

THE RÉSUMÉ

The résumé has one purpose: Produce a job interview. The purpose of preparing a résumé is to present yourself to a prospective employer at a glance. (Note: Employers often scan résumés in 20-30 seconds. Yours must survive the evaluating scan.) The résumé should contain positive information about your professional self.

The résumé is often your first introduction to an employer and is therefore vital as that important first impression. It is well worth the time and money it may cost you to compile a professional, comprehensive résumé. Once an effective résumé has brought you into personal contact with an employer, you must sell yourself. However, no student should miss out on an employment opportunity because of an inadequate résumé.

A good résumé is concise and brief. It must be devoid of grammatical, typographical and spelling errors. Abbreviations should not be used unless their meaning is clear. A résumé should be attractively arranged on a standard size page. Single-page résumés are ideal, though two-page résumés may also be used, provided that the information and data are pertinent. Remember that too much detail or irrelevant information will detract from the effectiveness of the résumé. Résumés must contain only information that is true and accurate. Information other than this is a violation of the Honor Code.

Be consistent in wording, usage, syntax, abbreviations, grammar, punctuation, margins and print style. Waste no words. Avoid "I did" sentences. Begin your employment entries with assertive, active verbs.

Do not send photocopied copies.

Include an address, email and phone number (avoid cutesy or long telephone answering-machine messages, as well as inappropriate email addresses!) at which you can be reached. Law students have lost second interviews when employers, who have phoned to schedule call-back interviews, were so turned off by the answering-machine message that they elected not to leave a message and called someone else.

Proofread, have a friend proofread, and proofread again! Errors are fatal flaws and guarantee rejection.

Keep track of résumés you send by listing them on the *Record of Employment Contacts* pages in this Manual or starting a spreadsheet. For each résumé you distribute, note the name of the employer, the date, the person addressed (if sent with a cover letter), and any additional information you may need for future reference. As you receive replies, note the date received and whether they require further action on your part. It's also an easy way to stay organized, so you can follow up. Always keep copies of your correspondence and the responses received.

Two sample résumés are included in this manual. If you have any questions concerning the composition of your résumé, set up an appointment with the staff in the Career Development Office.

GUIDELINES FOR RÉSUMÉS

NAME: Your name should be in capital letters on the top of the résumé in larger font not to exceed 16. Avoid the use of nicknames. An initial is not sufficient for the first name.

ADDRESS: If you have two addresses (temporary and permanent), both should be used. Also, indicate both telephone numbers and the area codes. Include your email address and cellular phone number. Address terms such as Street, Road or Lane should be spelled out, not abbreviated. Permanent Addresses are particularly helpful when you plan to return to your hometown for summer or permanent employment. Permanent Addresses can help demonstrate a connection to the area, or a lack thereof. Therefore, exercise judgment in determining whether to include them. For instance, if you are seeking employment in Georgia, but are from out of state, do NOT include your permanent address.

CAREER OBJECTIVE: Be aware that this statement can be limiting if you are interested in a number of employment options. Follow the general rule: **Do not use an objective on your résumé.** A cover letter can specify your interest in particular types of jobs eliminating the need to do it on the résumé.

PERSONAL DATA: This information, including birth date and place and marital status, should NOT be included on your résumé.

EDUCATION: This should be the first section on your résumé. Education should include all academic institutions that you attended AFTER high school, degrees awarded, graduation dates, college major and/or minors, special honors and student activities. Your academic background should be presented in reverse chronological order, with law school first. You may wish to devote specific sections under each academic institution to honors and student activities. These will highlight accomplishments and enhance readability. Indicate your graduation date; do not use terms such as "expect to graduate," "hope to" or "anticipate." It is not necessary to include high school, unless it indicates a connection to the geographic area, which is otherwise not visible from the remainder of the résumé.

