

Using Job Postings To Build Your Lawyer Resume

By Karen Anderson

If you are a lawyer looking for a job, you've probably begun your search by drafting a resume and seeking out job postings. Have you ever thought about doing it the other way around? Using job postings can be a very effective method of creating a great lawyer resume. Here's how:

Know What You Are Looking For

Whether you are a law student seeking an internship, or an experienced lawyer looking for a full-time position, the first step is to know the type of job you are looking for. Perhaps you are searching for an entry-level job, trying to jump from a law firm to an in-house position, or transitioning to a new practice area or industry. In any case, if you are seeking to make a move, make sure you know exactly what kind of position you will be targeting. The more focused you are, the more effective this lawyer resume creation exercise will be. Once you've determined what type of position you seek, then take a look at the various online lawyer job listings that are available to you.

Gathering Your Job Postings

Once you've determined what your job search target is, you will need to search the Internet for job listings. First, identify job boards that offer a variety and high volume of lawyer jobs. It is best to start with free job boards, as you will be primarily using them to mine data for your lawyer resume. Some of these free jobs boards include:

www.careers.findlaw.com

www.lawjobs.com

www.jobs.acca.com

www.abanet.org/careercounsel/jobs.html

www.mylawjob.com

www.simplylawjobs.com

We have no affiliation with any of these job boards, and this list is by no means exhaustive, but it is a good place to start. If you know of other reputable free legal job sites, by all means use them as well. Again, these are to be used to mine job postings to create your lawyer resume. So the more, the merrier. While law-specific job board may be very useful in your search, don't forget the big job boards:

www.monster.com

www.careerbuilder.com

One of the challenges of conducting an Internet search is the amount of time you will need to dedicate searching each sites. Fortunately, many sites offer an e-mail service called an "email agent" to keep you informed about new jobs without having to conduct daily manual searches. This feature allows you to receive email alerts on a daily or weekly basis of new positions that are relevant to your specific job search.

Use these agents to help you collect job listings without having to spend an inordinate amount of time surfing the Internet.

Using The Keywords of Job Listings

Once you have gathered about 10-15 job postings that reflect the type of position you are looking for, the next step is to use that data to create your lawyer resume. What should you look for? Take a look at the words used to describe the responsibilities and requirements of the position. Select the keywords that appear most relevant and specific to the position, and incorporate them into your lawyer resume.

Job posting example: *Responsible for providing legal advice and counseling on all labor, employment, and benefits matters relating to Company employees, and Company's retention of temporary workers and contractors, in some cases with the support of outside counsel. Management of all employee related claims and litigation, and any employee related government investigations, audits and inquiries, including EEOC claims and discrimination claims. Assistance in the development of HR policies and strategies, and legal advice and counseling on their application, interpretation and enforcement. Drafting of labor and employment related agreements including non-compete agreements and confidentiality agreements with employees. 8+ years of legal experience as an employment lawyer in the U.S. significant experience providing employment law advice and counseling in medium to large corporate client context, significant experience managing employment claims/litigation and benefits matters, and experience in drafting agreements.*

The keywords you should select to appear on your attorney resume based on this job description are: *advising, counseling, managing, drafting, interpreting, labor, employment, benefits, retention of temporary workers and contractors, employee claims, employee litigation, employee government investigations, audits, inquiries, EEOC claims, discrimination claim, HR policies and strategies, non-compete agreements, confidentiality agreements, employment agreements, and benefits agreements.*

Before you begin creating your lawyer resume and inserting keywords, you need to make sure that all of the relevant information with respect to your education, work history, and experience are included in your resume. This means not only focusing on the various elements of the job postings you have identified, but also making sure that every experience and skill related to the type of position you are seeking are included in your lawyer resume.

To draft an effective lawyer resume based on keywords from job postings, you have to use these identified keywords and phrases to create your "summary," "skill," and "work history" sections. By incorporating keywords and phrases identified in job postings into your lawyer resume, you will make your resume stand out to employers. There will be an element of instant recognition, as keywords will be picked up immediately, either by live recruiters or resume-scanning databases, reviewing your lawyer resume.

While using job postings and keywords can be a very powerful tool in crafting an effective lawyer resume, it should be used with caution. Be careful about overusing keywords or engaging in "keyword stuffing." Your lawyer resume should be an accurate representation of your skills and experience. Therefore, you need to use keywords that are reflective of your accomplishments. Padding your resume with terms that have nothing to do with your actual skills or experience could cost you. Honesty is not the best policy, but the only policy when it comes to your lawyer resume. Don't steer away from this policy when using keywords, and make sure to keep your lawyer resume honest.

Conclusion

If you want to land the perfect job, take the time to check out lawyer job listings, and use them to create a powerful lawyer resume. You will find that by mining this resource to create your lawyer resume, you will come up with some excellent results. Your lawyer resume will show you to be ahead of the game, and employers will immediately recognize you as the type of candidate they are seeking. If you lack the time or are unsure about how to best go about creating your lawyer resume, don't worry; there is plenty of help available. Writing a great lawyer resume isn't necessarily a skill that you need to have, so take some time, and spend the money to have it professionally drafted for you. Hiring a professional resume writer to craft your lawyer resume may be the best investment you've ever made.