

## **Interview Assessment #2**

**Name of Professional:** Rebecca Whitehouse

**Profession/Title:** Business Immigration Lawyer, Solo Practice

**Business/Company Name:** Law Offices of Rebecca S. Whitehouse

**Date of Interview:** Friday, September 29th

**Assessment:**

My second informational interview was with an Immigration Lawyer in Plano named Ms. Rebecca Whitehouse. From the interview, I was really able to gain an idea of what it's like to work in immigration, so in conjunction with the government. Additionally, I really got a feel for being self-employed in a solo practice, because Ms. Whitehouse works completely independently with only one assistant. I was able to discern a lot from this interview, probably even more so than my first one with Ms. Armstrong because I really felt like it was a completely different environment and her work was so different from that of a family and divorce attorney. I really wanted the opportunity to meet with her, because I feel like my original plan with ISM this year was to pursue nonprofit law, and when I found that to be challenging I decided to focus more on human rights law, and immigration goes really well in conjunction with that.

From the interview, I was able to ascertain that as much as I respect immigration lawyers and the work they do, and as much as I really enjoyed meeting with Ms. Whitehouse, I don't think choosing a completely independent solo mentor will be the best path for me to take this year in ISM. If I could find a larger firm that focuses on immigration, I will still maybe consider that as a path, however a solo practice seems like it won't give me as much knowledge about professional environments as a larger group with more people. I really feel like working with other people, not just one solo lawyer, will be like having a whole firm of mentors. Additionally, I didn't realize that Ms. Whitehouse doesn't even come into her office everyday for work. Because she is more of a freelance immigration attorney, she is often able to work from home and only rents out the office she is located in for a few times that she comes in every week and for when

new clients or people like me want to meet with her for an interview. I was able to realize through this that I would really like more of a traditional work environment this year for ISM.

I learned so much about immigration through this interview as well. Because of the diversity of the area, she doesn't even go to Dallas that much because there are so many highly educated people from India and China that are trying to gain work visas and citizenships to work in the suburbs of Dallas. Also, she said that she likes to call herself a "business immigration" lawyer to take some of the stigma away from an "immigration" lawyer, which I thought was really fascinating. I also learned that she does actually work with larger companies a lot because there is so much outsourcing in modern-day businesses, so a large part of her job is helping other companies get their employees valid residency in the United States.

Ms. Whitehouse also did touch on the difficulty working with the government. She said that for working as many decades as she had, she saw how with different administrations the process of working with the federal government varied greatly, and that right now especially, and over the last few years, immigration has become increasingly contentious of a job and for the immigrants themselves.

Overall, I really enjoyed the interview with Ms. Whitehouse and got a lot from it. I was able to come upon the knowledge that a solo immigration practice like hers might not be exactly what I want to shadow this year, but it was still incredibly fascinating to learn about and very informative. Through this I have truly developed more skills interviewing and talking with professionals and gained valuable insight that will help me further my ISM journey this year.