CLASS RANK: Grade point averages, class rank, percentages, etc. are optional. Do indicate if you graduated from college with honors. If you are in the top one-half of your law school class, class standing should generally be included. Omitting information about class standing may result in an employer's assumption that your rank is poor or mediocre. If this assumption is true, you may include in a cover letter mitigating factors: successful undergraduate record, specific law course grades, improving law school record or employment financing law school education. Further, academic progress or improvement can be noted. Neither an apology nor defensiveness is necessary. Strategically word and place your explanatory information.

PUBLICATIONS: Include title, citation and whether copies are available upon request. This can be a separate section if you wish to make note of your writings.

EMPLOYMENT: If your employment experience includes both law related and non-law related jobs you may wish to present the law related positions in a specific category. It is a good idea to include specific dates for periods of employment. Be concise – 3-4 bullets/lines of job descriptions are usually sufficient. List the name of your employer and your title. Part-time jobs such as waitress, bartender, etc., should not be included, unless they were used to defray educational costs. If you include them, you may choose to lump them together in a catchall category (e.g. “Experience also includes: XYZ”)

MILITARY SERVICE: Indicate the branch of service, organization, rank at the time of your discharge, places at which you were stationed, etc.

SPECIAL SKILLS: This is a good place to indicate practical abilities such as fluency in a language, computer capabilities, etc.

INTERESTS/ HOBBIES: Indicating your interests can be a humanizing factor on the résumé, and make for interesting interview conversation. We strongly suggest that students include them.

REFERENCES:

References should be listed on a separate page with the same heading as your résumé. Do not state that “references are available upon request” on your résumé. If an employer wants them, they will ask for them. They will also simply expect you to have them in an interview, so have them ready. It is preferable that you list your references with titles, addresses and telephone numbers. “Three” is a good number of references. You may use one law professor, one attorney from the area in which you hope to practice, and one of the employers listed on your employment section. Do use a law professor. Get to know one. Go by his or her office and ask if he or she will serve as a reference for you. That will give you an opportunity to educate the professor about yourself. Professors expect and want to serve as references for students.

If you entered law school directly from college, your references might consist of one law school professor, one employer and one undergraduate professor. Do not use personal friends, neighbors or relatives unless they have supervised your work or you consider them a professional mentor. Always inform your references when and for what purpose you are submitting their names. It is awkward for the employer and the reference when the reference gets a call and does not know why they are being called. Before putting a name on your reference list, ask that person for permission to do so.

**WRITING
SAMPLE:**

Many employers are interested in writing samples. You should plan to develop a writing sample as early as possible in your law school career. You should send a writing sample **only** when requested. If a writing sample is requested, it is good to send one that is relevant to what the employer does. Employers are interested in written legal work that is relevant to their field of practice. A good sample is generally under ten pages. If you have an excellent piece over ten pages, send a portion of it: one argument or chapter, etc. You can also consider editing portions.

You should include your name on your writing sample; do not put it in a fancy binder; delete confidential parts of your writing sample; if your writing sample is from a work assignment you should get approval from your supervisor to use it; and if you use a law review article or something written in collaboration with someone else, clearly indicate which portions you wrote. Have a cover page to explain these details. The cover page should also have your résumé heading.

RÉSUMÉ OUTLINE

NAME

Address: (Present and/or Permanent)

Phone: (Include area code)

Email Address

EDUCATION

Legal

John Marshall Law School, Atlanta, Georgia

Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 20__

Class Standing: Top ____ % (your # rank/ total # students; i.e., 7/135)

Honors:

- Honor X (i.e., Scholarships, Dean's List, Law, Review, etc.)
- Honor Y

Activities:

- Activity X (i.e., Legal Fraternity, SBA, Moot Court, Interest Based Org., etc)
- Activity Y

College

Name of College, City, State

Degree(s) Received, Subject, Date of Graduation

Minor:

G.P.A.:

Honors:

- Honor X (i.e., Scholarships, Honor Societies, Awards)
- Honor Y

Activities:

- Activity X (i.e., Sorority/Fraternity, Community Service Orgs.)

