



# Boston College Law School Office of Career Services

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## THE TRANSITION FROM LAY OFF TO EMPLOYMENT

2008 was a difficult year for many with the recession and ensuing layoffs. Our Career Services Office focuses on helping recent graduates with their job searches. With the increasing number of layoffs, alumni have been contacting us on a daily basis seeking career counseling. We are doing our best to accommodate these requests; however, we have been unable to meet the demands as quickly as desirable.

We have prepared this handout to help you get started in the unfortunate event you have been laid off.

### I. What to do immediately

- 1. Ask about severance benefits.** Find out how long your employer will continue your salary (if at all). Make sure you are reimbursed for accrued and unused vacation time and other outstanding expenses or money owed.
- 2. Ask about outplacement services.** See if your employer will offer outplacement services, and if so, take advantage of them. An outplacement firm can help you prepare your resume and cover letter, and practice your interviewing techniques.
- 3. Secure references.** Determine who will be your references before you leave your place of employment. Confirm with the references what they will say about you and your work product should a future employer ask.
- 4. Apply for unemployment assistance.** Depending upon your situation, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits. Even if you are receiving severance, speak to a representative to see if you qualify. You can obtain more information on The Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training's website at [www.detma.org](http://www.detma.org).
- 5. Change your tax withholding.** If you are married and your spouse is working, adjust withholding on that paycheck to reduce the amount of tax withheld.
- 6. Look into health insurance.** Consider exploring different options including COBRA payments, group insurance through bar associations, and insurance offered through the Medical Security Plan (a program of the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training for residents of the Commonwealth who are receiving unemployment insurance benefits).

## II. The Job Search

**1. Give yourself a break.** The first step is to come to terms with the layoff. It is normal to feel angry, sad or insecure. Many workers blame themselves for layoffs, even though the job cuts were not related to their job performance. Being laid off is not the same as being fired.

### 2. Resources which list open positions.

a. Boston College Law School Job Listings on our Career Services website at [www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career/alumni/joblistings.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career/alumni/joblistings.html). If you do not have a username and password and you are a BC Law graduate, please fill out the Alumni Request Form found on the website and one will be sent to you within 72 hours. Then, proceed with the link “Symplicity – Alumni Job Posting”.

b. *Mass Lawyer’s Weekly* postings which are also available online at [www.lawyersweeklyjobs.com](http://www.lawyersweeklyjobs.com)

c. Non-profit positions listed on [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org) and [www.pslawnet.org](http://www.pslawnet.org) (free registration for BC Law graduates). Be wary of commercial sites that charge an access fee.

**3. Networking resources.** One of the most effective ways to find a legal job through the “hidden job market” is through networking and informational interviews. An estimated 80% of all job openings never get posted. Networking is the process of contacting people with whom you have something in common and using them as resources to help you gather useful information. Although your first contact will not usually offer you a position, the contact may lead to other individuals who may help you in more direct ways. Potential contacts for your network include:

a. Friends, neighbors and family

b. Present and former colleagues

c. Former employers

d. Undergraduate and graduate school alumni

e. BC LawNet Community, our recently launched online community. Sign up and search for fellow graduates at [www.bc.edu/schools/law/alumni/bclawnet.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/alumni/bclawnet.html).

f. BC Law Alumni Chapter events  
([www.bc.edu/schools/law/alumni/association/chapters.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/alumni/association/chapters.html))

g. Bar associations (local, state and national bar associations). In Massachusetts, it may be worth looking into the Lawyers In Transition Committee of the Massachusetts Bar Association ([www.massbar.org/about-the-mba/committees--task-forces](http://www.massbar.org/about-the-mba/committees--task-forces)).

h. Other professional associations (related to a certain legal practice area or client industry).

i. Career Services panels. Attend career panels and presentations offered by BC Law and other area law schools. Check our website at [www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career.html) and *The Counselor* at [www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/deanstudents/counselor.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/deanstudents/counselor.html) regularly for details.

j. Law School Faculty and Administrative Staff. Faculty members and staff often have colleagues or former students who practice in an area that interests you. Reconnect with former professors and take advantage of their networks.

