



Harrison Barnes's 29 Rules to Make Your Resume More Marketable

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As a legal professional in today's highly competitive job market, crafting the perfect resume is crucial to securing an interview and ultimately landing the desired position. Learn about the essential resume rules that one should follow. Through my articles on [BCGSearch.com](https://www.bcgsearch.com) and [HarrisonBarnes.com](https://www.harrisonbarnes.com), you can gain valuable insights and a comprehensive guide on showcasing your dedication to the legal profession and effectively presenting your experience and qualifications.

By following these rules and adopting the strategies discussed, I am confident you can create a resume that stands out to potential employers and sets you on a path to career success.

- 1. Avoid Stuff About Not Practicing Law:** The Importance of showing commitment to the legal profession. In the article "[21 Pieces of Career Advice No One Ever Gives You](#)," attorneys should focus their resumes on legal experience and accomplishments. Law firms seek attorneys who will contribute to the firm's success over the long term, so it is crucial to demonstrate your dedication to practicing law in your resume. Including non-legal activities or interests may suggest you are not dedicated to a legal career.
- 2. Avoid Summaries of Experience:** Overly, general summaries can be condescending and may imply that you do not understand the specific skills and experiences needed for the job. In the article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," you should focus on the most relevant accomplishments and skills to the position and the firm. By doing so, you can effectively showcase your qualifications and avoid giving the impression that you are talking down to the reader.
- 3. Need to be Very Careful about Stuff on Your Resume that Makes it Look Like You Have Other Priorities:** In the article "[Top 32 Reasons Attorneys Lose Their Jobs Inside of Law Firms](#)," It should be emphasized that the importance of demonstrating a clear commitment to the legal profession. If your resume includes activities or interests that could be perceived as distractions, it could signal to potential employers that you are only partially dedicated to your legal career. To make a strong impression, focus on your legal accomplishments, skills, and experiences that show your dedication to the field.
- 4. Suppose You Have Had More than 4 or 5 Jobs. Listing too many jobs can make you appear unfocused or unreliable. In that case, it is often best to summarize them under one caption:** The importance of presenting a stable work history in this article "[The Number One Reason You Are Not Getting the Jobs and Interviews You Want](#)." By consolidating your experience, you can demonstrate that you have a consistent and relevant background in the legal field, making you a more attractive candidate to law firms.
- 5. If you want to work for others, you need to look manageable:** Law firms typically prefer attorneys who can follow instructions and work well in a team. In the article "[Why Law Firms Reject You](#),"

demonstrating your ability to work effectively with others and learn from them is crucial for making a positive impression on potential employers. You can position yourself as a valuable addition to any law firm by emphasizing teamwork, adaptability, and a willingness to learn.

6. **Law firms want to hire something other than entrepreneurs:** In the article "[Why Law Firms Do Not Like Entrepreneurial Attorneys](#)," firms prefer attorneys who focus on their clients and cases rather than trying to build their own businesses. To appeal to potential employers, showcase your ability to excel in a team environment and emphasize your dedication to legal practice rather than entrepreneurial aspirations.
7. **Suppose you have worked part-time or as a contract attorney. In that case, you need to be careful:** In the article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," attorneys with part-time or contract experience emphasize the relevant skills and experiences gained during these positions without specifically highlighting the part-time or contract nature of the work. This approach can help counter any perception of less valuable experience.
8. **Law firms hire specialists and not generalists:** In the article "[The Top 17 Reasons Law Firms Do Not Hire and Make Offers to Lateral Attorneys](#)" firms prefer candidates with expertise in specific areas of law. To make your resume more appealing, tailor it to emphasize your experience in the practice area most relevant to the position for which you are applying.
9. **In all industries, the law included, there is a preference for younger, more trainable people:** In "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," candidates emphasize their adaptability and ability to learn new skills. By highlighting your ability to grow, adapt to new situations, and willingness to learn from others, you can demonstrate your value as a candidate, regardless of age.
10. **Do not make your resume look overly academic:** In the article "[21 Pieces of Career Advice No One Ever Gives You](#)," stresses the importance of focusing on practical experience and accomplishments in the legal field rather than solely on academic achievements. Law firms want attorneys who can perform the work and contribute to the firm's success, so ensure your resume highlights your legal accomplishments and relevant skills.
11. **You must be very careful listing other bar admissions on your resume if you apply to work in another jurisdiction:** In this article, "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," attorneys to be cautious when listing bar admissions from other jurisdictions. Including multiple bar, admissions could be perceived as a lack of commitment to the specific jurisdiction you are applying to. Focus on the bar admission that is most relevant to the position and jurisdiction to avoid any negative impressions.
12. **If you have more than five years of experience, put your law school information at the end of your resume:** suggests in "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," that experienced attorneys should place their law school information at the end of their resumes. T this allows potential employers to focus on your professional experience and accomplishments, which are more relevant indicators of your abilities as an attorney.

