

## The Elle Woods Approach? Not So Fast

By Emily Sanderson



Everyone seeks to beat the competition in a job search, whether by receiving the highest grades, being a published author, or having worked at a prestigious law firm where they received excellent reviews. Attorney Resume recommends the traditional route of submitting a well-crafted resume and cover letter to a firm you may have connections with or one which you contacted by phone. Firms that hire want a superstar, but what they want more is someone who will make the firm look like a superstar. Where professionalism is important, sincerity and humility are key. The Elle Woods approach in the movie *Legally Blonde*, where the Valley girl used a sexy video as part of her application for Harvard Law School, may have worked on a Hollywood set, but in the real world this approach doesn't work.

So like, you've seen *Legally Blonde*, right? Well, something similar to Valley girl Elle Woods' using a colorful and sexy video as part of her application for Harvard Law School has been attempted by an applicant for a Wall Street job, but he failed.

"There's a fine line between getting recognition and turning people off," said Michael King, an executive recruiter for Wall Street, as reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Aleksey Vayner, a Yale undergraduate, submitted a cover letter and resume to UBS AG and included a link to his motivational video, where Vayner's voice is heard over images of him playing tennis, lifting weights, skiing, ballroom dancing, and, ultimately, breaking a tower of bricks with his bare hand, according to the Wall Street Journal.

Elle Woods' approach worked in Hollywood, where she had access to excellent lighting, sound editing, fantastic costumes, and the opinion of a motion picture director, not to mention scripted roles for the Harvard admissions committee, but it probably wouldn't work in the real world.

News traveled fast online about Vayner's video, which was originally reported by the media in October 2006, and now he is pursuing a lawsuit, claiming that his privacy was violated. Email forwarding and coverage by blogs such as IvyGateBlog.com, Gawker.com, and Dealbreaker.com assisted in sending the news item throughout Wall Street, the U.K., Greece, France, and Canada. Presently, UBS is looking into whether his email was inappropriately forwarded to someone outside of the company, the Wall Street Journal reported.

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Remember: firms may want a superstar, but they also want someone who will make them look like a superstar more. More than what a video could provide, firms want to know the details about you up front. They want to see your transcripts and letters of recommendation. They want to see a list of representative transactions, if you have one. Most of all, sincerity and humility are key.