

LEGAL RÉSUMÉ CHECKLIST

This checklist highlights some of the common features and frequent errors found in résumés sent to traditional legal employers.

General Matters

- ___ Heading includes your name, address, telephone number and business appropriate email address
- ___ Résumé is formatted in a conservative and traditional manner and on white, off-white, or very light gray heavy bond paper
- ___ The font and font size are easy to read and consistent throughout the résumé
- ___ Résumé is a single page unless you are a returning professional
- ___ Your name and “Page 2” is included at the top of the second page if two pages are absolutely required
- ___ Your references are listed on a separate sheet of paper and formatted to match the résumé

Education Section

- ___ All schools where degree conferred are listed in reverse chronological order
- ___ List the degree earned or expected, the month and year you graduated or will graduate, and the location of the school (city and state)
- ___ Activities and honors are strategically chosen and are listed underneath each school
- ___ Class rank is on your résumé if you are in the top 33% of your law school class
- ___ GPA is either included in all of the education sections or one of them

Experience Section

- ___ Include relevant work experiences including internships, paid or summer work
- ___ For each job you list, include the name of the employer, your job title, the location of employment (city and state), and the dates of employment
- ___ All descriptions of the work performed begin with action verbs
- ___ Present tense is used when describing the job you currently hold and past tense when describing former jobs

- Work descriptions clearly convey what you did, focusing on your contributions rather than the employer's work

Skills or Language(s) Section

- This section highlights ONLY significant skills
- All languages listed include level of fluency

Interests or Community Activities Section

- This section highlights ONLY significant interests and activities
- This section highlights ONLY interests that you are prepared to discuss in a professional manner

Proofreading

- Read the résumé aloud, on paper and digitally
- Have someone else proofread your résumé
- Ask an Ovadia CP&P Office adviser to review your résumé before submitting it to Symplicity or other job opportunities

Review & Update

- Remember to update your résumé after each semester to reflect any new and important academic information
- Remember to update your résumé with each not job, clinic, or internship you participate in

Even with a simple update, it makes sense to have your résumé reviewed in order to catch any small discrepancies that are easy to miss.

It is wise to keep your résumé updated at all times as you never know when someone will ask for it. By keeping it updated you will not make sloppy mistakes and you will be able to follow up immediately with potential employers.

ACTION VERBS FOR RESUME DESCRIPTIONS

accelerated	coordinated	handled	procured
accomplished	corrected	helped	programmed
accrued	counseled	identified	prohibited
achieved	counted	implemented	projected
adapted	created	improved	promoted
addressed	credited	incorporated	proposed
adjusted	critiqued	indexed	provided
administered	dealt	initiated	published
advised	decided	influenced	purchased
allocated	defined	innovated	pursued
analyzed	delegated	inspected	qualified
answered	delivered	installed	ranked
appeared	demonstrated	instructed	rated
applied	described	insured	received
appointed	designed	interpreted	recommended
appraised	determined	interviewed	reconciled
approved	developed	introduced	recruited
arbitrated	devised	investigated	regulated
arranged	devoted	involved	related
assessed	diagnosed	issued	replaced
assigned	directed	joined	replied
assisted	discussed	kept	revamped
assured	distributed	launched	reviewed
attended	documented	learned	revised
audited	drafted	leased	scheduled
awarded	earned	lectured	selected
bought	edited	led	served
briefed	encouraged	licensed	serviced
brought	endorsed	listed	set
budgeted	enlarged	logged	solved
calculated	enlisted	maintained	sought
cataloged	ensured	managed	spearheaded
chaired	entered	matched	specified
changed	established	measured	started
classified	estimated	mediated	streamlined
closed	evaluated	met	strengthened
coached	examined	modified	submitted
collected	expanded	monitored	substituted
combined	expedited	motivated	suggested
commented	experienced	moved	summarized
communicate	experimented	named	supervised
compared	explained	negotiated	surveyed
completed	explored	observed	tackled
composed	expressed	opened	targeted
computed	extended	operated	taught
conceived	filed	ordered	tested
concluded	financed	organized	toured
conducted	focused	oversaw	trained
considered	forecasted	participated	translated
constructed	formulated	perceived	transported
consulted	fostered	performed	traveled
continued	found	persuaded	turned
contracted	gathered	planned	updated
controlled	graded	prepared	visited
converted	granted	presented	worked
convinced	guided	processed	wrote

RÉSUMÉ DOs and DON'Ts

DO:

- Customize your résumé for different employers, highlighting experiences relevant to that particular employer.
- Include your class rank if you are in the top 33%.
- Highlight your achievements and quantify your efforts using concrete and specific terms. For example, instead of “drafted appellate briefs,” it is better to write “drafted successful Third Circuit brief.”
- For electronically submitted applications, make sure your résumé transmits as you have designed it and still prints as one page. It is a good idea to submit your résumé as a PDF to protect your résumé format.
- Upload your résumé as a Word document into Symplicity for review by an adviser from the Ovadia CP&P Office.
- Check for consistency within the résumé. If you spell out the name of the month in your first job description, you should spell out all months. If you list a job title, the organization, the location and your dates of employment in one job description, this information, in this order, should be provided for each position.
- Highlight the positive, but *be accurate*. Do not exaggerate or embellish.
- Designate volunteer/community work if applying for public interest positions, if significant, or to demonstrate a commitment to a geographic region. Public interest employers consider evidence of an applicant's commitment to public service very important.

DON'T:

- Do not include an "Objective" section. This information on a résumé limits its versatility and is more properly addressed in a cover letter.
- Do not use personal pronouns such as "I", "My", etc. Your descriptions should be brief and to the point. They need not read like a sentence.
- Do not list personal information such as marital status, age, health, etc. This type of information should not play a role in hiring decisions.
- Do not use abbreviations (except for states and U.S.).