

### **Purpose of Your Resume**

Your resume serves as a marketing tool to prospective employers. You have approximately 30 seconds to catch an employer's eye, so your resume must be concise, organized, and targeted to the employer receiving it. Thus, you may have different versions of your resume for different positions. Your resume speaks volumes about your communication skills and serves as a conversational guide during interviews.

Your resume cannot tell your complete story; however, it should highlight your experiences and skills for a particular position so that an employer will be compelled to take a closer look at you by inviting you to interview.

Your resume must be perfect. Many employers receive hundreds of resumes for each open position and are looking for easy ways to narrow the pool of applicants. Proofread your resume and have others also check for typographical and spelling errors and incorrect grammar usage. Avoid the temptation to exaggerate or mislead, as the damage resulting from doing so can be irreparable to your bar fitness eligibility and career.

### **Resume Samples and Templates**

The Career Development Office (CDO) has developed resume samples and typeable templates. These documents, available on the CDO [website](#), incorporate best practices in resume writing. We encourage you to use these documents as a starting point when creating your resume.

### **Resume Reproduction and Distribution**

When submitting resumes via hard copy, use high-quality 8.5" x 11" bond paper in a neutral shade (e.g., white or ivory) and matching envelopes. Use preprinted labels or print the address directly onto the envelope using an ink jet or laser printer.

When submitting resumes electronically, convert your resume into Adobe PDF format. This will ensure the receiver is able to view the document exactly as you intended. When sending applications via email, the body of your message should be a short transmittal note with your resume and cover letter attached to the email as PDFs.

### **Resume Length**

In most cases, your resume should be one page. Students with significant work experience (approximately 10 or more years) prior to law school may have a two-page resume. Also, a two-page resume is acceptable for some public sector positions for which you have substantial related experience.

## **Content and Format**

Your resume should have at least two sections – Education and Experience (with Education listed first). Optional additional sections include Publications, Community Service and Additional Information.

After gaining post-graduate experience, you will reverse the Experience and Education sections (with Experience detailed first). Optional sections (e.g., Memberships and Professional Affiliations) may follow the Education section. A Bar Admissions section (more details below) may be listed first or last on your resume.

## **Graphics, Layout and Font**

Use bold text, italics, underlining or all capital letters to highlight various elements of your resume, but use them sparingly. You also may experiment with margins, type sizes and fonts. We recommend that your margins are at least 0.75" on all four sides, and that you use a type size no smaller than 11 point. Consider using 12-point Arial and 1" margins if you need to fill the page; use 11-point Times New Roman and 0.75" margins if you have difficulty fitting everything on one page.

Graphics should be limited to the use of horizontal lines and simple bullets (• or ■), and they should be used consistently. Use the border feature to create a horizontal divider line, rather than a long line of dashes. Use the tab stop marker and tab alignment features instead of the space bar to align certain resume elements. To control the spacing between lines and throughout your resume, make sure the document is formatted with single line spacing and no automatic spacing between paragraphs.

When listing dates on your resume, be consistent in formatting. Use en-dashes rather than hyphens (i.e., May 2012 – September 2012, not May 2012-September 2012). Spell out months and years (not 9/2012).

Given the conservative nature of the legal profession, your resume should stand out because of its content, *not* because of unique formatting, graphics or colors.

## **Consistency**

Employers use your resume as a proxy for your level of attention to detail and drafting ability. Be consistent in all sections of your resume. For example, if you use the abbreviation "B.A." for your undergraduate degree, use "J.D." for your law degree; if you write out Bachelor of Arts, write out Juris Doctor. The same applies to state names (either spell them all out or abbreviate them all). Moreover, be consistent with the use of the serial commas; either use them throughout your resume and cover letter before conjunctions, or not at all.

## **Contact Information**

Your name, address, telephone number and email address should be on the top of your resume. Your name may be capitalized in a larger, bold font (several point sizes larger than the rest of the text, up to 16-point font). Use your full formal name including your

middle initial. However, if your preferred name is your middle name, you may use your first initial and your middle name (Example 1). If your preferred name is not a derivative of your first or middle name, the preferred name should be noted in parenthesis and quotation marks after your given name (Example 2).

EXAMPLE 1

**J. ANTON LEONARD**

5400 Stuart Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23226  
jleonard@richmond.edu • 804.555.2344

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EXAMPLE 2

**SOON YUN (“EMERY”) BUNTING**

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1234 Briarcliff Place, Richmond, VA 23226

804-232-8000 / sybunting@richmond.edu

**Address**

Your local address should be centered beneath your name. If applying to locations to which you have a geographic tie (family or a significant other), include a local and permanent address (Example 3). Ensure that correspondence to you at any address provided on your resume will be handled in a timely manner. Also, include a phone number and your richmond.edu email address at the top of your resume.

