

Interview Assessment #4

Name of Professional: Shanin Turner

Profession/Title: Family and Divorce Lawyer

Business/Company Name: The Wright Firm, L.L.P.

Date of Interview: Wednesday, October 25th

Assessment:

My fourth interview with a professional was with Ms. Shanin Turner, a divorce attorney that works for The Wright Firm with offices all over North Texas. It was definitely the most spontaneous that I had scheduled so far, but I still learned a lot nonetheless. I called her a few weeks ago, when I was getting nervous about the looming deadline to have interviews finished, and at the last minute she fit me in because she had a really slim open window of when I could interview. This really gave me a sense of how busy attorneys, and professionals in general, but I'm still very glad I was able to speak with her.

Ms. Turner had a really interesting background coming into family law, because she used to work as a teacher in Plano ISD before deciding to take the LSAT and attend law school to represent teachers. From there, she came into divorce law and has really enjoyed it since. I thought her 'origin story' of coming into law was one of the most interesting I've heard so far because most of the other lawyers I've talked to had the intention to become lawyers pretty early on, and it wasn't a decision that they made later in their career, like Ms. Turner. She also saw lots of parallels with being an elementary school teacher and a family lawyer, which I found really funny. She spoke in a really matter-of-fact way and was really different to interview.

I thought that it was interesting that she worked with a larger firm, because some of the other attorneys I've interviewed have been solo lawyers, which was one of the reasons I contacted Ms. Turner in the first place. That being said, it did seem a little more private than Ms. Armstrong's, for example, larger firm in Dallas, KoonsFuller. Comparing her practice to that of some other lawyers that I've interviewed again, she

seemed to take on more 'family' cases in 'family and divorce law'. Speaking to her, I really got the feeling that she always tried to represent children in her cases and dealt with a lot of adoption and custody aspects of family cases. As far as the actual firm, it surprised me to learn that the Frisco branch of The Wright Firm was actually really comparable in size to the Dallas one, with the same number of active attorneys at both. I thought this was so interesting because usually it seems like the Dallas firms are always the biggest with smaller, satellite firms in the suburbs of the city. I like the idea of not having to drive all the way to Dallas, but it still didn't seem as professionally prominent as KoonsFuller, for example.

Overall, it was a really good interview that I got a lot out of. She was able to provide me with new information on how different people all come to law in different ways, but that they can still work for successful firms happily. As far as her experience working in family law, it still seemed to mirror that of lots of other family lawyers, in that the line between 'friend' and 'professionalism' was something Ms. Turner stressed could be a problem and that time as a lawyer is valuable, but she is often very busy. It was great getting to meet with her and was able to take a lot away from the experience as a whole.