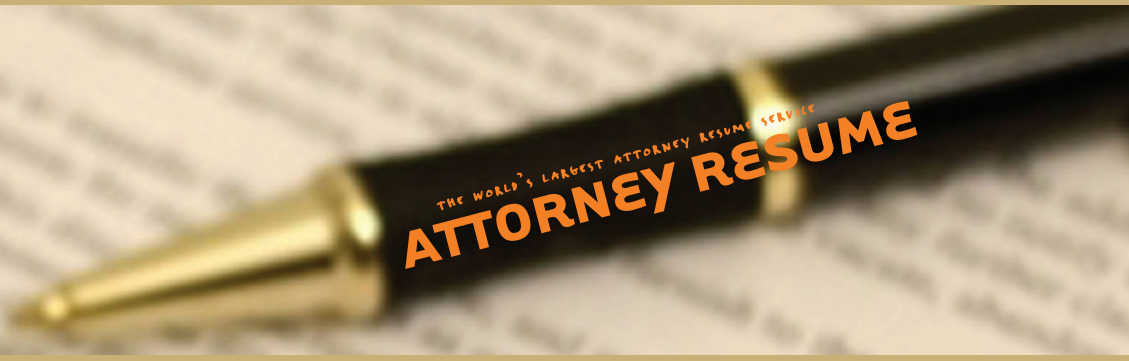


100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



There is no such thing as the perfect resume.

Every employer has their own unique likes and dislikes when it comes to resume formatting, so there is no secret resume-writing formula that automatically guarantees success.

A resume must be at least one page in length, but it can be more than one page if necessary. If it runs long, try to keep the resume on two pages.

A resume should always be accompanied by a cover letter.

A cover letter should never exceed one page.

Interviews can teach you about the effectiveness of your resume and cover letter.

Cover letters are important for inexperienced attorneys because they prove skills and enthusiasm to potential employers.

A cover letter briefly addresses “who you are” and “what you want;” highlights your most relevant experience and skills; tells employers what you can do for them; and addresses any “red flags” that will be raised by your resume.

Never hesitate to ask a professional resume writer any questions that you may have. A professional opinion can only assist you in your writing and job search.

Utilize resources such as resume books, samples, and writing tips to make your resume look as good as possible.

Research potential employers and their company’s positions you are going to apply for so that you can tailor your resume and cover letter to meet their needs.

A resume should give off a professional, polished appearance.

In your resume and cover letter, show potential employers what you can do for them.

To apply for jobs online, you can easily develop an electronic resume and send it to potential employers by email. Use a plain-text version of your resume and paste it into the body of your email after your cover letter or attach a file of your resume to the email and paste your cover letter into the body of the email, explaining that you have enclosed your resume as an attachment.

100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



Employers will not automatically throw away your resume if there is even one tiny spelling or grammatical error on it, but make sure to correct your mistake immediately before your next submission.

Always try to keep your resume updated. The more current your resume is, the less time you'll have to spend remembering minor details.

Check your resume for spelling and grammatical errors before you send it out.

If you have information on your resume that gives away personal attributes, it may be in your best interest to exclude it.

You do not need to state the phrase "References available upon request" on your resume. It is assumed that you will be able to provide references if asked for them.

When deciding how much of your work history to include in your resume, take into account the relevance of each of the positions you have held to the position you are trying to obtain.

Only use resume-friendly fonts such as Times New Roman, Book Antiqua, Verdana, or Garamond.

Font size should never exceed size 12pt. unless it is for your name at the top of your resume. It should also never get any smaller than 10pt. font.

Make sure to put your name and contact information on all pages of your resume and cover letter just in case your pages get separated.

For your contact information, try to get it all on one line by using abbreviations such as "555.511.1234 (h)" for your home phone number instead of spelling it out.

