

## **The Resume Breakdown – What You Should and Shouldn't Include**

- **Header (Name, Telephone, Address, Email)**

This information goes in bold type at the top of the page. You should also include your e-mail address and both your home and school addresses (if your home address connects you to the geographical area in which you're interviewing). Don't provide any personal data here or in any other place on the resume (e.g. age, birth, marital status, etc.). Correct emails and telephone numbers (and voicemail or answering machines) are crucial since many offers for callbacks, etc. are made by phone or email.

- **Objective**

Legal resumes do not include job objectives. You can address it in your cover letter or during the interview.

- **Education**

Law School resumes always list education first. (You won't list experience first until you have graduated and are practicing full-time). List education in reverse chronological order with name of school, city, dates of attendance (mo./yr.), degrees received or anticipated. (Example: Stanford Law School, JD expected June, 2010).

Include school activities and honors under each school. Under the Stanford Law School section, include proposed coursework if it relates specifically to an area of practice sought.

Under college education, include major and minor areas of study, and thesis topics. Be consistent. If you use "J.D." then use "B.A." If you write out "Juris Doctor" then write out "Bachelor of Arts."

- **Grades & LSAT Scores**

Your resume is a forum in which to highlight your accomplishments and strengths. You want the employer to focus on your marketable skills, your past work experience, your education - those things that make you unique from every other applicant. For this reason, we do not recommend that you include your undergrad GPA.

While not predictive of success in law school or as an attorney, some employers invariably ask for LSAT scores. We do not, however, recommend that you include them on your resume.

- **Experience/Employment**

List your experience in reverse chronological order as either "Experience" or "Employment." If you'd like to highlight particular experiences, you can have two headings. For instance: "Public Interest Experience" and "Other Experience."

Provide specific information about your most important responsibilities, promotions, and anything else that recognizes or highlights special efforts. Try to emphasize problem-solving responsibilities. Don't

take up a lot of space if the explanation is obvious. If you were at one job for an extended period of time, show promotions and increased responsibilities.

If you had many part-time or temporary jobs while in school, consider summarizing them, e.g. "Held various part-time and temporary positions, 2000-2005, to finance education." This shows that you are motivated and were self-supporting. Employers will value the fact that you have worked while attending school.

If you accept a judicial clerkship following graduation, you should put that on your third-year resume at the top of the experience or employment section even though it's for the future. It's an acceptable practice among law students.

- **Languages**

Languages are good to include. Be careful, though, how you rate your level of proficiency. To the interviewer, "Fluent" means that you could carry on a conversation with a client or could write or translate in that language – or conduct your interview in that language!

- **Publications/Presentations**

These can be listed in a separate category either immediately after "Experience" or on a second page. Publications, even though in another discipline, indicate writing and research skills. Therefore, listing 2-3 and summarizing the rest is generally enough. Also list any major presentations you've given.

- **Community or Civic Activities**

These can be included in a separate section. If you are applying for a public interest position or if the activity was a significant responsibility, however, you should consider including it in the "Experience" section. Include dates, positions held and key responsibilities. Please consult with Public Interest Program staff if you would like help describing these activities.

- **Professional Affiliations**

Include any relevant past and present memberships, positions held and responsibilities, especially if the time spent demonstrates the use or development of skills or expertise. List full names of organizations, rather than acronyms.

- **Travel/Interests**

This is optional. Usually there isn't enough room on the page to split these two sections out, so it's fine to combine them. Often employers "break the ice" by starting with a question about this section. Be specific and stay away from generic words like "travel," "reading," "cooking," "sports," etc. Unique hobbies or passions sometimes strike a chord with the interviewer and get your interview off to a great start.

- **Computer Skills**

Everyone knows Westlaw, Lexis and Word or WordPerfect, so there is no need to list such skills on your resume. However, if you're looking at practicing intellectual property law and you've done substantial computer programming, then include it.

- **References**

"Available upon request" is a waste of space because everyone assumes it. Instead, prepare a separate sheet, listing names, addresses and telephone numbers of your references, which you can either send with your resume or bring with you to interviews. Be sure to get permission from references before you include their names.