



CDO: Resources for Researching Practice Areas - WIP Prep

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As you know, the primary means for obtaining a large law firm summer 2021 position, EIW (Early Interview Week), has been moved from July to January (at law firms' request) and renamed WIP (Winter Interview Program).

However, there are some things you can do to prepare for participating in WIP before classes begin, including clarifying your practice area interests. Along with geographic preference, it tends to be among the most important factors students consider in determining which employers to pursue. Moreover, firms expect summer job candidates to be thinking seriously about the type of law they would like to practice and many (though not all) ask about your practice area interests and the reason(s) for those interests. Ideally, you will be able to point to prior experiences on your resume that support your reasoning. Your interests need not be overly specific and limiting, but, at a minimum, you should be prepared to express a preference for litigation vs. transactional work as well as the basis for that preference.

Here are some resources that may help clarify your practice area interests:

1. Major, Lindsey & Africa's [Practice Area Summaries](#)
2. Chambers Associate [Practice Areas Summaries](#)
3. Vault's Career Insider's Practice Perspectives: Vault's Guide to Legal Practice Areas
4. Vault's Guide to Law Firm Summer Associate Programs & Interviewing
5. Vault's "How to Research Law Practice Areas" and "How to Find Law Firms By Practice Area"

Berkeley Law subscribes to Vault, so you are able to access the last three listed resources [here](#). (There's also a quick "Access Vault" link on the bottom right of the CDO homepage.) You'll need to enter your CalNet UserID and passphrase at the authentication screen and then create an account in Vault if you haven't used it yet.

We've gathered other practice area exploration resources on the [Explore Private Sector Careers page](#) of our website [remember the general login is cdoaccess]

Once you have chosen a practice area or areas, it will be an important part of your employer research to determine whether your target employers actually practice in those areas. You will also need to have a sense for the extent of those practices relative to other practice areas that exist at the firm. A law firm's own website as well as the [NALP Directory of Legal Employers](#) contain information about the number of attorneys in each firm's practice areas. If there are only a few lawyers practicing in your chosen area, there may not be sufficient demand for hiring a summer associate to work in that area in a given year.

The NALP Directory will also be useful in identifying firms in your chosen location that practice in areas in which you are interested. We will be sending out more information about conducting employer research soon. In the meantime, do not hesitate to reach out to one of the private sector attorney-counselors if you have any questions.

NOTE: You can opt not to receive law firm related announcements by replying to this email with such a request.

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