#### 4. General resources.

a. The “Alumni Job Search” chapter of the Job Search Handbook can be found on *Appendix I*, at the end of this handout. Within Appendix I, you will find useful information relating to career planning and transition, resume preparation, interviewing, working with headhunters, and other aspects of the job search. If you need to convert your resume to a CV, please refer to *Appendix II*, at the end of this handout.

b. *Wall Street Journal Online*, “Careers” tab. You will find many useful articles on the job search in general as well as specific articles addressing layoffs. (<http://online.wsj.com/public/us>).

c. Deborah Arron’s book, *What Can I Do with a Law Degree?* This book has been published posthumously for several years. Check out the appendices which provide a comprehensive list of resources in dozens of categories, everything from ADR to Technology.

d. Kimm Alayne Walton’s book, *Guerrilla Tactics For Getting The Legal Job of Your Dreams*. This is an exhaustive 1300+ page book which covers every possible aspect of the job search.

e. Education. Several alumni have contacted us on how to transition from practicing law to teaching law. Here are several resources to explore:

i. American Association of Law Schools, [www.aals.org](http://www.aals.org) (website lists faculty, administrative and law library job openings at US law school). Specifically, [www.aals.org/frs](http://www.aals.org/frs) provides a general overview, as well as links to more detailed information about the Association's Faculty Recruitment Services.

ii. Chronicle of Higher Education, [www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com) (a weekly publication with a listing of education related positions).

iii. Higher Education Jobs, [www.higheredjobs.com](http://www.higheredjobs.com) (a job listings website updated continually).

iv. Deborah Arron's book, *What Can I Do with a Law Degree?*, appendix on Education.

\*v. <http://ww3.lawschool.cornell.edu/faculty-pages/wendel/teaching.htm>

\*vi. [http://eric\\_goldman.tripod.com/resources/becomingalawprofessor.htm](http://eric_goldman.tripod.com/resources/becomingalawprofessor.htm)

\*vii. <http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/guides/teachingscholarship.cfm>

*\* these websites provide advice and additional list of resources on the job search process in teaching law*

f. Clerkships. For recent graduates, a clerkship may be an option to consider. Please visit [www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career/clerkships.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/services/career/clerkships.html) for information on the application process and timelines. Please understand that except in the instance of a newly appointed judge, you may need to apply at least a year in advance for a September start date.

### **III. Volunteer Opportunities**

Some of you may be thinking about using this time to “opt out” of the legal profession for a certain time period. You should be wary that, although not impossible, trying to re-enter the legal profession after taking time off poses many challenges. In lieu of “opting out”, consider using this time to volunteer with a government or nonprofit organization. Volunteering will allow you to keep your legal skills sharp, gain experience in a different practice area you have desired, and develop new contacts. Places to consider include: Massachusetts Bar Association (numerous volunteer opportunities), Volunteer Lawyers Project, District Attorney's Office, Attorney General's Office, nonprofit organizations associated with your previous employer's pro bono program, and event/conference planning (through the Bar Associations, or Continuing Legal Education). If your volunteer activity includes the practice of law, make sure you are covered by the organization's malpractice insurance plan.

### **IV. Other Services**

**1. Resume and Cover Letter Review.** You are welcome to submit your resume and cover letter for review at [law.career@bc.edu](mailto:law.career@bc.edu).

**2. Transcripts.** Please visit [www.bc.edu/transcripts](http://www.bc.edu/transcripts) for instructions on how to request a transcript.

**3. Reciprocity.** Please contact [law.career@bc.edu](mailto:law.career@bc.edu) for a letter of reciprocity which allows you to visit a law school's career services office outside of Massachusetts.

**4. Use of Career Services Resource Library.** You are welcome to stop by the Career Services Office to review resources in our library. Our office hours are Monday – Friday, 9:00 – 5:00 (during the summer, the office closes at 3:00 on Fridays).

## APPENDIX I

### “ALUMNI JOB SEARCH” CHAPTER OF THE JOB SEARCH HANDBOOK

#### Career Planning & Transitions

Finding yourself in a position of transition may trigger many emotions including fear, depression, stress, excitement and anticipation. Change can be difficult and the pressure of searching for a new job can be particularly stressful due to the financial and professional uncertainties. Yet, beginning the search for a new job is also an opportunity for you to analyze your strengths and interests and find a position that will be truly rewarding. Maybe you are beginning to realize that aspects of your last job did not make you happy, or were not truly rewarding, or took you away from your family and other interests. Now, you have the opportunity to step back and analyze your values, lifestyle considerations, skills, and interests.

Many people will tell you that finding a job is a job in itself. This is true, and probably one reason many people remain in unhappy positions for too long – they haven’t had the time to look for something else. You should be prepared to devote significant time to your job search. Its fruits will impact your life enormously.

