

**Your resume reflects your accomplishments, skills, writing ability, and personality, and it also represents your potential. It is an employer's primary deciding factor on interviewing you for a position. Therefore, your resume should maximize your assets and minimize your liabilities.**

## Format and Style Guidelines

The legal resume has a relatively standard format. Your resume should be on 8 ½" x 11" white, off-white, or cream bond quality paper that is at least 25% cotton. Lettering should be in block-style type (e.g., Times New Roman or Arial) in 10-12 point font. Use of bold, italics and other formatting features should be consistent throughout your resume.

Generally, your resume should be limited to one page. You may have a two page resume: if law is your second career and you have extensive work experience; to demonstrate a longstanding commitment to public service; or to list extensive publications.

## Personal Data

Include your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address at the top of your resume. Be sure that your listed telephone number has a professional voicemail message and that your e-mail address is professional and appropriate. The heading for your cover letter should match that of your resume.

## Education

List your educational background in reverse chronological order: legal education, graduate education (if any), undergraduate education. If you are a transfer student, you must list your previous law school and dates of attendance in your legal education until you graduate from law school.

For each school, indicate the name of the institution, city and state location, month and year of graduation, and degree obtained. List any honors received at the school in order of importance, as well as activities in which you participated. If you prepared a thesis or studied abroad, you may include this information too. If you have not yet graduated, indicate the month and year of expected graduation (e.g., Candidate for J.D., June 201\_).

Include your law school G.P.A. if it is 3.0 or better and/or your class standing or rank if you are in the top 30% of your law class. Rank may be listed as a fraction or a percentage. Do not round the percentage to a higher rank (i.e., 23/249 is top 10% not top 9%).

## Experience

You may have one section for experience or you may separate your legal and other work experience into different sections, leading with your legal experience. List employment in reverse chronological order with employer's full name, city and state location, title of your position, and dates of employment.

## Experience (Continued)

Describe your tasks performed underneath each specific job. Use action verbs such as "analyzed," "directed," "managed," and "negotiated." Focus on skills most relevant to law (e.g., research, writing, analyzing data). When possible, include specific accomplishments.

Never use "I," "my," or any first person pronouns to describe your tasks.

Use paragraph format to list your job descriptions. Separate phrases with periods, not semi-colons. Do not use bullet points.

Exercise discretion in listing past jobs. Your resume is supposed to be a snapshot of your background. You are not expected to list every job you've ever held, so list the most relevant to the practice of law without creating unexplainable gaps.

List volunteer work and community service in a separate heading, (particularly important for public interest candidates), unless it is very dated.

## Other Skills, Special Qualifications, and Interests

List any other skills (e.g., languages, computer experience) that relate to the position in a separate section with the heading "Skills" or "Special Qualifications." Be honest with your level of competency.

Significant certifications or licenses, such as certified Public Accountant or Real Estate Salesperson or Broker may be included in this section.

If space permits, list extracurricular activities as interests, but do not list anything general like "reading" or "traveling."

## Do not:

- Include incorrect, inaccurate or misleading statements on your resume. Every statement must be precise and verifiable.
- Have any misspellings, misused words or grammar errors on your resume. Be sure to proofread your resume carefully and have someone review your resume for errors.
- Use abbreviations. Spell out months and do not use abbreviations such as "Dept." or "memos."
- Include an "Objective" or "Summary of Qualifications." This type of information should go in your cover letter.
- Include statements that your references, transcript or writing sample are available upon request. They are presumed to be available and should be brought to every interview.

# Resume Tip Sheet

## Sample Resume Format

### YOUR NAME IN BOLD CAPS

Your Street Address  
City, State and Zip Code  
Telephone  
E-mail

### EDUCATION

#### **ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Queens, New York (\*)

Candidate for J.D., June 201\_

**Academics:** This information includes class rank. While it is not necessary to list both your class rank and G.P.A., it is certainly not prohibited. You may want to list your G.P.A. if it is at least 3.0 or better, but it must be exact to the nearest hundredth (e.g., 3.120–3.124 = 3.12, and 3.125–3.129 = 3.13). You should include your class rank if you are in the top 30% of the class or better. This may be expressed as a percentage, e.g., top 20%, or as a number, e.g., 68/350. If you are not ranked with the full-time day division, indicate your section or division, e.g., (Evening Division).

**Honors:** Include anything that you are competitively selected for in order of importance. Examples include Dean's List (indicate semesters); *St. John's Law Review*; *American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review*; *St. John's Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development*; *Journal of International & Comparative Law* and *N.Y. International Law Review* (NOTE: Should your journal status change, and you are no longer a member of your journal, you MUST indicate dates of participation); Moot Court Honor Society; Mock Trial Competitions (if you "placed," and at what level); Dean's Award for Excellence (specify subject); and any fellowships and scholarships you may have received.

**Publications:** List published work (or work scheduled to be published), using official citation BlueBook form.

**Activities:** List most impressive first and indicate any leadership position before the organization name. If you are selected as a Research or Teaching Assistant and do not have room to list it in the "Experience" portion of your resume, you may list it here.

**(\*) Transfer students must list their previous law school and dates of attendance.**

**GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION INFORMATION** (Same format as above).

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**NAME OF EMPLOYER**, City, State

**Your Title**, Dates employed using month and year (if currently employed, list end date as "Present")

Describe responsibilities briefly, beginning each statement with an action verb (e.g., Conducted research regarding etc., Drafted memoranda regarding etc.). Highlight accomplishments. Use the correct tense (past or present) for each job description.

(NOTE: List employment in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent)

### OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Follow same format as above. If you have had a variety of part-time and summer positions which are not germane, it might be prudent to either incorporate all positions in one statement (i.e., Worked part-time to finance college education) or to leave them off your resume entirely. However, if you do not have enough education or legal experience to include in the previous sections, then provide details on these jobs.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

Follow the same format as experience section(s). You may include a community service section or a volunteer section if you have relevant material to include.

### SKILLS & INTERESTS (together or separately, depending on available space)

State abilities with languages and computer software. You may include licenses or certifications in this section.

Set forth interests that you can discuss comfortably if space allows. Do not put vague/broad subjects (e.g., Reading, Sports). Instead, use specific statements (e.g., Completed two marathons, Certified yoga instructor, Military history).