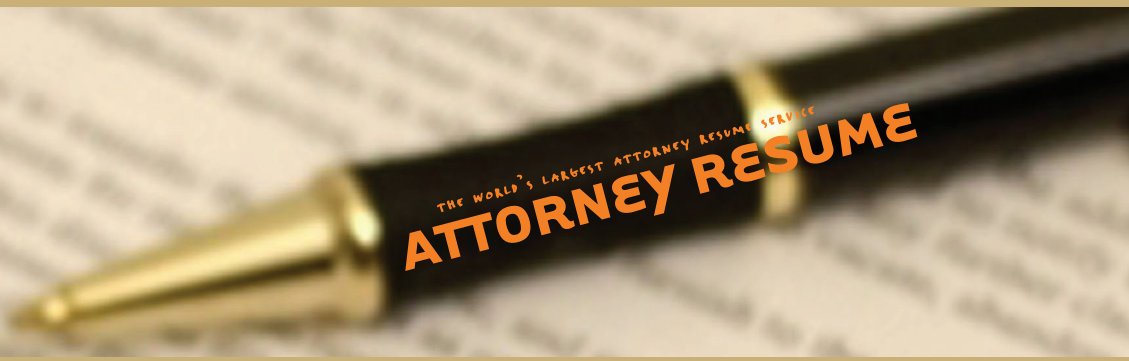
Page numbers should be listed at the top of your resume underneath your contact information if your resume is two pages or longer.

Spacing between lines can be changed. If you need more room, try using a smaller font size such as 6 or 8 between lines.

Rethink those margins. A good combination is top and bottom 0.6" with left and right at 0.7." If you need less room, use top and bottom 0.8" with left and right at 0.9."

Ensure visual appeal by using design elements with consistency.

100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



Avoid tiny fonts and large blocks of text.

Do not list salary requirements on your resume or cover letter unless you are instructed to do so. Only add pages of references, publications, or lectures if they are relevant to your job search.

If you are an experienced attorney, list your “Education” section after your “Work Experience” section.

Do not overuse bold, italic, underlined, and other formatted styles of text.

Always try to separate your work experience into two sections, titled “Legal Experience” and “Professional Experience.”

If you have graduated from law school in the past two years, list your education at the beginning of your resume.

For each job position, make sure that the date of employment and the location of the employer are listed.

List as many dates as you can for school activities, bar admissions, and professional affiliations.

Never write in all capital letters unless it is for your name at the top of your resume.

Sometimes your resume may look empty, so try using a different alignment for your dates and employer locations. (We prefer using right alignment.)

Centering your bar admissions and professional affiliations in their own section can use up “white space” on your resume.

For bullet points, try dragging them as far left as you can to put more words on one line.

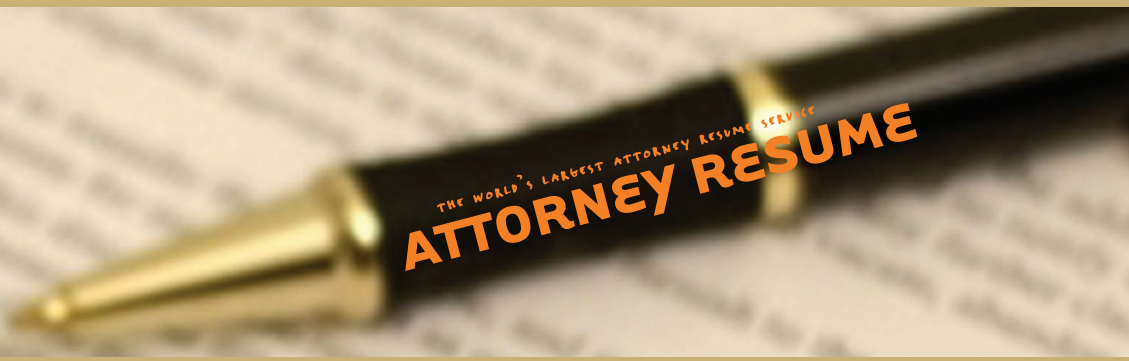
Not every resume has to be in the traditional format. A functional format can be useful for an experienced attorney.

Law students should list any relevant coursework down in their “Education” section if they are going into a certain field.