The first step of any job search is self assessment. What are you looking for in terms of the substance of your new position? What type of environment is most productive for you? What personal considerations are paramount? Here are a few things to consider:

Financial Issues: Should you find yourself out of work, one of the most important things for you to do is to review your financial situation. Sit down and calculate all of your expenses. This will help you plan your finances while you are out of work, and it will also allow you to determine a bottom-line salary necessary to cover your annual expenditures. Also, if you still have student loans, you might consider contacting your lenders and inquiring about deferment or consolidation options. Finally, if this period of unemployment has taken you by surprise, try to follow the advice of many financial planners and

always have sufficient savings on hand to cover at least three (3) months of your expenses.

Unemployment Insurance: Depending upon your situation, you might be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Even if you are receiving severance, speak to an unemployment representative at the state level to see if you qualify.

Health Insurance: Consider exploring different options including COBRA payments, group insurance through bar associations, and insurance offered through the Medical Security Plan (a program of the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training for residents of the Commonwealth who are receiving unemployment insurance benefits).

Counseling: Searching for a job can be a very stressful time in your life. While it is wonderful to have family and friends to lean on for support during this time, if you think you would benefit from professional counseling, seek out help offered through Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers, Inc. in Massachusetts, or a similar organization in other states. The website for Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers is: <http://www.lclma.org>.

Personal Inventory: Self reflection is the most important and most frequently overlooked step in the job search process. It is essential to be honest with yourself in order to determine which new position, or perhaps new career path, will be most fulfilling for you. If you pause to self-reflect, the remainder of the job search will proceed more easily. Spend time thinking about your past jobs and the type of work and the environment that will be enjoyable and rewarding for you.

#### Values and Lifestyle Considerations:

Some of your priorities have changed since graduating from law school. Now, you have time to sit down and really think about what is important to you, not only with respect to the type of work you enjoy, but even more importantly, with respect to your personal life.

- Geographical Location: Are you seeking to stay where you are currently located? Would you consider relocating for a job?
- Workplace: Large or small? Training? Independence? Responsibility?

Hierarchical? Egalitarian? Management structure?

- **Autonomy:** Do you prefer working for yourself or reporting to others?
- **Lifestyle:** Family obligations? Type of commute? Vacations? Flexible hours? Overtime required or expected?
- **Security:** Prefer stability and predictability over risk.
- **Power and Prestige:** What are your personal goals and how do they factor in?
- **Wealth:** Short and long term financial considerations.
- **Challenge:** Opportunities for professional growth and development.
- **Relationships and sense of collegiality.**
- **Service to the community.**
- **Leadership development with the organization and wider community.**

### **Skills and Accomplishments**

In order to market yourself effectively, you need to identify your skills and accomplishments and be prepared to elaborate on them throughout the process. Begin by listing your accomplishments at work, but consider community and bar activities, as well.

- **Cases won? Settlements achieved? Transactions completed? Successful negotiations?**
- **Participation in decision making**
- **Managing or supervising associates, paralegals, law clerks**
- **Published articles, training manuals, books or law review pieces**
- **Training attorneys**
- **Effective management of an office or firm**
- **Planning events**
- **Pro Bono contributions, especially if they provided more hands on experience.**

All of the accomplishments you have listed required specific skills that you have developed. Now it's time to make a list of your skills. Not only will this help identify careers that you are well-suited for, but it is also important to be ready to bring your skill set to the attention of an interviewer.

## ***Functional Skills***

(Adapted in part from *The Perfect Legal Résumé*, by J. Murray Elmwood)

Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Appellate Argument  
Associate Development  
Business Planning  
Civil Litigation  
Community Relations  
Contract Negotiations  
Cost Reduction Strategies  
Crisis Management  
Debt/Equity Offerings  
Diversity Management  
Domestic Relations  
E-Commerce Ventures  
Event Planning  
Financial Planning/Analysis  
Financial Services Management  
Firms Marketing  
Health Care  
Human Resources  
Information Applications  
Information Technology  
Insurance Defense  
Intellectual Property  
Litigation Management  
Legal Research and Writing  
Medical Malpractice  
Mergers and Acquisitions  
Nonprofit Development  
Occupational Safety & Health  
Organizational Development  
Outside Counsel Liaison  
Patents and Trademarks  
Products Liability  
Project Management  
Patent Agent  
Regulatory Oversight  
Risk Management  
SEC Reporting  
Tax Governance  
Strategic Planning  
Team Leadership  
Toxic Torts  
Transaction Structuring  
Workmen's Comp

## ***Résumés***

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Consider creating a master version of your resume and several different versions of your résumé - each tailored to a different practice area or type of work -rather than creating one résumé appeal to all audiences.

