

Writing a Resume

Advice for those with a few months to a few years of experience...

Your resume may just be what will get you in front of a prospective employer. It can open doors, allows you the opportunity to sell yourself and to present your skills and talents. And, with today's technology, you can custom-tailor it for each opportunity.

- With that in mind, you want to construct your resume from the employer's point of view. In preparing your resume, you may want to consider:
 - What do you believe that the organization is seeking?
 - What skills and talents do you have that could meet the organization's needs?
 - How can you then best tailor your credentials so that the organization will feel that you meet their needs?

As your career develops, you may want to have a standard resume ready that you update on a regular basis. But as particular opportunities arise, you may also want to consider preparing a special resume that better addresses the needs of your target position.

Here are several suggestions on preparing your resume:

YOUR STANDARD RESUME

Standard legal industry resume format:

- Your resume should be concise and presented on as few pages as possible. A single page is still ideal.
 - o Note: If your resume now extends to more than one page, be sure to have a footer "Resume – Bill Bailey – page 2 of 2".
- Continue to put your education first, unless you graduated more than five years ago OR you feel that your law degree may not be the first thing they are looking for.
- Keep your college activities to a minimum, including only those that are most relevant to your success as a lawyer and those that have generated the most interest from employers in the past.
- Include a "Bar Admission" section, and put the dates of your admission into various jurisdictions.
- Describe your experience to date in as "lawyerly" terms as possible. Avoid weak words like "assisted," "worked with", even "researched." Instead, use a strong, active voice. For example, "researched and drafted answers to complaints" might become "reviewed and analyzed complaints, evaluated strategic responses, and wrote answers."
- There is a spectrum of how you can actually describe your work, from the very vague ("completed projects as assigned") to the very specific (using the technical jargon of your particular field). Choose language along this spectrum that is best suited to your goal. For example, if you've done nothing but real estate, but now would like to try bankruptcy, you would be specific about the *skills* you use that transfer across these fields, without using the terms specific to real estate. However, if you are looking for another real estate position, you would want to be very clear about the nature of your expertise.
- Use a plain font and keep adequate (at least .5") margins. This is particularly important if you will be posting or sending your resume electronically – you want to be sure it prints clearly for your reader.
- Use a plain cream or white resume paper with matching letterhead and envelopes.

Your standard resume should be written with an eye to presenting your skills as broadly as possible, to as wide an audience as you can foresee.

YOUR TARGETED RESUME

Your targeted resume, on the other hand, might almost be written on a case by case basis for each application you submit. Starting with your standard resume, edit your targeted resume to best present your credentials in response to *a particular employer* and their needs for this particular job. This means you will do as much research as is possible before applying for a given position, and then consider how to best present your skills and talents to most effectively match their goals in filling it.

This might mean that you...

- Redraft your experience to emphasize your experience in related areas, using the relevant terms to the new position where appropriate.
- Add more of your volunteer work and experience when applying for a public interest job.
- Include your administrative and committee work at your employer as relevant to the new position.
- Include work in that particular city, to show your ties to the region, even if it was many years ago.

The strategy here is relatively straightforward: your credentials should reflect what the employer is looking for.

If you are considering leaving the law altogether, you may need to re-format your resume entirely to avoid looking "over-qualified" or inappropriate as a candidate. It will be very important for you to learn the language of your intended new field and to draft a resume that presents your skills in that language and style. You can find a very good discussion of this topic in Deborah Arron's book, *What Can You Do with a Law Degree?* (Niche Press).

CP&P would be happy to review and comment on your resume drafts. You can e-mail your resume to us at all-cpp@law.upenn.edu.

We have included a variety of sample resumes that might be helpful to you as you move forward:

TOMAS MARTINEZ

1234 Monsey Lane
Lancaster, PA 19607
(717) 837-2948
tmartinez@aol.com

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA LAW SCHOOL

J.D., May 2002

Honors: Editor, *Journal of International Economic Law*
Finalist, Keedy Cup Competition, 1999

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

B.S., Engineering, 1997

Honors: *magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa*

EXPERIENCE

THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. BECKER

United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, Philadelphia, PA

September 2002 - Present

Law Clerk

Draft opinions and memoranda advising the judge on legal issues. Observe oral arguments before the Third Circuit. Participate in bench conferences.

