



CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

MAKING THE MOST OF ONLINE RESUMES

As employers come to use online application procedures as a primary method to solicit resumes from large numbers of people, it is important to draft and format your resume to take advantage of the techniques employers use to review these the resumes they receive. Thoughtful changes to your regular resume will help distinguish your online resume from others.

1. Format your resume to help it get past employer filters. HR pros are increasingly using keyword searches to pull possible resumes out of the electronic pile. Put keywords and phrases, separated by a space, then an asterisk or bullet, then a space, at the *bottom* of your resume, to enable searches to pick them up, like this:

Keywords: Litigation * Bankruptcy * Chapter 7 * Depositions * Foreclosure

Use your cover letter to highlight experiences and job accomplishments that don't fit well within the standardized resume format, and tailor it to each position.

2. Proofread, proofread, PROOFREAD! Don't give anal-retentive potential employers *any* excuse to decide that "if your resume is sloppy, your work would be too." Beyond spelling (and doo knot rely on spellcheck, of course), consider grammar, punctuation (make sure it's consistent across the resume), capitalization and formatting (both text-only for easy posting to forms, and Word or PDF for appearance). If you're not a good proof reader (or even if you are), find a few trusted friends to proofread *every* new version of your resume.
3. File names can be your friend. "Resume.doc" is a non-starter for distinguishing your submission; "Amy Smith Resume for Associate Position.doc" works much better, visually and for sorting.
4. Network, network, (SOCIAL) NETWORK! Get involved in local bar associations. Volunteer your skills at local not-for-profits to keep your skills current and meet new people (who will know other people). Put your employment status on your Facebook wall. Join your college and law school online alumni groups. Follow key people in legal employers you'd like to work for on Twitter, and post your own *relevant*, *well-edited* tweets. Set up a Google Alert for employers you'd like to work for, and mention the article in follow-up e-mail or snailmail to them. LinkedIn.com itself is hugely powerful; use LinkedIn to build your network.
5. Above all, don't panic. Take advantage of all available state and federal assistance, from health care to financial help to job coaching and referrals. Do *not* give in to pitches from for-profit "career counselors" who will charge you tremendous amounts of money for assistance you can get elsewhere for little or no cost. Try to find any paying work until you can return to your career--it's good both for the wallet and your self-esteem to make money. And remember, you're not alone in your situation. As long as you focus, treat getting a job as if it were your job, and allow your friends who offer help to give it, you will be giving yourself every chance to succeed.