

## Drafting Legal Resumes

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Legal resumes are challenging to write, and demand a lot of expertise in conveying the best of what you have in the most professional, yet appealing way. Whether you're still in law school or a seasoned pro, the resume is the most important document in your legal career. Here are some tips which can aid you in building your legal resume.

First and foremost, legal resumes should have the four characteristics or four C's of writing:

1. **Consistent**—Be consistent with your formatting, style, and wording
2. **Concise**—Be concise, and do not write long tales about your achievements
3. **Clear**—Be sure your resume is readable and makes perfect sense, even at a glance
4. **Complete**—A complete resume is a must, for the employers to appropriately evaluate you

### Formatting

- Use standard fonts for writing the resume. Stick to fonts such as Arial, Times New Roman, and Garamond etc...
- Do not use a number of font sizes throughout your resume. Stick to no more than 2 or 3 different sizes of the same font.

- Break up paragraphs with bullets, the plain ones. This also makes for quicker and easier reading. Do not make use of Wingdings or complicated bullets in your resume.
- Use space effectively so that you can give your prospective employer's eye a break and draw attention to certain sections.
- Whether you use hyphens or dashes, be sure to remain consistent.
- Align your dates and position titles in a particular column to facilitate better readability.

### Writing

- Use powerful action words to assert yourself throughout your legal resume. Use active voice instead of passive voice. Tailor your resume to the specific legal employer. Likewise, tailor it to the position you are seeking in the relevant practice area.
- Be careful with abbreviations; use them only when it is very important.
- Guide your reader with clear section headings.
- Keep your descriptions of jobs and activities short to minimize reading time.
- Use proper names for all companies, job positions, and schools you want to mention in the resume.

## Content

- Include an email address that is used solely for professional reasons. The domain names should sound professional too.
- Type your name on your resume like you want it to appear professionally.
- List any languages that you speak, even if they do not directly relate to the legal job description.
- Include any major law publications you may have authored.
- Include old jobs on your resume though irrelevant to the position, but keep them short and terse.
- List all education you have had and explain how it will benefit the target position.
- Never leave time gaps, since that will make employers apprehensive about your activities during that time.
- Don't lie in your resume, be truthful, and market yourself according to your real abilities.
- Proofread your resume several times or give it to an editor or friend to avoid glaring mistakes.

## Presentation

- Print your resume on professional resume paper and produce a quality printout.
- Don't forget matching envelopes to go with your resume and for mailing them later.
- If you are submitting documents electronically, send them as PDF files, if possible.

## Conclusion

Keep your resume updated, so you can send it out at any moment. Also, by updating it every 6 months or so, you will not forget important accomplishments that should be added in your legal resume. Finally, sharpen your skills and experience as you march forward in your legal career so that you can update your achievements the next time around in your legal resume.