BALLARD, SPAHR, ANDREWS & INGERSOLL, Philadelphia, PA

Summer, 2001

Summer Associate

Researched a variety of labor, employment, constitutional, and procedural issues in support of law firm's trial and appellate practice, and conveyed findings to firm's attorneys in detailed memoranda of law.

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, Philadelphia, PA

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Summer, 2000

Legal Intern, Criminal Division

Drafted appellate brief, wrote government responses, and drafted memoranda.

BAR ADMISSIONS

Admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania	2002
Admitted to the Bar of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania	2002

INTERESTS

Golf, coin collecting. Prize coin is 1825 nickel found at construction site in Allentown, PA.

Sample Resume

Brian is a fifth-year associate. He is interested in a career change from a large law firm to becoming an in-house counsel with a major corporation doing international transactional that he has learned about, . He has tailored his standard resume for this specific position to include some previous labor work since his research revealed its importance to this corporation.

BRIAN T. EDMONDS

1700 Market Street * Apartment 103
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 545-9767 * bedmonds@aol.com

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA LAW SCHOOL, J.D., May 1997

Honors: Order of the Coif
Editor-in-Chief, *Constitutional Law Journal*

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, B.A., Wharton, Finance, May 1993

Honors: *cum laude*

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, Economics Course of Study, 1992

EXPERIENCE

FOX, ROTHSCHILD, O'BRIEN & FRANKEL, Philadelphia, PA 1998-Present

Associate, Corporate Department

Areas of Practice Include: general corporate law; securities regulation; mergers & acquisitions; board of director compliance

Representative Transactions and Experience: Corporate and transactional practice involving public and private entities in the U.S. and abroad. Negotiate, document, and close acquisitions and divestitures with an emphasis on multi-party transactions. Represent clients' business interests in identifying acquisitions. Ensure compliance with multi-national regulations and tax structures. Act as liaison between clients and their financial advisors. Travel broadly, including frequently to Prague.

Firm Management Experience: Member of the firm's internal sexual harrassment committee. Draft policies for firm on this and other labor issues. Member of the firm's hiring committee.

THE HONORABLE ROBERT S. GAWTHROP 1997-1998

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Law Clerk

Researched and drafted memoranda and opinions, advised the judge on legal issues.

U.S. SECURITIES & EXCHANGE COMMISSION, Philadelphia, PA

Legal Intern

Summer, 1996

Wrote motion briefs and legal memoranda on issues of insider trading and pyramid schemes.

T&L TRADING COMPANY

1993 -1995

Analyst

Researched companies in the international media business for venture capital firm.

BAR ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

1994

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

1995

SKILLS/INTERESTS

Fluent in Spanish, French, and German; traveled extensively in Europe, South America, and Central America

Sample Resume

Marsha is looking for employment with a public interest organization or non-profit after spending her first years after graduation with a law firm. She has tailored her resume to emphasize her history of volunteer and public sector work.

Marsha Goldfarb

918 East 52nd Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 729-2398
mgoldfar@aol.com

Education

J.D. **University of Pennsylvania**, Philadelphia, PA
May, 2000 *Activities:* Volunteer, Custody and Support Assistance Clinic, 1997-2000

B.A., History **Barnard College**, New York, NY
May, 1997 *Honors:* Mary Fineman Award for Superior Honors Thesis

Experience

2000 - Present **Torys**, New York, NY
Associate, Litigation Department
Represent clients in various stages of civil litigation. Draft briefs, complaints, pretrial motions, memoranda and discovery requests and responses. Serve on firm-wide *pro bono* committee. Team member on class action suit brought against a major NYC landlord on behalf of a group of tenants.

Summer 1999 **Skadden Arps**, New York, NY
Summer Associate

Summer 1998 **Community Legal Services**, Philadelphia, PA
Legal Intern
Interviewed prospective clients as intake worker. Researched issues on grandparent custody of minor grandchildren for training manual. Researched and drafted memoranda and briefs in preparation for trial.

Summer 1997 **Volunteers for the Indigent**, Philadelphia, PA
Volunteer
Screened phone calls from prospective clients and performed clerical tasks as needed.

