



Application Materials Workshop

1LLaunch

UC Berkeley Law

Resume / Cover Letter Basics Video

If you missed it, catch up by watching the recording and reviewing the slides and application material templates.

All recorded programs are up on this CDO page.



Overview of Today's Program

- Develop persuasive descriptions for resumes
- Introduce and practice “IAC” structure for persuasive cover letters





CDO Mission Statement

The CDO provides **opportunities, guidance, and resources** for students to learn about and pursue legal career paths and to **empower** students to explore and reach personal career goals.

CDO's Goals for 1Ls

- Learn about different legal careers and pathways.
- Identify and develop your transferable skills and assess legal career interests.
- Learn how to research employers & jobs.
- Learn to communicate with legal community members.
- ***Prepare legal job application materials.***
- Learn how to interview persuasively for a legal job.

Transferable skills are your abilities and strengths that are applicable across different jobs and industries. These skills are part of the “toolkit” of your career.

Category	Transferable Skill	Example Evidence
 Professional	Research	Worked in a lab and helped author a paper
 Practical	Problem-solving	Led large networking event at undergrad institution
 Interpersonal	Communication	TFA experience - had to break down complex topics into digestible formats, speak directly, and to different audiences.
 Personal	Time management	Collegiate athlete and held a work-study job

What Persuasive Writing Looks Like on a Resume

- Know your audience
- Lead with strength
 - Use strongest verbs
 - Ask yourself: what is the action/skill (i.e., the verb) or the quality you want to highlight?
 - Put most relevant skills first
 - Ask yourself: what will I be expected to do in this role?

Persuasive Resume Structure

- **Verb** + object/task + *purpose*
- **Verb** + *purpose* + object/task

Common skills for 1L summer jobs: Research, writing, analysis, communication, attention to detail, time management

Example: **Researched** history of labor organizing *for senior thesis.*

Advocated *to restore arts budget* by writing op-eds and presenting to local school board.

Use Strong Action Verbs

- “**Conducted interviews** with twelve stakeholders for consumer protection investigation. **Assisted with factual research** of two-part series on fraudulent insurance agency.”
- “**Interviewed** twelve stakeholders for consumer protection investigation. **Researched** facts for two-part series on fraudulent insurance agency.”

Be Specific

- Specific = compelling
 - Avoid empty language
 - Ask yourself: is this obvious from the job title?
 - Include context (e.g., substantive topics, quantification)
 - Ask yourself: what can I cover from the 5 Ws and 1 H?
(who, what, when, where, why, how)

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- “Tutored middle school students for one year.”
 - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
 - “Designed weekly English lesson plans for 30 middle schoolers in after-school enrichment program.”
- “Answered customer calls to help desk number.”
 - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
 - “Resolved technical issues for 15+ customers daily.”

Why Is The Sentence Important?

- Identify the “why”
 - Every sentence should tell the reader something about you that matters to them
 - Ask yourself: what is the connection to a transferable skill?

Cover Letter Strategy

- Typically three or four paragraphs – see CDO Cover Letter Template (QR code)
- Discuss **who you are and why you want the job** and **why the employer should hire you** (what are your transferable skills?)



IRAC to IAC

- **I**ssue - what's the topic?
- **R**ule
- **A**pplication/**A**nalysis - what's the proof?
- **C**onclusion - what's the point?

Job Description Analysis

- About This Role:
 - Provide legal research and support to litigation.
 - Manage and respond to tasks and inquiries from emails with decisions or recommendations.
 - Analyze and compare changes in law.
 - Answer legal questions and issues raised by various business units.

What transferable skills is the employer looking for?

Cover Letter Traps

- Repeating the resume (breadth, but not depth)
- Telling, not showing
- Missing the connection

Compare and Contrast - Don't Repeat the Resume

I have developed strong leadership skills throughout college and my early career. I was a Resident Assistant at Penn State. I also co-founded the Biomedical Sciences Club and served as vice president. I then worked in pharmaceutical research and development during several semesters as a co-op. I became a high school math teacher after graduating. These experiences make me a great fit for this position.

I bring strong leadership skills to this position. For example, in my first week as a Resident Assistant in college, I managed a medical crisis situation with a resident and first responders. I kept calm and relied on my training to keep the resident safe and get them the help they needed quickly.

Compare and Contrast - Show, Don't Tell

I bring strong leadership skills to this position. For example, in my first week as a Resident Assistant in college, I managed a medical crisis situation with a resident and first responders. I kept calm and relied on my training to keep the resident safe and get them the help they needed quickly.

I bring strong leadership skills to this position. In my first week as a Resident Assistant, I responded to a medical emergency. I jumped into action by calling 911 and calmly communicated with EMTs and my supervisor upon their arrival. I also made sure other residents were respecting the resident's privacy and not impeding the response team.

Compare and Contrast - Make the Connection

I bring strong leadership skills to this position. In my first week as a Resident Assistant, I responded to a medical emergency. I jumped into action by calling 911 and calmly communicated with EMTs and my supervisor upon their arrival. I also made sure other residents were respecting the resident's privacy and not impeding the response team.

I bring strong leadership skills to this position. In my first week as a Resident Assistant, I responded to a medical emergency. I jumped into action by calling 911 and calmly communicated with EMTs and my supervisor upon their arrival. I also made sure other residents were respecting the resident's privacy and not impeding the response team. I will similarly apply my training and my ability to manage difficult situations to working with clients at the Legal Aid clinic.

Worksheet Practice

**IDENTIFY A
TRANSFERABLE SKILL**

**BRAINSTORM ACTION
VERBS**

**THINK OF STORIES
AND EXAMPLES**

I

TOPIC SENTENCE HIGHLIGHTING A SKILL

A

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE DEMONSTRATING THE SKILL

C

CONCLUDING SENTENCE TYING THE SKILL TO THE JOB

Using Technology

- Posting / engagement on social media platforms
- E-mail signature

Jane Smith

UC Berkeley Law | J.D. Candidate, 2028

- Use of AI
 - Example from real job posting: Application materials must consist of material that is the candidate's own original work and not composed or substantially edited by other individuals or by generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Claude).

Materials Review

- Have CDO review your materials
 - Launching Oct. 9
- Have someone who really knows you review your materials



