# University of California, Berkeley School of Law

Resume Writing Workshop for LL.M.s and J.S.D.s September 2012



# What is a U.S.-Style Resume?

- One-page document highlighting education and relevant experience and skills
- Often your first opportunity to make a good impression
- Tailored marketing tool, not a biography
- Brief and concise, yet offers enough information to stimulate the employer's interest; every word should serve a purpose
- Does not include personal data (age, birth date, marital status, photos, religion, and health), computer skills, objectives, or references
- Typically would not include a statement of purpose or objectives
- Information is listed in reverse chronological format
- A "living" document that should be updated periodically

# General Guidelines on Resume Writing

- Be scrupulously honest
- Create a concise, yet informative, document that is easy to understand
  - This may require translating some information such as your initial degree, awards, activities, or articles you have written into English
- Remember that your resume is a marketing tool: it should be tailored to highlight your relevant strengths to each target employer
- Ensure that your resume is error-free, as it will serve as an example of your writing skills

# How Am I Going to Fit All My Information On One Page??!!



# The Process ...

- 1. Consider your target employer or job posting and the skills you wish to emphasize;
- 2. Prepare your draft;
- 3. Conduct a self-critique using CDO resources;
- 4. Revise your draft;
- 5. Submit for review by an LL.M. Career Advisor;
- 6. Incorporate LL.M. Career Advisor's edits;
- 7. Print for a final review;
- 8. Make final edits; and
- 9. Save as a PDF file (clearly labeled with "resume" and surname).

# **Key Considerations**

### Qualities Employers Seek in LL.M. Candidates

- Demonstrable ties to the country in which the employer has business interests
- Specialization in a specific area of law
- Excellent educational background
- Relevant work experience
- Good command of English

Your resume, tailored to your target employer, allows you to clearly demonstrate these qualities.

# The U.S.-Style Resume: An Overview

#### I. The Basics

- A. Format and style
- B. Reverse chronological order
- C. Length
- D. 30-second rule
- E. Things to avoid

#### II. The Specialized LL.M. Resume

- A. No "One Size Fits All" approach
  - May have significant experience
  - May have multiple academic institutions
- B. What are the important rules to follow?

# The U.S.-Style Resume: An Overview

- Easy to read (margins, font, clearly organized, order of sections)
- Tailored to the type of position and employer
- Clearly demonstrates specialty (coursework and experience)
- Treat as a writing sample (consistency in formatting and abbreviations; no typos)
- Living document ("grows" with you)
- Length (one vs. two pages)
- Delivery method (PDF not Word or printed on quality resume paper)

- I. Header
- II. Education or Experience
- III. Experience or Education
- IV. Professional Memberships
- V. Language Skills





VII. Interests (Only in Exceptional Circumstances)

Note: Some sections may be combined

#### Header

- Style, size, and length
- Use professional e-mail address
- Ensure telephone has professional voicemail
- Address: current vs. permanent

#### "Header" Samples:

#### Peigi Ming

1825 First Street • San Francisco, CA 94104 (415) 662-1234 • pming@law.berkeley.edu

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#### PAOLA MERCUTIO

(510) 291-8901; pmercutio@law.berkeley.edu

<u>Current Address</u> 123 The Street Berkeley, CA 94720 Permanent Address Rua Visconde 123 São Paolo-SP 04642-000 Brazil

#### **Education**

- List all institutions (Undergraduate, Law School, LL.M.)
- Include city, state, and country (if not U.S.) for each institution
- List proper name of degree and date received for each institution
- Include grades and scale for each degree (all or nothing?)
- Activities and honors at each institution
- Research papers (if relevant)
- Relevant coursework for LL.M. degree (and potentially, your first law degree)

### "Education" Samples:

University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, Berkeley, CA

LL.M. with Law and Technology Certificate, expected May 2013

Activities: Treasurer, Patent Law Society; Member, International Law Journal

Relevant Coursework: IP Litigation; Trademark Law; Copyrights

University of International Business and Economics, School of Law, Helsinki, Finland *LL.B.*, 2011

Honors: Annual Best Student of the University (2010-2011)