When writing a résumé, every word should be relevant - the text translating directly into benefits for the potential employer. Follow these four rules when deciding what information to include or exclude:

- Illustrate your capacity to perform the job.
- Convey your commitment to the geographic area.
- Communicate your genuine interest in and knowledge of the practice area.
- Distinguish yourself from the other applicants.

Once you write your résumé, edit it vigorously, eliminating all details that are not essential to the message you want to convey.

### **Résumé Content**

#### ***Heading***

The heading includes:

- Your Name, as you wish to be known professionally. It appears at the top of the résumé and serves as the title. Note: The word “résumé” should not appear on your résumé.
- Your Address. Be sure to provide your current address, telephone number and e-mail address where you can be reached. *Do not use the address, phone number or e-mail address of your present employer.*

#### ***Job Objective***

This section is never appropriate on a traditional legal résumé. Tailor your résumé to a particular position and discuss your specific career goals in your cover letter or during the interview. Only consider using an objective if you are switching to an alternative career.

#### ***Summary of Qualifications***

Using a “summary of qualifications” assists you in tailoring your résumé to specific positions, as you can highlight your relevant skills – perhaps by using the same language as is used in the job description. Typically, it is a one or two

sentence summary of your qualifications for a particular position. Such a section is most helpful if transitioning into another field or career and you want to highlight transferable skills.

#### ***Experience/Employment***

When describing your employment experience, include more details for jobs that involved legal responsibility. Other employment can be summarized briefly to avoid leaving large gaps in your employment history. If your experiences are not directly applicable to the position, then describe transferable skills.

#### ***Education***

Alumni who have been practicing for a number of years should, in most instances, move their education section to the bottom of the résumé, thereby highlighting their professional experience. For recent graduates and judicial clerks, the name of the law school, academic performance, and extra curricular achievements in law school are usually the most important elements of a résumé.

Outline your education in reverse chronological order: (1) legal education, (2) graduate education, if any, and (3) undergraduate education. Indicate the month and year of graduation and the degree attained, as well as the city and state where each college or university is located. Following your degree, list any distinction you received, such as “*cum laude.*” Latin phrases should always appear in lower case letters and be italicized. Secondary school education should be excluded unless you are applying for jobs where your school or hometown establishes important geographic ties and networking inroads.

#### ***Bar Admissions***

Include a list of the states or courts in which you are admitted to practice, as well as the dates of admittance.

#### ***Bar Associations***

Include a list of active associations and leadership positions, if any.

#### ***Professional Certification***

If you have earned any other professional certifications, such as a CPA or real estate license, you may include this information, along with the date and state in which you were certified. As a general rule, we do not

recommend including such “titles” after your name (e.g. R.N. or C.P.A.).

***Representative Transaction/ Case Sheet (aka “Deal Sheet”)***

It is customary for a lateral candidate to attach a list of Representation Transactions or Cases to his or her résumé. The list highlights major, significant and typical clients and matters with which he or she was involved. This additional piece of information allows potential employers to understand and assess the depth and breadth of the candidate’s transferable skills and experiences. The “Deal Sheet” is not an exhaustive list of all matters in which you were involved, but rather functions as a list of your “greatest hits.” Litigators may also use the document to highlight skills such as trials, depositions, and motions.

***Additional Submissions***

When making a lateral hire, many employers request materials not usually part of an initial hiring process. Employers often request that applicants complete a Conflict of Interest Check Form, supply a certificate of good standing for applicable jurisdictions and sign a formal letter agreement containing an arbitration clause.

***Résumé Falsification***

Be scrupulously honest. Putting false or misleading information on your résumé is a serious offense, easy to catch on a reference check or internet search. Falsifying your resume could cost your job and your professional reputation.

## SAMPLE ALUMNI RÉSUMÉ FORMAT

Elizabeth Bennet Darcy  
114 Pemberley Drive • Any City • Any State • 55555  
(555) 888-1111 • jausten@yahoo.com

**SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS** (If you are transitioning into a completely new career, this section might be appropriate for you to highlight the transferable skills you've developed that are applicable to the job for which you are applying. Keep in mind that this section may change slightly on every résumé you send out.)

### EXPERIENCE

#### EMPLOYERS

City, State

Title of Position

Season or Month & Year(s)

List your job responsibilities and accomplishments, highlighting relevant experience and transferable skills. Begin each sentence or bullet with an Action Verb. Delete personal pronouns and articles.

