



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

The Law School

Resume Guide

Career Development Office

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INTRODUCTION

Resumes are a vital part of the interviewing and job search process. A resume serves as an introduction to prospective employers and is a brief yet important representation of your non-legal writing abilities. You should assume that a reader will spend no more than 30 seconds on an initial scan of your resume. An organized and informative resume is crucial to offer an employer a good snapshot of your accomplishments and experience. Therefore, it needs to clearly and concisely highlight the most important aspects of your background and what you have to offer a prospective employer. Conversely, your resume must be able to withstand strict scrutiny from employers, who are likely to scour it for information while simultaneously gauging your attention to detail. As such, your resume must be absolutely free of errors and impeccably formatted.

There is no such thing as the “perfect” resume; creating your resume is indeed an art just as it is a science. If you follow the general rules included in this guide, you will be able to prepare a resume that is professional and properly exhibits your skills, prior experiences, and accolades. The following rules are generally recommended by a variety of writers and readers of resumes, but keep in mind that there is still room for individual preferences in writing resumes. Individual choices are up to you, but never attempt to substitute form for content. Most importantly, take great care when drafting your resume. A poorly written and disorganized resume will not serve you well. Even the best of credentials are minimized when presented in a poorly composed resume containing misspelled words and typographical errors. Also, by using one of the two Notre Dame Law School resume templates available on the Career Development Office’s website, you know your formatting is laid out in a manner employers prefer and may be updated easily with embedded tabs.

RESUME BASICS

What are employers looking for in a resume? When asked about their preferences, a national panel of attorneys was unanimous in asking that resumes be:

1. **Readable.** It should be organized and follow a logical sequence of information with no time gaps.
Account for all periods of time.
2. **Believable.** It must be an honest portrayal of your previous experiences.
3. **Informative.** It should enable a reader to find out as much about you as she/he can in as brief a time as possible.
4. **Balanced.** It should be both a persuasive and informative document. Rather than state that you are a “self-starter” or a “diligent worker,” use specific examples from work and other experiences to demonstrate these attributes.

An effective resume provides a one-page summary of your educational and professional background that highlights the experience (legal and non-legal) and attributes you possess that are most relevant to the position for which you are applying.

CONTENT

Some basic information needs to be included in any resume you write. These basic categories are listed below. Before writing your resume, take a personal inventory. Write down the experiences and skills you acquired through work or school. Consult your law school applications, which likely included all the honors, accomplishments, and activities you achieved while an undergraduate student. Categorize your inventory under logical headings, as effective resume drafting requires careful organization.

Please use one of our resume templates to guide you while you prepare your resume. If you have specific questions regarding if/how certain information should be listed on your resume, include the information in the manner you think best and submit it to a CDO counselor for review. It is easier for a CDO counselor to subtract or edit information on your resume than to conjure up prior experiences you

have not included. Avoid being vague or overly general when drafting your resume. Be specific with your descriptions of the work you have completed. For example, simply indicating that you “conducted research and drafted memoranda” is not enough. Include a brief description of the issues you researched and wrote about so the reader better understands the nature of your experience.

When deciding what content to include or exclude, consider your intended career path and the employers to which you are applying. Keep in mind that your resume is not supposed to be an exhaustive accounting of every club you ever joined, every award you ever received, and every task you ever completed at every job you ever had. Think strategically about the content you include and the message it conveys to your potential employers. For example, if you intend to pursue a career as a prosecutor and are applying to prosecutor’s offices, you might choose to include your membership in the Future Prosecuting Attorney’s Council but omit your membership in the Business Law Forum. Similarly, you might devote more space to your 2L spring externship with the St. Joseph County Prosecutor’s Office and less space to your 1L summer internship with the Internal Revenue Service.

RESUME SECTIONS

Any resume you prepare will include certain basic information, such as your name and contact information, educational background, and work experience. The basic categories that may appear on your resume are listed below. Sample resumes appear at the end of this guide and provide examples of how these categories may be constructed.