Relevant community service should be listed at the bottom of your resume.

A profile at the top of your resume can highlight skills and accomplishments if you are an experienced attorney.

100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



For each job position, write down as many details as you can and then combine them into important duties to list on your resume.

Bullet points are not mandatory on a resume.

If you have just passed the bar exam, use this phrase underneath your contact information, "Passed [name of state] bar exam, admission pending (year)."

An "Interests" section on a resume is optional, but is normally not listed on a resume.

Objectives are no longer listed on resumes, so save your objectives for the cover letter.

A "Qualifications Summary" is the same as a "Profile" section.

Less is always more, so keep it brief by using simple declarative sentences, strong verbs, and tightly edited writing when listing your job descriptions.

Always maintain a marketing mindset when writing your resume. You want to sell yourself to potential employers.

The words, "Legal Assistant," should be used instead of "Paralegal" for job titles.

Be bold and use a focused resume for certain legal fields you want to apply to. If you are looking at a corporate firm, focus your resume on your own personal corporate experience.

Remember, everyone reads from left to right, so put your most important information first on the left side of the page, such as company names and job titles. Dates and locations should be listed on the right side of the page.

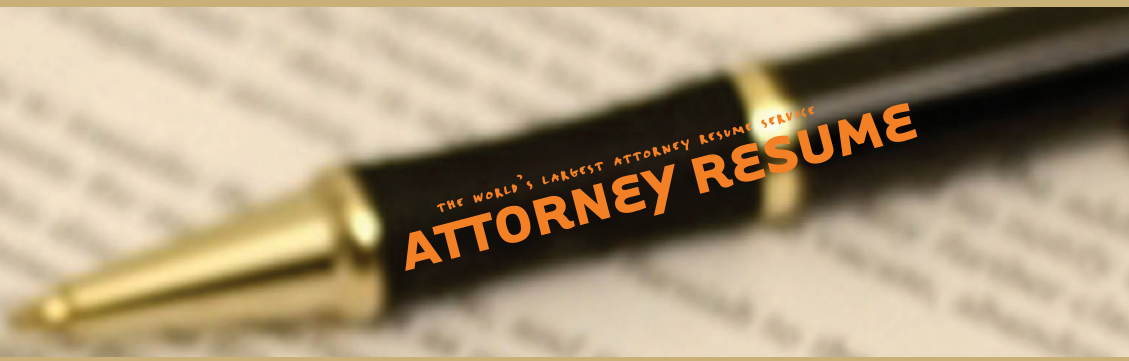
Legal resumes often list professional affiliations.

A chronological resume format contains a list of your positions, starting with the most recent position.

If you are an experienced attorney, use this phrase at the top of your resume underneath your contact information, "Licensed to practice in [name of state] (year)."

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RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



Employers will not take the time to read thick blocks of information, so make it easy on them by using bullet points or lists to separate the information instead.

GPA is not always necessary on a resume. However, if you manage to get a high GPA, make sure to post it in your “Education” section.

Legal employers want to see your legal work history in a reverse chronological format.

Never misrepresent yourself on your resume. Lying will always get you into trouble.

A functional resume format markets skills and achievements over job chronology.

A resume should achieve a balance of “white space vs. text” that makes it full enough without becoming cluttered.

Legal employers place significant emphasis on education, so make sure that the “Education” section of your resume is clear and prominent.

The reader should be able to pick out your job titles, assess your educational background, and get a general sense of the level of your experience after a brief review of your resume.

Bullet points can be used with paragraphs to emphasize certain position duties or accomplishments.

Legal resumes typically have a “Bar Admissions” section.