**EDUCATION** (List all graduate and undergraduate degrees in reverse chronological order.)

**Boston College Law School**, Newton, MA  
*Juris Doctor*, Month and Year of Graduation  
GPA/Class Standing: (if distinguished)  
Honors: Law Review, Awards, scholarships  
Activities: Memberships, committees, teams  
Worked 20 hours per week to finance education

**Graduate School**, City, State  
Degree, honor, Month & Year Obtained  
Thesis, Honors, Activities, etc.

**Undergraduate School**, City, State  
Degree, honor (ex: Bachelor of Arts, *summa cum laude*, English), Month & Year Obtained  
GPA/Class Standing: (if distinguished)  
Thesis, Honors, Activities, etc.

**BAR ADMISSIONS (List court and date admitted.)**

**BAR ASSOCIATIONS**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)**

This category may be called "SKILLS and INTERESTS," "LANGUAGES," "ACTIVITIES," etc. You may include foreign language skills, community activities, professional licenses/qualifications/affiliations, community activities, relevant publications, and/or unique interests/hobbies.

## ALUMNI RESUME

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**SMITH JONES, LLP**, Boston, MA

2002-2008

Associate: Corporate, Trademark and Licensing: Represented high-tech and emerging growth clients from start-up phase through sale of the company. Counseled clients on various corporate matters ranging from business formation, stock option plans, employment, leases, loans, financings and acquisitions. Advised clients on application and registration of trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office and various license and web-based agreements. Drafted and negotiated primary agreements in connection with mergers and acquisitions, venture capital financings, licensing and general corporate matters.

**JEFFERSON WASHINGTON LLP**, Boston, MA

1998-2002

Associate: Corporate and Bank Finance: Represented and counseled institutional clients in connection with acquisitions and bank financings. Drafted supporting documents to stock purchase and asset purchase agreements such as legal opinions and disclosure schedules. Drafted supporting documents to credit and loan transactions such as security agreements, guaranties and stock pledge agreements. Conducted closings and due diligence reviews. Drafted board votes and stockholder consents.

### LEGAL INTERNSHIPS

**BRADY & BRADY**, Boston, MA

Winter 1997-1998

Legal Intern: Performed research and writing regarding employment discrimination, easements, employment compensation, and various issues in connection with commercial litigation.

**JEFFERSON WASHINGTON LLP**, Boston, MA

Summer 1997

Summer Associate: Drafted supporting documents to asset purchase transaction. Reviewed and prepared summaries of various agreements. Performed research and writing regarding environmental issues, web based advertising, Securities and Exchange Commission review of disciplinary proceedings and employment issues.

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, District of Massachusetts**

**Honorable William G. Young**, Boston, MA

Winter 1996-1997

Legal Intern: Worked closely with the judge and two legal clerks. Drafted various opinions. Performed research and writing in anticipation of motions for summary judgment and motions to dismiss. Prepared internal memorandum regarding hearsay evidentiary issues. Observed the "Code of Silence" trial.

**MASSACHUSETTS ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE**, Boston, MA

Summer 1996

Law Clerk: Conducted interviews and reviewed affidavits of victims of civil rights violations. Performed research and writing in Civil Rights Act, Consumer Protection Act, HMOs, tax codes, and housing regulations.

### EDUCATION

**BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL**, Newton, MA

J.D., *cum laude*, May 1998

**WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY**, Middletown, CT

B.A. in Art History

### BAR ADMISSIONS

Massachusetts 1998

### BAR ASSOCIATIONS

Boston Bar Association; Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts

# Judicial Clerk Résumé

## EDUCATION

### **Boston College Law School**

Newton, MA

*Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, May 2006*

GPA: 3.70/4.00 (Top 5% of class)

**Honors:** Order of the Coif; *Boston College Law Review*: Senior Editor, 2005-2006, Staff Writer 2004-2005.

### **Harvard University**

Cambridge, MA

*A.B. in History, cum laude, June 2001*

GPA: 3.41/4.00

**Honors:** Harvard College Scholarship for Academic Achievement; Dean's List all semesters.

**Activities:** *The Harvard Independent*, weekly newspaper, Senior Manager and Commentary Editor; Harvard Prefect Program, advisor to freshman students.

## EXPERIENCE

### **U.S. District Court, District Court Judge for District of Maine**

Portland, ME

*Judicial Clerk*

August 2006 - August 2007

### **Hale & Dorr LLP**

Boston, MA

*Summer Associate, received permanent offer*

Summer 2005

Researched and drafted memoranda for the litigation, labor and employment, corporate, and private client departments on issues including attorneys' fees in derivative suits and the validity and timing of trust dispositions. Assisted in preparation for depositions of key witnesses in employment litigation. Coordinated pro bono case and prepared client and case for unemployment benefits hearing. Attended judicial conference regarding approval of a settlement in a derivative suit. Observed deposition in contract dispute.