<u>Activities</u>: Ninth Annual International Commercial Moot Arbitration Team (7<sup>th</sup> among 108 participating law schools; personal ranking above 95<sup>th</sup> percentile)

#### **Experience**

- Include internships, paid work, volunteer activities, etc.
- Ensure all listed experience is relevant to target employer (subject matter or transferable skills)
- Include organization name, city, state, and country (if not U.S.)
- Include title for each position and dates worked (months and years)
- Bullet vs. paragraph format
- Current vs. past tense
- Focus on most representative and impressive duties (3-6)
- Quantify and give examples (types of matters and clients)
- Do not use acronyms or jargon
- Highlight research, writing, analysis, advocacy, client contact, supervision, teamwork, and leadership skills

#### When Drafting Your "Experience" Narratives, Consider:

- The project and the subject matter;
- The type of client;
- Your role in the project;
- The work that you produced (e.g., a memorandum or an oral report); and
- The person to whom you reported (e.g., a senior associate, a partner, or a client)

#### For Example:

• Collaborated with senior derivatives counsel to prepare memorandum concerning new systemic risk regulation for international asset management client.

#### "Experience" Samples:

#### Bean, Kinney & Korman LLP, Arlington, Virginia

Law Clerk, September 2010 – August 2012

- Assisted lead counsel in government contracts case by preparing for depositions and assembling exhibits for trial.
- Drafted employment contracts and supplements to personnel codes for major pharmaceutical company.
- Conducted research and prepared client memoranda in areas of civil litigation, banking, corporate law, and wills and estates.

#### Attorneys-at-Law Harri Kontturi Ltd., Helsinki, Finland

Consulting Lawyer, March 2008 – August 2010

- Drafted and negotiated both domestic and international intellectual property rights contracts, such as franchise and distribution agreements and trademark license agreements.
- Prepared memoranda concerning the legal framework of intellectual property investment for corporate technology clients.

#### Sample Action Verbs for "Experience" Section Narratives:

- Administered
- Advised
- Analyzed
- Conducted
- Coordinated
- Counseled
- Developed
- Drafted
- Edited
- Established

- Investigated
- Managed
- Negotiated
- Performed
- Presented
- Represented
- Researched
- Reviewed
- Revised
- Wrote

\*\* For more samples, go to <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/435.htm">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/435.htm</a>; click on Resume Guide and look for "Action Words".

#### Other Relevant Sections for an LL.M. Resume

#### Professional Memberships

- Bar Memberships (caution regarding prospective plans)
- Professional Associations (e.g., American Bar Association Section of International Law)
- Any Relevant Professional Certifications (e.g., CPA, CFA)
- Be sure to include dates for each entry

#### "Professional Memberships" Samples:

- Admitted to practice law in Finland (2010) and New York (2012)
- American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division (2012)
- 100 Women in Hedge Funds San Francisco Chapter (2012)

#### Other Relevant Sections for an LL.M. Resume

### Language Skills

- Include name of language and skill level (e.g., native, fluent, or basic)
- General rule: anything other than basic → be prepared to conduct an interview in that language

### "Language Skills" Samples:

• Spanish (native); English (fluent); French (basic reading comprehension)

#### Other Relevant Sections for an LL.M. Resume

#### Publications and/or Presentations

- May be a standalone section or included under Experience or Education (if transpired as part of employment or education experience)
- Use Bluebook citation format for publications
- Ensure publications and/or presentations are relevant for target employer
- Include dates for each

#### "Publications and Presentations" Samples:

<u>Publication</u>: An Introduction to International Taxation for Young Professionals, 25 TAX NOTES INT'L 81 (2009)

<u>Presentation</u>: The Freedom of Information Act: A Primer for Analysts, given to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Personnel on April 15, 2011

#### Other Relevant Sections for an LL.M. Resume

#### **Interests**

- Include only if exceptional and unique
- Consider how the target audience will react
- Do not include basic popular interests (e.g., travel, reading, cooking)
- Reflect: given your experience, do you want to use valuable page space for non-legal topics?

#### "Interests" Samples:

Columnist: Author weekly "Legal Updates" column in the Legal Times

Equestrian: Placed third in FEI World Equestrian Games (2009)

Travel: Spent 12 months backpacking across four continents

You may combine the "other" sections (Professional Memberships, Language Skills, Publications and Presentations) to save space.

