



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL RESUME TIPS

What should be included in the header?

Resume headers are the focal point of a resume so including the proper information is key. Students should always include name, address, telephone number, and email address. The name should be in larger font and bolded to stand out. Students should use the most accurate contact information so they are aware when employers call or email for an interview.

What is an appropriate length?

For most law students, a legal resume should be no longer than one page. Students with extensive previous work history may consider a longer resume but should consult their career counselor. Some legal careers, as well as academic positions, may also require longer resumes; in those cases, students should consult their career counselor.

What is the proper format?

Legal resumes have a conservative format. Students should always include an “Education” and an “Experience” section. Other sections may include: “Volunteer or Community Involvement,” “Interests,” and “Languages.” Section names should be bolded, underlined, or capitalized. Information and descriptions should be in single-spaced paragraph form. Choose a basic, professional font with a size no smaller than 10.5 point. Margins should be no smaller than .5.

What content should be included?

A good resume highlights a student’s educational and professional background. Resumes should be tailored to include information that is relevant and pertinent to the position. Focus on skills and experience, not on employer or industry. Remember, most law students have limited legal experience but they have gained many skills that are transferable to the legal industry.

What are common mistakes to avoid?

Always, always proofread your resume! Many employers automatically disqualify candidates with spelling errors or grammatical mistakes. Employers have time limitations, so make sure your resume is clear and easy to read. Save your resume as a PDF document to avoid any formatting issues. Finally, update your resume regularly so it’s ready to go when needed.