

CAREER CORNER

NEWS ARTICLES & OTHER
JOBSEARCH TIPS AND IDEAS
WRITTEN BY EXPERTS
IN THEIR FIELD

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resume

Critiquing

"Judgment Day"



Does Your Resume Rate With the Best?

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December's
Resume.

Once a month, legal professionals will put their cover letters and resumes against a panel of career counselors. The counselors will rate each cover letter and resume between *one and five gavels*, five being the best. Their comments on the resume are listed below.

E-mail: ResumeCritiquing@LBPC.com

(Your name, contact info, places of employment will remain confidential)

The Critiques:

Curtis Linder's Resume Critique



December 2013 Resume; Missing Key Items and Poor Page Formatting.

Let us start with what is missing from this Three Gavel resume. Section Heading Titles: look better with a colon after the titles. And those Section Heading Titles look odd and adrift in the center of the page, especially when everything else is left justified. The page break is poorly placed - separating a series of bullet points that should be kept intact at all cost. And page two is not paginated and is missing author's name. The phrase, "Positions Held," is redundant. The text after the subheading "achievements:" [note the use of the colon there] in her Education section is in parentheses and should not be. Back to the top section on page one - that section does not have a label and would look better with one. Such as Summary: With some page formatting work and other cosmetic changes - this could be a four or five-gavel resume.

Curtis Linder, President and Owner Linder Legal Staffing Inc.

Chere Estrin's Resume Critique



This is a very good resume. The only "warning" sign is that the candidate finally made it to General Counsel only to be terminated less than one year later. If this was a lay-off, it would be good to note that either in the cover letter or within the resume. Minor things include a missing comma at the end of "In addition," and negotiation should be negotiations. Best of luck to this candidate.

4 gavels

Chere Estrin, Chairperson Board of Directors, The Organization of Legal Professionals

Sarah Haley's Resume Critique



I give this resume 3 gavels. This is a great example of a candidate who has a fantastic background but does not present it well on paper. The resume should be concise, organized, and carefully tailored to give the reader a clear sense of the person after scanning it for ten seconds. Overall, there is an emphasis on time and dates, which detracts from this person's background. There is a much stronger way to start the summary than "20 years of experience." The summary (if used) should focus on specific accomplishments and relevant skills, and never use first person. It should essentially summarize the knowledge and skills required for the target position (the sentence under "General Counsel," for example, would be great in the summary section). The format in the experience section, similarly, should not start with dates; rather, the name of the employer or the title should be first. The bullet points should start on the first line, with the most important listed first. They can be divided by practice area or skill set, but here I do not see a clear difference between her responsibilities and accomplishments. For "previous" positions, are any of them relevant to the target position? It might be helpful to know, for example, what she focused on during her four years at a firm. The activities under University are hard to read (bullets would be easier), and the last two entries do not have dates or explanations (if they are not recent they should be removed). The last section should be in reverse chronological order with entries over 10 years old removed.

One more thing - it's Juris Doctor, not Juris Doctorate.

Sarah Haley, Associate Director Career Services at The John Marshall Law School

Continued on next Page.

CAREER CORNER

Continued

Nancy Glazer's Resume Critique



Law,

You certainly have an exceptional professional history. I am sure you would excel in any position you choose. I would like your resume to help get you there.

Here are some easy ways to better demonstrate your talents:

- The career summary/highlights should be in bullet form. It is too bad that busy professionals are distracted all day by incoming stimuli and that no one has time to read anymore. Make your resume easy for the busy employer to read and understand. I prefer to cast a "summary" instead as "Career Highlights or a "Profile of Accomplishments."
- Like Curtis, I do not think you need to state, "Positions Held."
- If you say \$8 million, you do not need the word, "dollars."
- "Intergovernmental and Community Affairs" repeats your exact earlier phrase and adds no more value.
- Lawyers and most professionals start their bullet points with a past tense action verb; your bullets are inconsistent.
- What issues did you resolve as the legal advisor to the HR Director?
- "Functioned as" is awkward.
- I'd love to know more specifics of what you actually did when you "served as a liason, identified govt funding opportunities, supervised and managed contracts adjusted claims, etc. You talk about your overall tasks without really telling us what you specifically did in some given situations and how you helped the situation for the better.
- Your first bullet in your key accomplishment section is stupendous; it should be the first thing we read about and learn about you.
- The second bullet is just an overview of what you told us before in the previous section.
- The third accomplishment is huge! Details! Same with the fourth bullet. "Dollars" not needed.
- Last bullet— fantastic! These should all be on page one. In fact, everything having to do with the City PD should be together on page one.
- The name of your school is University City School of Law.
- You earned a Juris Doctor, not Doctorate. Don't lose credibility with the easy stuff
- All of your many achievements should be in bullets.
- You did not receive your Bachelor's Degree from the law school.
- When did you participate in NITA? Be consistent.
- Were you certified by the SBA in mediation? Does the SBA have a certification program for mediation?
- Your next large section should be split into 2 sections, the first awards, and the second, professional affiliations.
- You start with LBB and only later, you tell us what that is.

Law, you are obviously a very accomplished attorney and leader in the community. This draft of your resume tells me you have exemplary experiences, but maybe you are not so detail-oriented, which you must be to make a good impression. Don't be in such a hurry to blow through your resume and just get it done. It is a reflection of you; make sure it makes sense and presents you in the most professional way.

2 gavels.

Nancy Mackevich Glazer, Esq., Manager, Legal Launch, LLC



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