Ensure these entries are clearly categorized.

#### Samples:

#### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Memberships: Japanese Bar (2009)

Language Skills: Japanese (native); English (fluent)

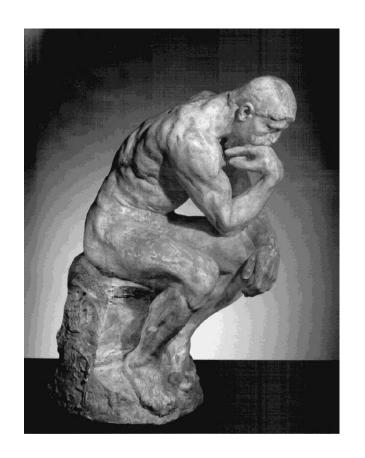
-or-

#### **OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

<u>Professional Associations</u>: Hispanic National Bar Association (2011)

<u>Professional Certifications</u>: Chartered Public Accountant (2007)

# Now That You Have Completed Your Draft ...



It's Time For a Self-Critique!

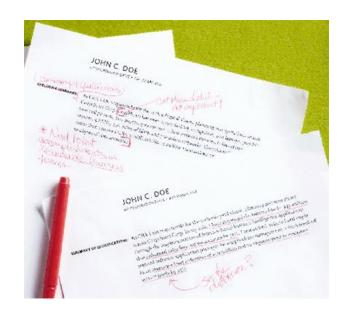
# Resume Self-Critique

- Once you have drafted your resume, <u>PRINT</u> a copy to review!
  - Reviewing a printed copy will enable you to catch formatting errors, spacing issues, inconsistencies, and typos that were not identified in your word processing program.
- Consult the LL.M. Resume Self-Critique, available online at <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/5902.htm">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/5902.htm</a>

• Consider the LL.M. Career Advisor's frequent corrections to LL.M. resumes ...

# Frequent Corrections to LL.M. Resumes

- Improper "white space": margins need adjustment
- Font size is too small or too large
- Inconsistency in style, formatting, and abbreviations (e.g., underline vs. italics; abbreviating some degrees but not others)



- School name is University of California, Berkeley, School of Law
- Degree name is LL.M. or Master of Laws
- No relevant coursework listed to establish specialty

# Frequent Corrections to LL.M. Resumes

- Use of acronyms/terms of art without initial definition
- Improper verb tenses (current vs. past tense)
- Too many or too few narrative descriptions under "Experience"; repeated verb descriptors (e.g., "drafted," "researched") in same entry
- If resume is two pages, failure to include name and page number on second page
- Including personal information (e.g., citizenship, marital status, date of birth, photograph)
- Including basic interests (e.g., reading, travel)

## Further Resources ...

- Make a counseling appointment with an LL.M. Career Advisor
  - Sign up for an appointment using the online Appointment Scheduler:
     <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/231.htm">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/231.htm</a>
  - When prompted to enter a username and password, enter "cdo" for the username and "cdoaccess" for the password
  - If you have not done so already, create an Appointment Scheduler account using the "Enrollment" tab
- Review the Sample LL.M. Resume on the CDO Web site: <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/5902.htm">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/5902.htm</a>
- Consult the "Resume Guide" on the Career Development
  Office Web site: <a href="http://www.law.berkeley.edu/1145.htm">http://www.law.berkeley.edu/1145.htm</a> (note: this particular resource was developed for J.D. candidates)

# Submitting Your Resume For Review

- Once you have prepared your <u>best draft</u> of a U.S.-style resume and conducted a self-critique, you may e-mail your resume to an LL.M. Career Advisor for review.
  - <u>llmresumereview@law.berkeley.edu</u>
  - We aim to return comments within one week; this may take longer during high volume periods (leading up to a deadline), so it is important to <u>plan ahead!</u>
  - <u>ISIP review deadline</u>: October 17<sup>th</sup> (comments returned by October 26<sup>th</sup>; bidding deadline is November 2<sup>nd</sup>).
  - You will receive an e-mail notification when our comments are ready.
- If you have specific questions, it is best to make an appointment to meet with us.

# **Any Questions?**