1. **Name and Contact Information.** Your name should appear in bold letters at the top of your resume. Nicknames are not appropriate. Your address, telephone number and e-mail should be displayed prominently. If your current address is temporary, consider providing a permanent mailing address as well (e.g., the home address of a parent or family member), especially if the address is in the same geographical location as the employer to which you are applying. While an excellent idea to include your home address if you are applying near your hometown, consider eliminating your permanent address if it is too far afield from your target employer’s location (e.g.,

from San Francisco and applying to work in Atlanta). If you do so, move your current address to where your permanent address was located and move your email address and telephone number to where your current address was previously listed.

2. **Education.** List schools in reverse chronological order beginning with law school. Indicate the schools you attended, degrees you received or will receive and when, and your major field of study in college. Mention individual courses or a special course emphasis if they would be of special interest to a particular employer (e.g., science or engineering courses lending themselves nicely to patent litigation), but do not list every course you have taken. This is especially true when you are tailoring your resume to an employer in a specific area of law.

It is your choice whether to include your GPA; however, the CDO recommends including your GPA if it is a 3.0 or above. If you exclude your GPA, prospective employers may assume that it is below a 3.0. When listing your GPA, you may round up from the thousandths position but not from the hundredths position. Put another way, your hundredth number may be rounded up but the tenth number cannot. For example, a 3.259 can become a 3.26. It cannot, however, become a 3.30. In no situation can the tenth number change. Even a 3.299 cannot be bumped to a 3.30.

Do not create separate headings for legal and non-legal education. The delineation is obvious from the names of the schools and activities listed. Too many headings are distracting. List the honors and activities under the relevant educational experience. You may include scholastic honors and achievements, publications, journal membership, moot court, clinical programs, dean's list, and other activities in which you have participated (e.g., athletics, debate, dramatics, fraternities). Including these items demonstrates the breadth of your personal development, your leadership ability, and your ability to handle a variety of tasks at one time. Honors and achievement listings often serve as a springboard for discussion in an interview.

3. **Experience.** Highlight job titles and employer names (include city and state) and present your list in reverse chronological order. Include significant jobs you have held, even if they are not

connected with the law. Focus on skills that transfer to the legal profession (e.g., researching, writing, public speaking) or to the duties you would perform in the job for which you are applying. Emphasize any law-related work you performed. Designate the value associated with the work you performed when it is significant (e.g., one bullet on your resume might be “Drafted successful appellate brief to U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit affirming a \$1.2 million settlement in favor of Chapter 7 trustee in bankruptcy.”) Work performed as part of your educational experience should be included in this section (e.g., legal clinic experience, research for a professor, or work on a pro bono project). Emphasize your most recent and relevant positions, and provide fewer details about more distant or less relevant work experience. For some prior positions, the descriptive title will suffice.

If you worked in a legal capacity, note the work product you completed and the subject areas in which you were working. For example, you would want to note that you “Researched and wrote memoranda on issues involving TOPIC 1, TOPIC 2, and TOPIC 3.” Your topic insertions in that example should be neither overly broad nor too specific. While “criminal law” may be too vague and “Model Penal Code §2.01(b)(3)” is too exact, the choice of “white collar crime” or “wire fraud” would work nicely.

Highlight those assignments and accomplishments that indicate managerial or organizational skills. Increasing sales/productivity, supervising a staff, or training personnel are examples of items to include.

Include descriptions for the summers/years you worked beginning in college. Do not leave time gaps on your resume, if possible.

4. **Military Service.** A separate category should list the branch of service, period of service, rank at time of discharge, place where stationed (may be omitted if the service was over a long period of time), special educational achievements/opportunities, awards, and any other pertinent information.