Bar Memberships State of New York 2000
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York 2001

Professional Affiliations

National Lawyers Guild
Association of the Bar of the City of New York

Sample resume

Arthur is a fifth year associate doing commercial real estate work at a law firm. He seeks a lateral move to another firm. Arthur also prepared a Transaction Summary List of his accomplishments, which follows.

ARTHUR PETERSON

350 Salsa Boulevard, Apt 3 – A
Dallas, TX
215 - 555 - 3401
apeter@aol.com

EDUCATION:

University of Pennsylvania Law School, J.D., May 1997

Honors: Associate Editor, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*

University of Texas B.S. in Business Administration, May 1993

Honors: *Phi Beta Kappa*

EXPERIENCE:

- 1997 - Present **Baker & Botts**, Dallas TX
Associate - Commercial Real Estate
Draft agreements for the acquisition and disposition of commercially developed properties. Negotiate, draft, and review of leases of commercial space. Represent major institutional lender. Draft, negotiate, and review a wide range of real property instruments (including partnership, corporate trust, and joint venture agreements).
- Summer 1996 **Jenkins & Gilcrest**, Dallas, TX
Summer Associate
Researched and drafted memoranda for corporate and real estate matters. Participated in refinancings, loan workouts, and nonjudicial foreclosures.
- Summer 1995 **U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission**, Philadelphia, PA
Legal Intern
Researched and prepared memoranda on issues related to financial fraud and market manipulation. Attended seminars on federal securities laws.

BAR ADMISSIONS AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

State Bar of Texas	1997
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas	1998

INTERESTS: Skiing, camping, and tutoring English as a second language

(A summary transaction list may be helpful to employers because it gives a clearer picture of the level of work performed and, in some cases, for whom it was performed)

ARTHUR PETERSON

350 Salsa Boulevard, Apt 3 - A
Dallas, TX
215 - 555 - 3401
apeter@aol.com

SUMMARY TRANSACTION LIST

Reviewed title and drafted loan documents and supporting collateral agreements in connection with eight commercial loans (\$10 million to \$200 million) by two major insurance companies.

Reviewed title and drafted lease agreements for Boston Properties, Inc. in two bulk sale transactions of commercial properties (hotels, apartment houses and office buildings) located in eight states.

Drafted transfer documents and contract of sale for Blackstone Group, Inc., New York, NY in the acquisition of sixteen hotels in four states.

Negotiated and drafted lease agreement for 330,000 square foot property in Northern Virginia on behalf of Nextel Communication, Inc.

On behalf of owner, drafted and negotiated construction contracts, construction management agreements, and architect-s agreements.

Participated in negotiations for sale-lease-back of commercial properties located in the northeast corridor.

Advised foreign oil investors regarding tax laws and regulation for establishing foreign based real estate holding companies.

Negotiated, drafted and reviewed purchase/sale contract on behalf of Tishman Speyer, New York, NY for developments in Austin and Dallas.

Sample Resume

Rose is seeking a move outside the law. She is interested in moving into human resources management. She has been working at law firms for six years, and has of late attempted to take as much labor work as possible. She has arranged her experience in a Skills Resume format to best display her relevant talents.

Rose Heilferty
133 Bailey Avenue
Bronx, New York 10463
212.886.8866

rheilferty@alumni.law.upenn.edu

Summary: Six years of progressive responsibility in major institutions, with law - related human resource management experience, compliance experience, and excellent collegial skills.

Human Resources Experience

- advised corporate clients on employment claims, including strategies designed to avoid litigation
- represented corporate clients in employment litigation matters
- drafted legislative compliance strategies for corporations on benefits and labor relations matters
- as member of firm's hiring committee, recommended recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies

Related Experience

- as legal advisor, developed strong interpersonal skills and ability to understand client needs and goals
- strong analytical ability and ability to achieve client-established goals
- excellent oral and written presentation skills

Employment

1999 – present

Associate, LeBoeuf, Lamb, Green & MacRae, LLP, NYC

1996-1999

Associate, Dickstein Shapiro, Washington, DC

Education

JD, University of Pennsylvania Law School, 1996

BA, History, *summa cum laude*, SUNY Albany, 1993

Continuing Education

Personnel Law Update and Human Resources Practices, Council on Education in Management, 2002 & 2003

Memberships

Admitted, NY Bar

Labor and Employment Law Section, ABCNY