EXAMPLE 3

**JEFFERSON A. LEONARD**

jleonard@richmond.edu • 804.555.2344

5400 Stuart Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23226

25 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Apt. 6D  
New York, NY 10017

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**Education**

Begin your Education section with University of Richmond School of Law. Then, list your other educational experiences in reverse chronological order. Include the school name in bold font, followed by the location and degree date (not dates of attendance) for each institution attended.

- List the law school as “University of Richmond School of Law.”
- Include “Candidate for” degree name, and anticipated graduation date if you are a current student. Example: “*Candidate for Juris Doctor, May 2016.*” Italicize

degree names. Note that the degree for which you are studying is a juris doctor, not a juris doctorate.

- If you are a dual degree candidate, include both anticipated degrees in a single entry (if you will be obtaining both degrees simultaneously) or use a separate entry for each degree and academic unit (Example 4).

#### EXAMPLE 4

##### **EDUCATION**

##### **University of Richmond**

*Candidate for Juris Doctor and Master of Business Administration*

**Richmond, VA**

May 2015

or

##### **EDUCATION**

##### **University of Richmond School of Law**

*Candidate for Juris Doctor*

**Richmond, VA**

May 2015

##### **University of Richmond, Robins School of Business**

*Master of Business Administration*

**Richmond, VA**

December 2015

- You may include your law school GPA (recommended if it is 3.0 or higher) if you would like.
- You may list your class rank as a number (e.g., 23/161) or percentile (e.g., Top 15%).
- Include Latin honors. Example: “*Bachelor of Arts, cum laude, in Political Science, May 2013.*”
- Exclude your LSAT score.
- List awards, distinctions, and scholarships under the relevant school. Law school honors include CALI Awards for Excellence and participation on a law journal.
- Include significant activities under the relevant school, not in a separate section.
- List study abroad experience under your home school using the formal name of the program. For Richmond Law’s Cambridge program, you would list: “Study Abroad: Summer Law Program at Emmanuel College, Cambridge University, 2013.”
- If you are a transfer student, list Richmond Law first, and then the law school from which you transferred. If you received academic honors or were invited to join a journal at your prior law school, you may include that information (Example 5).
- Typically, you should not include your high school on your resume. If you attended a preparatory school that is well known nationally or in the area to which you are applying, you may list it as the last item in your Education section. Do not include honors and activities with your high school.

## EXAMPLE 5

### **EDUCATION**

**University of Richmond School of Law**

*Candidate for Juris Doctor*

**Richmond, VA**

May 2015

**Charleston School of Law**

*First-Year Student*

**Charleston, SC**

2012 - 2013

- GPA: 3.998
- Dean's Award for Excellence in Contracts (Fall 2012)
- Invited to join *Charleston Law Review*

### **Experience**

List your work experience in reverse chronological order (with the most recent employer listed first). Use bold font for the employer name, city and state. Use italics for your position title and list it below the employer name and location.

- This section is titled "Experience" intentionally to incorporate professional work experience, internships, clinical placements, volunteer activities and any other activities through which you have developed relevant experience, whether paid or not.
- If the name of an employer is not well recognized, include a brief indication as to the industry and type of work (i.e., add "mortgage" or "finance" in the job description).
- Use either bullet points or paragraph form to describe your job responsibilities. Use action verbs to describe your work in each position. (See below for examples of action verbs.)
- Be clear, concise, and consistent in detailing your experience. Describe relevant projects, issues, and practice areas (e.g., "Conducted legal research and prepared memoranda for complex environmental impact litigation.") Think about the overall experience and how what you learned will translate and be valuable to another employer. You may add a brief description of the case or deal on which you worked, without disclosing confidential information.
- Avoid vague expressions such as "assisted with" or "gained exposure to."
- Use past tense action phrases for former positions and present tense for current ones.
- Avoid industry-related jargon unless you are seeking employment within that specific field.
- If you have accepted a position, but have not started it, you may list the employer's name, city/state, your title, and when you will begin work. Do not describe your presumed job duties. Noting a future position comes up most frequently when you have been selected for an upcoming clinical placement.

### **Additional Information**

This optional section may include language skills, personal interests and accomplishments, affiliations and special skills. When listing language skills, describe your level of proficiency (Example 6).

Interests noted on your resume should be unrelated to your course of study (or Richmond Law or another institution) or professional experience and not otherwise evident from your resume.