5. **Bar Certifications and Professional Affiliations.** List your bar certifications (if applicable) and professional affiliations in this section.
6. **Publications.** Demonstrate that you possess professional writing skills by listing any writing you published. List the most recent publications first, by publication date, using correct legal citation form. In the alternative, the proper place for this may be under your educational listings or activities.
7. **Language Skills.** Foreign language skills and the level of your proficiency, both written and spoken, should be noted. Be prepared to be interviewed in the language you list if you state that you are fluent or conversant. You can also title this section simply SKILLS if you have other appropriate certifications or skills to include. Refer to the Interagency Language Roundtable Scale (ILR Scale) in order to determine your level of ability and its title (e.g., professional working proficiency). You may also place your study abroad experience in this section if you attended an institution aligning with your foreign language.
8. **Interests.** When possible, focus on interests or activities demonstrating discipline, teamwork, leadership, initiative, confidence or dedication—traits of successful lawyers. Avoid very general activities that are unlikely to spark conversation. Many resumes will list a physical activity (e.g., kayaking), a cultural interest (e.g., German opera), and/or something intriguing (e.g., metallurgy). In general, this section is not necessary and should not be longer than one or two lines.

FINAL POINTS

After drafting your resume, proofread it carefully several times and ask a friend to do so as well.

Send a draft of your resume in Word format to a CDO counselor for review prior to submitting it to employers. Always submit your resume to employers in PDF format.

A list of common resume concerns follows. Please read them before drafting your resume. In addition, we have included a list of action verbs to aid you in crafting job descriptions, as well as sample resumes prepared using our resume templates.

COMMON RESUME ISSUES

DOs

- Do use one of the Notre Dame Law School resume templates.
- Do list your GPA exactly as it appears on your transcript or rounded to the hundredth position.
- Do list your degree as “Juris Doctor” – there is no such degree as a “Juris Doctorate.”
- Do use action verbs to describe your experience. Use the past tense for completed work.
- Do use consistent formatting throughout your resume. If you choose to abbreviate something, do so consistently throughout. If you choose to use a period at the end of a job description line, do so on every line.
- Do eliminate all errors.
- Do have multiple proofreaders to ensure all errors have been eliminated.

DON'Ts

- Do not exceed one page in length.
- Do not change the font or reduce the font size (10-point font is the minimum) to get your resume down to one page. Instead, think strategically about which content should be cut to best tailor your resume to the employer.
- Do not list your GPA if it is below 3.0 unless your employer requests it.
- Do not estimate class rank. Notre Dame Law School does not rank its students, and an employer seeking verification of a stated rank will be informed as such.
- Do not include an “Objectives” section.
- Do not include high school information or LSAT score.
- Do not include a list of references or state “References available upon request.”

ACTION WORDS

accelerated	computed	founded	proposed
accomplished	compounded	generated	protected
achieved	conceived	guided	proved
acquired	conducted	handled	provided
activated	conserved	increased	purchased
adapted	consolidated	identified	ran
adjusted	constructed	implemented	realized
administered	consulted	improved	received
advised	controlled	influenced	recommended
advocated	coordinated	initiate	recorded
analyzed	corresponded	installed	reduced
applied	counseled	instituted	referred
approved	created	instructed	reinforced
allocated	criticized	interpreted	rendered
analyzed	dealt	interviewed	reorganized
annotated	defined	invented	reported
anticipated	delegated	launched	represented
applied	delivered	led	researched
appraised	demonstrated	lectured	restored
arbitrated	designed	logged	revamped
argued	detected	maintained	revealed
arranged	determined	managed	reviewed
articulated	deterred	motivated	revised
assembled	developed	navigated	routed
assessed	devised	negotiated	scheduled
assigned	diagnosed	obtained	selected
assisted	directed	offered	served
audited	discovered	operated	set up
authored	dispensed	ordered	simplified
balanced	disproved	organized	sold
briefed	distributed	originated	solved
brought	drew up	oversaw	strengthened
budgeted	edited	participated	streamlined
built	eliminated	performed	structured
calculated	enlisted	planned	studied
catalogued	established	pinpointed	supervised
categorized	evaluated	prepared	supplied
chaired	examined	prescribed	supported
charted	expanded	presented	taught
clarified	expedited	processed	tested
collected	explored	produced	trained
communicated	facilitated	proficient	translated
completed	filed	programmed	won
composed	formulated	promoted	wrote