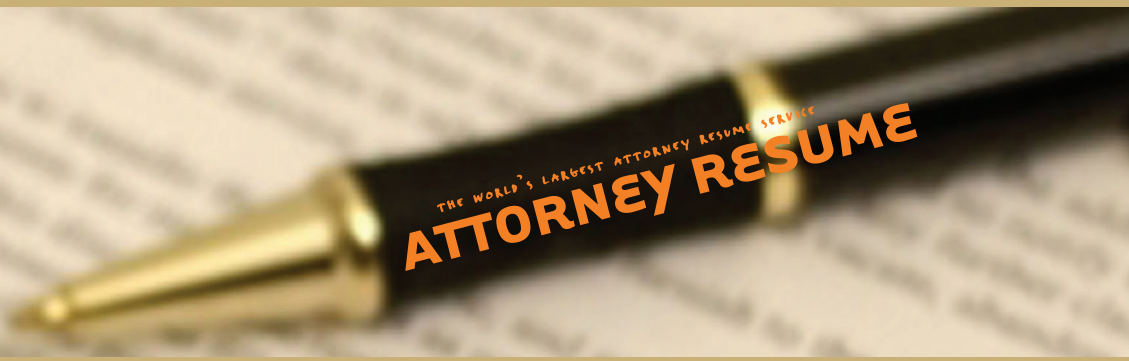
While job descriptions tell employers who you were in each position, the summary section of your resume allows you to tell employers who you are overall.

Accomplishments do play a major role on your resume.

Law students and recent graduates should write as much as they can in their “Education” section because that is where potential employers will be looking.

Bullet points are the quickest way to convey any additional information associated with your education. If you have an extensive list of activities and honors, you may want to create a separate category for each.

100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



Listing relevant coursework on your resume can be a good way to compensate for lack of experience in a given practice area.

You may have been a member of an organization or activity that is not well known outside of your school or may have won an award for an academic achievement. If you do not provide details about what you did or why you were honored, these things will be irrelevant to a potential employer.

If you are listing a fair amount of transactions on your resume, it is better to categorize them by their transaction type.

More experienced attorneys' resumes often contain a separate page listing representative cases or transactions.

If you are a recent graduate, list your internships, clerkships, legal clinic positions, and summer associate positions in the "Legal Experience" section of your resume because it may be the only experience you have, so expand on those positions in detail.

Experienced attorneys should list their internships under their "Education" section because it is a great way to display what you did during law school without taking up too much room on the resume.

Experience never has to come in the form of a paid position, so take into account all of your community and volunteer opportunities, as well as your internships.

Highlight your transferable skills.

List your job description duties in order of importance.

For dates, you do not always have to include the month and day. Resumes look less cluttered with only the years listed.

The most recent position on your resume should have the most detail, while the other positions carry less.

When deciding whether or not to include supplemental information, ask yourself how relevant it is to the position you are seeking.

Use italics instead of underlining publications or journals for a cleaner resume format.

100 RESUME TIPS for Attorneys



If you have done extensive community work and/or you are planning to pursue a career in public interest law, you will want to focus on your “Volunteer Work” section the most.

For cases or transactions, it is only okay to list the clients involved on your resume or in your cover letter if those cases and transactions are considered public information. If they are not, describe the type of client you represented instead.

A representative transaction list is essentially the same as a representative case list. In it, you want to briefly discuss the type of transaction, your role in it, and the outcome.

If you are not currently employed, your resume needs to list the end date of your most recent position.

Use action verbs to describe your daily duties. The right verb is always eye-catching.

Try not to be repetitive. Using the same adjectives and verbs will make your resume sound boring to potential employers.

Always use 8-1/2-inch x 11-inch white or off-white paper when printing your resume so that it will be easy to read and scan.

Never be afraid to try new outlines and borders for your resume headlines.

A curriculum vitae (CV) is not the same as a resume and usually runs much longer.

List your work number on your resume if your search is not confidential and your employer has no policy against acceptance of personal telephone calls.

Give outdated experience a feeling of real time by using past progressive tenses such as “I was managing” to draw readers away from the past tense of the experience in your cover letter.

Using acronyms is fine, but make sure to write out the abbreviation the first time it appears in your document. An example would be “American Disabilities Act (ADA).” From then on, you can just use “ADA.”

Never use contractions on your resume or cover letter.

Use Attorney Resume to write a professional resume and cover letter for you.