### **U.S. District Court, Hon. Robert B. Collings, Magistrate Judge**

Boston, MA

*Judicial Intern*

Summer 2004

Researched and wrote civil memoranda and orders. Prepared two draft opinions on motions to dismiss, one discussing res judicata principles and the second interpreting the provisions of third-party practice under Fed. R. Civ. P. 14(a), which served as the foundations for decisions published in *Federal Supplement 2d* and *Federal Rules Decisions*. Observed civil and criminal trials, detention hearings, motion hearings, mediations, and oral arguments in the First Circuit Court of Appeals.

### **Harvard Law School, Office of Student Life Counseling**

Cambridge, MA

*Office Assistant*

September 1999-May 2003

Assisted with organization and publicity of programs concerning career and personal development in the legal profession. Organized elements of patient scheduling and data for staff of three psychologists.

### **Winchester Hospital, Assessment and Evaluative Services**

Winchester, MA

*Research Assistant*

Summer 2002

Conducted interviews and testing with children and adolescents on inpatient mental health units. Drafted reports on each patient evaluating test results and patient's emotional state. Assisted with organization and coordination of research.

## BAR ADMISSIONS

Massachusetts, passed bar examination, admission pending

## ***Other Considerations***

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### **Interviewing**

The interview is the most critical part of the hiring process. The employer will expect much more from a lateral candidate than from a law student or a recent graduate. The interview provides an opportunity to demonstrate your personal strengths and your professional commitment to the field and the firm or organization. Your goals are to establish a rapport with the interviewer, to communicate your qualifications, to convey your self-confidence and enthusiasm and, ultimately to receive a job offer. After accomplishing those tasks, you can weigh the positive and negative aspects of each offer.

You must do a *substantial* amount of research on each employer before going into the interview. The employer will hold you to a much higher standard of knowledge. Contact classmates and alumni who work or have worked for this employer before the interview. If you are using a headhunter, ask the headhunter about the firm, its attrition and hiring practices and what they seek.

The big question for the employer is whether you have the necessary skill set to jump in and fill the existing void. They may like you personally and think you would fit in with the firm, but if your skill set does not match their present and existing need, you will not get the position.

### **Working with Headhunters**

In the lateral employment market, many experienced lawyers utilize the service of recruitment agencies, affectionately referred to as “headhunters.” Your initial question should be whether or not you should use a headhunter for your search. Headhunters will generally not handle employment arrangements until you have at least a year of work experience, and a judicial clerkship does not count for these purposes. Headhunters receive placement fees from the employer for 20-30% of the attorney’s annualized base compensation. So, only larger law firms and corporations are generally able to afford to use a headhunter.

If you have a more direct entry to an employer, consider using your own avenues of inquiry rather than using a headhunter. In many cities, employers post job openings on their websites. A personal contact can also give you information,

and if the person works for the organization, any internal referral fee would give them incentive to shepherd your résumé.

If you decide to use a headhunter, choose carefully. Headhunters have reputations, both good and bad, in their community. That reputation transfers to candidates whom they present to employers – so your résumé carries not just your reputation, but that of the headhunter. If you are looking for employment in a distant city, get recommendations as to good, reputable headhunters. Be sure to check out the type and quality of the headhunter’s listings as well as the depth and breadth of their contacts.

In any geographic area, use just one headhunter (or in rare circumstances, use two). You do not want multiple headhunters to paper the city with your résumé as it cheapens your candidacy. Also, discuss beforehand where the headhunter will send your résumé. If you have personal contacts with an employer, it is best for you to submit your résumé directly. If a headhunter introduces a candidate to an employer-this is most often accomplished by simply sending the résumé to the employer, then the headhunter would be entitled to a commission should the employer hire the candidate within a given contract period (usually 6 months). This holds true even if the candidate has also contacted the employer independently. Consequently, it is important that a headhunter circulate your résumé only with your prior knowledge and approval.

### **Alternative Careers**

As you take the time to reflect and seriously consider what is important to you, you might decide that you would like to learn more about alternative careers to practicing law. Keep in mind that your law school education and practice has developed many skills transferable to other careers – try some informational interviewing to learn more.

One good reference book on alternative careers is Deborah Arrons, *What Can You Do With a Law Degree? A Lawyer’s Guide to Career Alternatives Inside, Outside and Around the Law – 2004 Edition* (Niche Press LLC).

## **Bar Admissions and Reciprocity**

If a new position necessitates a move across state lines, you may find yourself considering whether or not you need to take another bar exam or whether you may qualify for reciprocity. Refer to the Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admissions Requirements, published by the National Association of Bar Examiners. <http://www.ncbex.org>. ALWAYS confirm directly with the relevant state bars administrators as there may have been changes since the production of the guide.