NICOLE JOHNSON

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New York, NY 21010

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10 Holmes Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame Law School

Juris Doctor Candidate

GPA: TBD

Notre Dame, Indiana

May 2019

- Women's Law Forum, Member
- Legal Voices for Children & Youth, Member
- Black Law Student Association, First-Year Representative

University of Wisconsin

B.A. in Sociology and Economics, cum laude

GPA: 3.50

Madison, Wisconsin

June 2016

- Bradford Scholar for Outstanding Senior Thesis Research
- *Wisconsin Herald*, Guest Columnist
- Student Senate, Senior Class Representative
- Women's Center, Community Outreach Chair
- Varsity Swim Team, Co-Captain
- Senior Thesis: *AIDS and Health in the Third World: A Case Study of the Spread of AIDS in Kenya*

EXPERIENCE

National Association for Women

Staff Assistant

New York, New York

June 2016 – August 2016

- Staffed an information referral service for women dealing with various legal issues, including domestic violence, rape, divorce, custody, health care, and employment
- Wrote press releases, drafted correspondence and tracked pending legislation

University of Wisconsin, Department of Sociology

Teaching Assistant to Professor Mick Dugan

Madison, Wisconsin

August 2014 – May 2016

- Graded exams and essay papers for Sociology of Modern Europe section
- Held weekly office hours for sixty students

Wisconsin State Assembly, Senator Desiree Gould

Legislative Intern

Madison, Wisconsin

May 2014 – August 2014

- Researched and analyzed state legislative issues regarding eminent domain
- Contacted key state officials and citizens to testify at committee hearings

VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY WORK

- **Volunteer Fundraiser, End Poverty Now Concert Series** (*July 2012 – August 2012*) New York, New York
- **Tutor, Sin Guerra** (*January 2011*) Mexico City, Mexico

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Spanish – Limited Working Proficiency

INTERESTS

Telenovelas, Surfing, and Baking Pies

Nicole L. Johnson

(574) 555-1234 ♦ njohnson12@nd.edu

125 East 25th Street ♦ New York, NY 21010

10 Holmes Hall ♦ Notre Dame, IN 46556

EDUCATION

The University of Notre Dame Law School, Notre Dame, Indiana

Juris Doctor Candidate, May 2019

GPA: TBD

ACTIVITIES: Women's Law Forum, Member; Legal Voices for Children & Youth, Member;
Black Law Students Association, First-Year Representative

University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Economics, cum laude, June 2016

GPA: 3.5

HONORS: Bradford Scholar for Outstanding Senior Thesis Research; Senior Thesis: *AIDS and Health in the Third World: A Case Study of the Spread of AIDS in Kenya*

ACTIVITIES: *Wisconsin Herald*, Guest Columnist; Student Senate, Senior Class Representative;
Women's Center, Community Outreach Chair; Varsity Swim Team, Co-Captain

EXPERIENCE

National Association for Women, New York, New York

Staff Assistant, June 2016 – August 2016

- Staffed an information referral service for women dealing with various legal issues, including domestic violence, rape, divorce, custody, health care, and employment
- Wrote press releases, drafted correspondence and tracked pending legislation

University of Wisconsin, Department of Sociology, Madison, Wisconsin

Teaching Assistant to Professor Mick Dugan, August 2014 – May 2016

- Graded exams and essay papers for Sociology of Modern Europe section
- Held weekly office hours for sixty students

Wisconsin State Assembly, Senator Desiree Gould, Madison, Wisconsin

Legislative Intern, May 2014 – August 2014

- Researched and analyzed state legislative issues regarding eminent domain
- Contacted key state officials and citizens to testify at committee hearings

VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY WORK

Volunteer Fundraiser, End Poverty Now Concert Series, New York, New York

Organizer, July 2012-August 2012

Sin Guerra, Mexico City, Mexico

Tutor, January 2011

LANGUAGES

Spanish – Limited Working Proficiency

INTERESTS

Telenovelas; Surfing; Baking Pies

LESLIE OWENS

53 Elm St. Apt. 2
South Bend, IN 46862

415.555.9378
lowens9@nd.edu

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame Law School

Notre Dame, Indiana

Juris Doctor Candidate

May 2018

GPA: 3.82

- *Notre Dame Law Review*, Staff Member
- Student Bar Association, Vice President
- Merit Fellowship (Half-Tuition Merit Scholarship), Recipient
- GALILEE (Group Alternative Live-In Legal Education), Chicago Planning Committee
- Dean's Award (Highest Grade): Contracts, Constitutional Law I, and Torts

Wayne State University

Detroit, Michigan

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, cum laude

May 2015

GPA: 3.41

- Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society
- Women's Cycling Team
- National Achievement Scholar
- Community Problem Solving, Co-Director

EXPERIENCE

Notre Dame Legal Aid Clinic

Notre Dame, Indiana

Certified Law Clerk

August 2016 – December 2016

- Acted as lead counsel for clients in family and domestic violence matters before local courts
- Executed all motions, briefs, hearings, client interviews and negotiations with opposing counsel
- Devised legal strategy under the supervision of licensed clinical faculty members

Glibson and Cole

Chicago, Illinois

Summer Associate

June 2016 – August 2016

- Researched and wrote memoranda on issues involving laches, legal malpractice, and municipal zoning laws
- Prepared recommendations for client comments during administrative rulemaking period
- Worked on pro bono project leading to incorporation of local nonprofit organization

Families in Need, Inc.

New London, Indiana

Services Coordinator

May 2015 – August 2015

- Provided social service referrals for families in crisis to facilitate ability of families to remain healthy and intact
- Researched, initiated and maintained community contacts for various referral organizations

LANGUAGE SKILLS

French – Native Proficiency

INTERESTS

Tennis, Bluegrass Music, and Competitive Logrolling

Leslie M. Owens

(415) 555-9378 ♦ LOwens9@nd.edu
53 Elm St. Apt 2 ♦ South Bend, IN 46862

EDUCATION

The University of Notre Dame Law School, Notre Dame, Indiana

Juris Doctor Candidate, May 2018

GPA: 3.82

- HONORS: Dean's Award (Highest Grade): Contracts, Constitutional Law, and Torts; Half-Tuition Scholarship
- ACTIVITIES: *Notre Dame Law Review*, Staff Member; Student Bar Association, Vice President; GALILEE (Group Alternative Live-in Legal Education), Chicago Planning Committee

Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, cum laude, May 2015

GPA: 3.41

- HONORS & ACTIVITIES: Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society; Women's Cycling Team; National Achievement Scholar; Community Problem Solving, Co-Director

EXPERIENCE

Notre Dame Legal Aid Clinic, Notre Dame, Indiana

Certified Law Clerk, August 2016 – December 2016

- Acted as lead counsel for clients in family and domestic violence matters before local courts
- Executed all motions, briefs, hearings, client interviews, and negotiations with opposing counsel
- Devised legal strategy under the supervision of licensed clinical faculty members

Gibson and Cole, Chicago, Illinois

Summer Associate, June 2016 – August 2016

- Researched and wrote memoranda on issues involving laches, legal malpractice, and municipal zoning laws, including memoranda arguing that Chicago zoning law unconstitutionally prohibits food trucks from operating within city limits
- Prepared recommendations for client comments during administrative rulemaking period
- Worked on pro bono project leading to incorporation of local non-profit organization