#### **EXAMPLE 6**

##### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Language Skills:** Proficient in written and spoken Spanish

**Professional Memberships:** Member, Young Lawyers Section, Richmond Bar Association (2012 – present)

### **Publications**

If you are published, include legal publications using Bluebook citation format and other publications in the format appropriate for the genre.

### **Bar Admissions**

After passing the Bar exam, you may note this accomplishment in a separate section of your resume (Example 7). Alumni who are admitted to practice in certain courts may include that information as well.

#### **EXAMPLE 7**

##### **BAR ADMISSIONS**

Admitted to practice in Virginia; Eastern District of Virginia

### **References**

Create a separate [Reference List](#) using the header from your resume. Do not include references on your resume or state that “references will be provided upon request.”

### **Action Verb Usage**

Effective resumes and cover letters employ active voice. Action verbs describe your experience and achievements in a persuasive, concise manner. Please refer to the following list of action verbs to replace passive verbs (variants of “to be”) on your resume and cover letter drafts.

accelerated  
accomplished  
achieved

acquired  
adapted  
addressed

adhered  
adjusted  
administered

advised  
allocated  
analyzed  
anticipated  
applied  
appointed  
appraised  
approved  
arbitrated  
arranged  
assembled  
assessed  
assigned  
assumed  
assured  
attended  
audited  
authored  
authorized  
awarded  
balanced  
began  
bought  
briefed  
brought  
budgeted  
built  
calculated  
cataloged  
chaired  
changed  
clarified  
classified  
closed  
coached  
collaborated  
collected  
combined  
communicated  
compared  
compiled  
completed  
composed  
computed  
conceived

conceptualized  
concluded  
conditioned  
conducted  
consolidated  
constructed  
continued  
contracted  
contributed  
controlled  
convinced  
coordinated  
corrected  
corresponded  
counseled  
crafted  
created  
criticized  
critiqued  
customized  
debated  
decided  
defined  
delegated  
delivered  
demonstrated  
designed  
determined  
developed  
devised  
diagnosed  
digested  
directed  
discovered  
dispatched  
drafted  
dramatized  
earned  
edited  
educated  
elected  
employed  
encouraged  
engineered  
enlarged

enlisted  
ensured  
entered  
established  
estimated  
evaluated  
examined  
excelled  
executed  
exercised  
expanded  
expedited  
explained  
explored  
extracted  
fabricated  
facilitated  
filed  
financed  
forecasted  
foresaw  
formulated  
forwarded  
fostered  
founded  
gained  
gathered  
generated  
governed  
graded  
greeted  
grossed  
guided  
handled  
heightened  
helped  
highlighted  
hiked  
housed  
hunted  
identified  
illustrated  
implemented  
improved  
included

incorporated  
increased  
indicated  
influenced  
informed  
initiated  
innovated  
inspected  
inspired  
instituted  
instructed  
insured  
integrated  
interpreted  
interviewed  
introduced  
investigated  
joined  
labored  
launched  
learned  
lectured  
led  
licensed  
located  
made  
maintained  
managed  
mapped  
marketed  
maximized  
mediated  
met  
minimized  
moderated  
modified  
monitored  
motivated  
moved  
named  
negotiated  
netted  
observed  
opened  
operated

ordered  
organized  
overcame  
paid  
painted  
participated  
perceived  
performed  
persuaded  
pinpointed  
pioneered  
placed  
planned  
played  
policed  
prepared  
presented  
prevailed  
prioritized  
processed  
produced  
profited  
programmed  
prohibited  
projected  
promoted  
proofed  
proposed  
proved  
provided  
publicized  
purchased  
qualified  
ran  
rated  
realized  
received  
recognized  
recommended  
reconciled  
recorded  
reduced  
referred  
rehabilitated  
reinforced

rendered  
renovated  
reorganized  
repaired  
reported  
represented  
rescued  
researched  
retrieved  
returned  
revamped  
revealed  
reviewed  
revised  
revitalized  
saved  
scheduled  
scouted  
screened  
scrutinized  
selected  
sent  
served  
shaped  
showed  
sifted  
simplified  
smoothed  
solved  
sought  
spearheaded  
specified  
spoke  
started  
stated  
stimulated  
stopped  
strategized  
streamlined  
strengthened  
structured  
suggested  
summarized  
supervised  
supported



surveyed  
systematized  
tabulated  
targeted  
taught  
tested  
totaled  
toured  
tracked  
trained  
transferred  
transformed  
translated  
traveled  
treated  
tutored  
uncovered  
updated  
validated  
verified  
won  
wrote