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5 Essential Interview Questions for
CORPORATE COUNSEL

Even the most skilled interviewers can have difficulty assessing Corporate Counsel candidates if they don't know what to ask. No matter what the scope of the Corporate Counsel position, these five questions offer important insight into the competency of your candidates.

one

What types of matters require you to seek outside counsel?

- Is the candidate making the most of existing resources?
- How does the candidate prioritize tasks to meet deadlines and stay within budget?
- How well does the candidate look for ways to reduce costs where possible?

two

Discuss the most complex legal issues you have faced. What was your strategy for solving the problems and what was the outcome?

- How has the candidate worked with key stakeholders to develop strategy?
- If the topic was unfamiliar, how did the candidate research it?
- Did the candidate provide an industry-specific example with a positive outcome?

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three — How have you helped to control costs or reduce outside spending in the law department?

- Did the candidate offer concrete examples of how he or she reduced costs?
- Did the candidate use benchmarking practices to compare legal spending at companies of similar size?

four — What has your interaction been with various regulators?

- What was the nature of the requests the candidate received from regulators?
- Did the candidate respond to them in a timely manner?

five — What is your risk tolerance?
Have you made a legal decision you have come to regret?

- Did the candidate provide an industry-specific example?
- How did the candidate handle the fallout of that decision?
- Was the candidate able to honestly assess what went well and what could have been handled more effectively?

An interview that includes these five questions should give you a more comprehensive understanding of your candidate's key competencies, but these are not the only important questions to ask. Any effective assessment should also cover questions that reveal behavioral traits, such as loyalty, honesty and integrity, as well as leadership ability.

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