## APPENDIX II

### CONVERTING YOUR RESUME TO A CURRICULUM VITAE AND VICE VERSA

#### **What is the main difference between a CV and a Resume?**

A resume is a marketing tool – a clear and concise summary of your education and experience no longer than 1 page. It is not intended to be an exhaustive statement.

A CV contains most of the information in a resume but in addition can include separate sections for any teaching experience, research, publications, presentations, grants, professional affiliations, awards and sometimes references. A CV is a much more detailed list of your educational and professional background and is usually 2 or more pages long.

#### **When do I use a CV as opposed to a resume?**

In the US, the general rule is that a CV is used for an academic or research oriented job application. A resume is appropriate for most other job searches.

However, when applying for a job in Europe, Asia or Africa, candidates should expect to have to submit a CV rather than a resume for all jobs. A CV in Europe traditionally includes more personal information than would otherwise be appropriate to include on a US style CV (see below for more information).

A CV should always be accompanied by a cover letter which can focus on the skills and accomplishments that are most relevant to the particular job. This is your opportunity to draw out key features that you want to bring to the employers attention.

#### **How do I convert my CV to a Resume?**

##### *Identify the Specifics*

Converting a CV to a resume requires research and preparation. A resume should address the specific skills and experience that the particular job demands. What are the key skills and qualifications which the employer requires? What are the personal qualities they are looking for? The resume should be tailored specifically to the job you are applying for and should be restricted to information which demonstrates *why you would be an asset to that particular employer*. The CV traditionally will contain your complete academic and professional credentials, focusing particularly on coursework, research and publications.

##### *Change the Length*

Resumes are usually no longer than 1 page, whilst a CV may be 3 or more pages in length. Tailoring the resume to the key skills and qualifications required for the job will inevitably mean cutting out aspects of your CV which are no longer directly relevant and/or presenting them in a different manner. This is often the thing which students find

most difficult to do when converting a CV to a resume. If you cannot explain something in terms of the job that you are applying for, it should not be included.

### *Format*

Readability is the primary objective of a resume. Both style and content are important (with a CV, content is the most essential facet). Information should be clear, concise and presented in a consistent style throughout. Use short phrases, not sentences. Bullet points are a good way of setting out the information clearly and concisely. Begin each sentence with a legal related action verb.

For more general information on resumes and sample formats, please see the Resume section of the Job Search Handbook or the Career Services website - [www.bc.edu/bcscareer](http://www.bc.edu/bcscareer). You may also submit your resume to the Career Services Office for review at any time.

### **CV's Overseas**

Candidates should expect to have to submit a CV rather than a resume when applying for a job overseas. In addition, some countries would expect more personal information to be included than would otherwise be considered appropriate on a US CV, for example, age, marital status, children. For more information see <http://workabroad.monster.com>

When applying to a non-English speaking country, it is usually appropriate to submit the CV in English and in the language of that particular country. This is not just merely a case of translating the English CV though – the foreign language version must make sense in the local language and both versions must be tailored to the specific requirements of the particular country. It is also usual to include details of any residency or work visas. Examples include:

*France* – It is customary to include a passport sized color photograph of yourself, attached to the CV, along with full personal details, including age, marital status, number of children. The CV must be in reverse chronological order and usually includes an additional section headed 'Projet Professionel' which is a short paragraph detailing your career aspirations over the next few years.

*Germany* – similar to the French style although is usually in chronological order. The photo is usually attached to the top right hand corner of the CV and it is usually signed on the bottom right hand corner, with the date in the bottom left hand corner.

*Switzerland* – similar to the French and German styles, depending on the region.

*Italy* – no photo is required and hobbies or activities are rarely mentioned.

*Spain* – give passport details (ID number) in the personal details section.

*UK* – Do not include details of your civil status (ie. single, married, divorced) or religion. It is also customary to include details of 2 referees at the bottom of the CV. The CV is usually 2 pages long. Remember that some words are spelt differently in the UK. For more information see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:SpNeo/Spelling\\_Guide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:SpNeo/Spelling_Guide)

*Russia* – may be handwritten and likely to be very detailed. Written in full sentences and employers expect a full biography.

