (other attorneys)
  - Support Staff (paralegals, assistants)
  - Recruiting coordinators



# Tips to Impress – Summer Associate Cont.

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- Responsibility
  - Ownership over your projects
  - Meet deadlines
  - Ability to balance work/social/family obligations
    - These are not going away as you start your career



# Tips to Impress – First Post-Law School Gig

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- Continue above
- Challenge your comfort zone
  - Presentations
  - Projects
  - Go the extra mile
- Develop substantive knowledge in niche areas
- Identify mentors and use them
- Bar Service: ABA, State Bar, County Bar