PUBLICATIONS

(If applicable)

EMPLOYMENT

Law Related

Name of Company or Firm, City, State

Dates of employment

Position, Responsibilities (briefly) (beginning with active verbs)

Non-Law Related

Name of Company or Firm, City, State

Dates of employment

Position, Responsibilities (briefly) (beginning with active verbs)

Various part-time positions to help defray educational costs including...

MILITARY

(If applicable) (Or include with Employment)

SKILLS/INTERESTS

i.e., Foreign Language Fluency; Computer Skills

i.e., Hobbies/Interests

(continued)

RÉSUMÉ OUTLINE

REFERENCES

FOR

NAME

Name
Title
Address
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OR

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SUGGESTED WORDS FOR RESUMES

Action Verbs

accelerated	convicted	entered	launched	proved
accepted	coordinate	established	lecture	provided
acquitted	corrected	evaluated	led	pursued
actively	counseled	exercised	litigated	recommended
adapted	created	expanded	maintained	reduced
administer	cross examined	expedite	managed	reinforced
advocated	defended	explored	mobilized	reorganized
allocated	delegated	exposed	motivated	represented
amended	demonstrated	filed	negotiated	researched
analyzed	deposed	fought	noted	resolved
applied	determined	founded	organized	responsible
approved	deterred	generated	originated	revamped
arbitrated	develop	handled	participated	revealed
argued	devoted	implemented	performed	reviewed
assisted	directed	improved	pinpointed	revised
backed	disseminated	increased	planed	scheduled
brought	donated	influenced	pledged	served
chaired	drafted	initiated	predicted	settled
challenged	edited	innovated	prepared	solved
compiled	effect	inquired	produced	sponsored
completed	effected	instituted	proficient	streamlined
conceived	eliminated	interpreted	programmed	strengthened
conducted	elucidated	interviewed	proposed	structured
constructed	enforced	introduced	prosecuted	studied
controlled	engaged	investigated	protected	suggested

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ #1

JANE P. SMITH

Email: JPS@anyserviceprovider.com

Present Address:

100 College Street
Atlanta, Georgia 31201
(478) 555-7016

Permanent Address:

1402 Elm Street
Dublin, Georgia 30341
(404) 555-2340

(NOTE: Permanent Address is used ONLY to show connection to area; otherwise, do not include)

EDUCATION

Law School

John Marshall Law School, Atlanta, Georgia

Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 2010

Class Standing: Top one-third

Honors:

- Woodruff Scholarship Recipient (Full tuition, plus stipend)

Activities:

- Student Bar Association, *IL Representative, Vice-President*
- Moot Court Board, *Intrastate Competition, March 2003*

College

Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia

B.A., Political Science, *cum laude*, May 2005 (Minor: French)

G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0

Honors:

- Dean's List

Activities:

- Alpha Beta Chi Sorority, *President, Rush Chairman*

EMPLOYMENT

Law Related

Brown, Wills & Jones, Griffin, Georgia

Summer 2006

Law Clerk, Drafted memoranda, briefs, and pleadings in areas including medical malpractice and elder law.

Non-Law Related

Atlas Storage Company, Atlanta, Georgia

Summer 2004

Secretary

SKILLS/INTERESTS

Lexis, Westlaw, Power Point, Fluent in French

Cooking, Golf, Reading History Novels

REFERENCES

Professor Richard Roswell
John Marshall Law School
1422 West Peachtree Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
(404) 555-3980
Email

Mr. Edward Brown
Brown, Wills & Jones
P.O. Box 555
Griffin, Georgia 31306
(404) 555-4075
Email

Congressman Iva Owen
555 Capitol Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(202) 555-3043
Email

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ #2

JANE P. SMITH

100 College Street, Atlanta, Georgia 31201
(478) 555-7016 ▪ Email: JPS@anyserviceprovider.com

EDUCATION

John Marshall Law School

Atlanta, Georgia

Candidate for Juris Doctor

May 2010

- Class Standing: Top one-third, Ranked 53 out of 125
- Vanderbilt Scholarship Recipient (Full tuition, plus stipend)
- Student Bar Association, 1L Representative, Vice-President; Moot Court Board, Intrastate Competition, 2006