## **SAMPLE CV.**

### **BAR ADMISSION**

July 2005

### **EDUCATION**

#### **Boston College Law School**

**Newton, MA**

Candidate for *Juris Doctor*

May 2005

Specialism in [insert any specialisms]

GPA 3.63/4.00; class rank: top 10%

#### **Carleton College**

**Northfield, MN**

Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, in Chemistry

June 1995

[include any particulars]

GPA 3.31/4.00

College Semester Abroad: Berlin, Germany

### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

Teaching Excellence, Richard Ramette Award

Senior comprehensive exercise: Structure and function of ion-channels in biological systems

### **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

Carolina Summer Research Program in Pharmacology, UNC-Chapel Hill

NASA Langley Aerospace Research Summer Scholars

*[Include research projects recently conducted or in progress, including the type of research and a brief description of the purpose].*

### **ACADEMIC POSITIONS**

Teaching Assistant, Department of Chemistry, Carleton College 1994-1995. Helped create curriculum, composed exams and term paper assignment, led weekly discussion sessions, graded written work and helped to determine final grades.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

*[Give bibliographic citations for articles, pamphlets, chapters in books, research reports or any other publications you have authored or co-authored]*

### **PRESENTATIONS**

*[Give titles of professional presentations, name of conference or event, dates and location and if appropriate, brief description. Start with the most recent first.]*

### **RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

#### **Wilmer Hale, LLP**

**Boston, MA**

*Summer Associate* (Permanent Offer Extended)

Summer 2004

Researched anticipation and means plus function claims in patent law in preparation for litigation. Reviewed client's patent portfolio in preparation for negotiations concerning new licensing agreement. Drafted response to PTO office action, addressing enablement, anticipation, and obviousness rejections. Researched manufacturer's liability for negligent advertising. Drafted pleading motions for Chapter 11 bankruptcy case. Participated in closing activities for merger between two publicly traded companies.

### **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

#### **Clark & Elbing, LLP**

**Boston, MA**

*Summer Technology Specialist*

Summer 2003

Drafted responses to PTO office actions, information disclosure statements, and letters to clients and foreign associates for law firm specializing in patent prosecution of biotechnology, chemistry, and materials science matters. Experience with drafting and amending patent claims. Addressed double patenting, obviousness, and novelty rejections, as well as restriction requirements.

**AutoImmune Incorporated**

*Quality Control Supervisor*

**Lexington, MA**

March 2001-August 2002

Validated analytical methods used to characterize new biological drug therapy. Prepared experimental protocols, statistically analyzed data, wrote summary reports. Developed and wrote standard operating procedures to ensure regulatory compliance. Supervised two quality control analysts.

**Eli Lilly and Company**

*Bioanalytical Chemist*

**Indianapolis, IN**

2000-2001

*Associate Bioanalytical Chemist*

1995-2000

Supported product development for new biotechnology products. Wrote technical reports, drafted sections of regulatory admissions, and performed method validation studies, including statistical technical conferences and at staff meetings.

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

*Boston College Law Review*, Executive Editor, 2004-2005

Law Student Association, Co-Chair, Diversity Committee, 2004-2005

Lambda Law Students Association, Co-Chair, 2003-2004

*[Include memberships in national, regional, state and local professional organizations (including student memberships). Include significant appointments to positions within these organizations.]*

**LANGUAGES**

German (near-native fluency), French (reading knowledge)

**ACTIVITIES**

**Girl Scout Council of Southeastern Massachusetts** – devised teambuilding and challenge programs, including outdoor pursuits program.

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)** – through Boston College Law School. Assisted on a weekly basis, offering free tax help to low to moderate income families who cannot prepare their own tax returns.

## **SAMPLE CORRESPONDING RESUME**

### **EDUCATION**

#### **Boston College Law School**

**Newton, MA**

Candidate for *Juris Doctor*

May 2005

GPA 3.63/4.00; class rank: top 10%

Honors and Activities:

*Boston College Law Review*, Executive Editor  
Law Student Association, Co-Chair, Diversity Committee  
Lambda Law Students Association, Co-Chair

#### **Carleton College**

**Northfield, MN**

Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, in Chemistry

June 1995

GPA 3.31/4.00

Honors and Activities:

Richard Ramette Award for Teaching Excellence  
Senior comprehensive exercise: Structure and function of ion-channels in biological systems  
College Semester Abroad: Berlin, Germany  
Carolina Summer Research Program in Pharmacology, UNC-Chapel Hill  
NASA Langley Aerospace Research Summer Scholars

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*Bioanalytical Chemist*

2000-2001

*Associate Bioanalytical Chemist*

1995-2000

Supported product development for new biotechnology products. Wrote technical reports, drafted sections of regulatory admissions, and performed method validation studies, including statistical technical conferences and at staff meetings. Member of Diversity Action Team.

### **BAR ADMISSIONS**

**MA Bar**

July 2005