13. **Do not list law school and college activities unless they make you look extraordinary:** In "[21 Pieces of Career Advice No One Ever Gives You](#)," recommends only including law school and college activities that demonstrate exceptional accomplishments, such as being on law review or graduating at the top of your class. Listing less impressive activities can detract from the overall impact of your resume.
14. **Do not list your skills unless they are extraordinary:** in "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," that attorneys should only list skills on their resumes if they are exceptional. Basic skills, such as using Lexis or email, are expected and do not need to be mentioned. Instead, focus on unique skills or accomplishments that set you apart from other candidates.
15. **Do not tell people references are available:** In this article, "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," against stating that references are available upon request. Employers typically assume you will provide references if asked, so including this information is unnecessary and can appear unprofessional. Allow potential employers to request references as needed during the hiring process.
16. **If you have any legal job, do not give yourself titles and responsibilities that make it look like you are not practicing law:** In the article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," attorneys to give themselves the strongest possible titles that accurately reflect their legal experience. Presenting yourself as a practicing attorney with a focus on your legal accomplishments will make your resume more appealing to law firms.
17. **Do not put irrelevant, short-time jobs on your resume if you do not have to:** recommends in "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)" that you should avoid including short-term or irrelevant jobs. Focus on positions that showcase your legal skills and experiences, as these are most relevant to potential employers and will strengthen your resume.
18. **Your resume must be consistent:** Consistency is key to creating a strong resume. In the article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," emphasizes the importance of maintaining consistency in titles, responsibilities, locations, and practice settings throughout your resume. This will help demonstrate a clear career trajectory and make it easier for potential employers to understand your experience.
19. **Law firms prefer candidates with a clear focus and expertise in a specific area of law. Practice areas should look consistent:** In "[The Top 17 Reasons Law Firms Do Not Hire and Make Offers to Lateral Attorneys](#)," highlights the importance of consistency in practice areas. Ensuring your resume emphasizes your commitment to a particular practice area will make you more attractive to potential employers.
20. **Law firms do not hire dabblers:** They seek candidates committed to their chosen practice area and know what they want to do. In the article "[21 Pieces of Career Advice No One Ever Gives You](#)," against appearing as a "dabbler" on your resume. Instead, demonstrate a clear plan and commitment to your legal career, showing potential employers that you are dedicated and focused on your profession.

21. **Suppose you need to put more information on your resume. In that case, you make yourself look weak:** In this article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," against overwhelming your resume with excessive information. Instead, focus on presenting a concise, well-organized resume highlighting your most relevant and impressive achievements, making you a more appealing candidate to law firms.
22. **Your resume needs to show upward mobility:** in this article "[The Top 17 Reasons Law Firms Do Not Hire and Make Offers to Lateral Attorneys](#)" the importance of demonstrating growth and progress in your legal career. Ensure your resume reflects a trajectory of improvement, showcasing your development and the logical progression of your career goals.
23. **Suppose you went to law school in a foreign country and did well. In that case, you must inform employers of what that means:** In the article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," foreign-educated attorneys to clearly explain their achievements and the significance of their law school accomplishments. T this will help potential employers understand and appreciate the value of your education and experience.
24. **When you summarize your experience on your resume, do not make yourself look weak:** According to the author in "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," it's essential to put your best foot forward when summarizing your experience. Highlight your most significant accomplishments and relevant skills to create a strong impression and showcase your suitability for the position.
25. **Most law firms do not like solo practitioners:** In the article "[The Top 17 Reasons Law Firms Do Not Hire and Make Offers to Lateral Attorneys](#)," explains that law firms are often wary of solo practitioners because they may be more difficult to manage or likely to leave the firm again. When applying for positions at law firms, solo practitioners must emphasize their adaptability, team-oriented mindset, and commitment to the firm's success.
26. **You do not want to compliment yourself on your resume by calling yourself different things:** In "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)" stresses the importance of avoiding self-aggrandizing language. Instead of using terms like "corporate leaders" or "amazing negotiators," focus on presenting specific achievements and experiences demonstrating your abilities and qualifications.
27. **Put your bar admissions at the end of your resume—not at the top:** In "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," your admissions should be listed at the end. T this allows potential employers to focus on your experience and accomplishments first while providing essential information about your licensure.
28. **Your job as an attorney is to cover up your client's weaknesses and make them look strong:** In "[The Top 17 Reasons Law Firms Do Not Hire and Make Offers to Lateral Attorneys](#)," highlights the importance of presenting your strengths while minimizing weaknesses in your resume. Just as you would advocate for a client, your resume should advocate for you by showcasing your qualifications, skills, and successes.

29. Make all resumes and cover letters through Grammarly/Prowriting to ensure they are fixed:

In this article "[How to Write a Legal Resume](#)," recommends using tools like Grammarly or ProWritingAid to ensure your resume and cover letter are free of errors and effectively communicate your skills and experience. A polished, well-written resume will make a positive impression on potential employers and increase your chances of securing an interview.

In conclusion, a well-crafted and strategically tailored resume is crucial for legal professionals seeking to make a positive impression on potential employers. By following the invaluable advice and resume rules outlined by the founder of BCG Attorney Search, you can significantly increase your chances of securing interviews and advancing your legal career. Remember to focus on showcasing your dedication, experience, and expertise concisely and compellingly while also being mindful of potential pitfalls that could undermine your efforts. By adhering to these guidelines, you can create a powerful resume that effectively communicates your value and sets you apart from the competition, opening the door to new opportunities and career success in the competitive legal field.