Families in Need, Inc., New London, Indiana

Services Coordinator, May 2015 – August 2015

- Provided social service referrals for families in crisis to facilitate healthy and intact families
- Researched, initiated, and maintained community contacts for various referral organizations

LANGUAGES

French – Native Proficiency

INTERESTS

Tennis; Bluegrass Music; Competitive Logrolling

TIMOTHY WALKER

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Little Rock, AR 71920

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28 Fischer Grad. Res., Apt. 2G
Notre Dame, IN 46556

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame Law School

Juris Doctor Candidate

GPA: 3.16

Notre Dame, Indiana
May 2018

- *Notre Dame Journal of Legislation*, Editor-in-Chief
- Native American Law Students Association, Secretary
- American Constitutional Society, Symposium Chair

University of Michigan

Bachelor of Arts in English, magna cum laude

GPA: 3.72

Ann Arbor, Michigan
May 2014

- Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society
- Michigan Club of Arkansas
- National Achievement Scholar
- Community Problem Solving (Michigan-Ann Arbor Community Group), Co-Director
- Circa Blue (Community Service Group), President

EXPERIENCE

Center for Human Rights

Summer Intern

Little Rock, Arkansas
May 2016 – August 2016

- Researched legal issues on several death penalty cases and drafted motions and briefs
- Represented clients in pre-trial hearings under supervision of lead counsel
- Performed client interviews, observed court proceedings, and investigated private probation system in indigent cases in both Arkansas and Missouri

Smythe Community Ventures

Marketing and Business Development Manager

San Francisco, California
March 2015 – August 2015

- Developed and maintained strategic partnerships to support portfolio companies and analyzed social return data
- Handled marketing, communications and public relations, including website redesign and major fundraising events
- Managed external event, web, and public relations consultants and interns

Operations and Marketing Manager

June 2014 – March 2015

- Conducted financial reporting and managed operating budget of a \$1M nonprofit organization
- Worked with President on fund development strategy, execution, and evaluation
- Developed and produced the first annual report and marketing materials
- Managed administrative staff and interns

Save the Whales, Inc.

Intern

San Francisco, California
May 2013 – August 2013

- Implemented financial and administrative policies and procedures
- Served as contact for investor relations and created relationships with legal, accounting and insurance firms

INTERESTS

Marathon Swimming, Modernist Art, and Racquetball; Eagle Scout (2005)

Timothy A. Walker

(574) 555-1300 ♦ *twalker4@nd.edu*

2500 Zane Street ♦ Little Rock, AR 71920

28 Fischer Grad. Res., Apt. 2G ♦ Notre Dame, IN 46556

EDUCATION

The University of Notre Dame Law School, Notre Dame, Indiana

Juris Doctor Candidate, May 2018

GPA: 3.16

HONORS & ACTIVITIES: *Notre Dame Journal of Legislation*, Editor-in-Chief; Native American Law Students Association, Secretary; American Constitution Society, Symposium Chair

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Bachelor of Arts in English, magna cum laude, May 2014

GPA: 3.72

HONORS & ACTIVITIES: Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society; Michigan Club of Arkansas; Community Problem Solving (Michigan-Ann Arbor Community Group); Circa Blue (Community Service Group), President

EXPERIENCE

Center for Human Rights, Little Rock, Arkansas

Summer Intern, May 2016 – August 2016

- Researched legal issues on several death penalty cases and drafted motions and briefs
- Represented clients in pre-trial hearings under supervision of lead counsel
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Smythe Community Ventures, San Francisco, California

Marketing and Business Development Manager, March 2015 – August 2015

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Save the Whales, Inc., San Francisco, California

Intern, May 2013 – August 2013

- Implemented financial and administrative policies and procedures
- Served as contact for investor relations and created relationships with legal, accounting and insurance firms

INTERESTS

Marathon Swimming, Modernist Art, and Racquetball; Eagle Scout (2006)