Georgia State University

Atlanta, Georgia

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Minor in French, cum laude

May 2002

- G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0
 - Dean's List
 - Alpha Beta Chi Sorority, President, Rush Chairman; Golden Key National Honor Society, Treasurer
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EXPERIENCE

White, Williams & Jones

Griffin, Georgia

Law Clerk

Summer 2006

- Drafted memoranda, briefs, and pleadings in areas including medical malpractice and elder law

Weinberg, Whaler, Hawkins, Davidson & Hastings

Atlanta, Georgia

Director of Attorney Recruitment

October 2002 – November 2005

- Administered and coordinated all aspects of attorney recruiting, including: campus, targeted, and lateral recruiting; the summer associate program; and attorney development programs for the Los Angeles office
 - Maintained working relationships with law school career service offices and legal search firms
 - Assisted with planning and coordinating local office activities such as arranging meetings, set-up for training seminars and programs, interviews, and events
 - Generated utilization and statistical reports
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Fluent in French
- Helped build 10 Habitat For Humanity homes
- Cooking, Golf, Reading mystery novels

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ #2
JANE P. SMITH

100 College Street, Atlanta, Georgia 31201
(478) 555-7016 ▪ Email: JPS@anyserviceprovider.com

REFERENCES

Professor William Kelley
John Marshall Law School
1422 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
(404) 872-3593
Email

Mr. Theodore Brooks
Burns, Brooks & Ferry
68 Cherry Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
(404) 555-0001
Email

Ms. Alice Bright
Red Lobster Restaurant
111 Riverside Drive
Roswell, Georgia 30326
(770) 555-1111
Email

RÉSUMÉ CHECKLIST

**Please review prior to submitting your résumé to the Career Development Office*

- Fits on one page (if you have an extensive work history, please see the Career Development Office).
- Is in one of the formats included in the Sample Résumés.
- Use Arial 12-point and 1" margins if you need to fill a page. Consider using Times New Roman 11-point and 0.5" margins if you have trouble fitting everything on a page.
- Are you effectively using white space? Play with CAPS, **bold**, *italics*, upper and lowercase, and indentation to make your résumé look good. Use those tools consistently.
- You printed on white or off-white résumé-quality paper.
- You were consistent in use/non-use of periods at end of sentences and commas before conjunctions.
- You were consistent in spelling out names of cities, states, dates, degrees awarded.
- You have at least 2 sections: Education and Experience.
- You do not have a statement similar to "References available upon request." This is a waste of space. Employers will request references if they need them. Have a copy of them at every interview, just in case.
- Reverse order chronologically.
- Had a friend proofread?
- Eliminated all typos and spelling errors.
- If you have not graduated, on the line following JMLS: "Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 2010."
- Academic honors such as *cum laude* or *magna cum laude* are all in italics and lowercase.
- Every job description starts with an action verb in the past tense (use present tense ONLY if it is your current position).
- Job descriptions highlight skills that are relevant to your legal career, even if the job was not of legal nature itself (e.g. research, writing, supervision of others, negotiation, presentation of reports or information).
- Eliminated wordiness (e.g. responsibilities included...).
- Dates do not include commas (e.g. May 2008 or Summer 2008).
- Part-time, non-legal jobs are placed in a "catch-all" category as the last item in your Experience section.
- If you are seeking a public interest or government job, consider including a separate "Community Service" section following "Experience."
- For an "Additional Information" or "Skills/Interests" section, consider unique computer skills relevant to the job, volunteer experiences, or other hobbies that might be good conversation starters. For general hobbies, try to be specific. For example, if traveling is a hobby, be specific and include a region of the world or country you enjoy traveling to. Similarly, if reading is your hobby, be more specific and include a genre.
- When describing languages, be sure to specify level of fluency (e.g. native, fluent, proficient, conversational).
- Take a quick look at your printed résumé. Does it allow for a fast read?