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Career Corner

Career Tips

Putting Yourself in the Interviewer's Shoes

By Pamela Hyland

When writing cover letters or answering interview questions, students tend to focus on what they themselves will get out of working for a certain employer, rather than trying to show the employer how their skills, experience and personal qualities will benefit the office. Try putting yourself in the employer's place to analyze what they are looking for.

Be clear. Imagine you are an attorney on your firm's hiring committee and you have 100+ resumes to review this weekend for 15 interview slots (you brought them home because you couldn't find time to read them during the work week) and you're missing your kid's soccer game because you have to finish by Monday. Are you likely to read a cover letter that is as dense as a page from a Civ Pro text? Or search carefully for qualifications on a resume that isn't clearly headed and succinctly worded? Of course not, you'd simply throw that letter or resume onto the discard pile and go to the next candidate.

Be concise. Any wordiness is a waste of valuable attorney time, whether they are reviewing cover letters or listening to interview answers. Edit your letters carefully to remove unnecessary repetitions of material already described on your resume; instead, give expanded information or evidence for personal qualities you want them

to notice. The same is true of answers to interview questions; they should be on point, rehearsed enough to be articulate, and brief while still showcasing your excellence.

If you've got it, flaunt it. Your resume and cover letter are your marketing materials; you need to include everything that reflects your excellence and nothing that detracts from your luster. We like to say, "Everything on your resume must be true but not everything about you must be on your resume."

Think about the bottom line. Because law firms are profit-driven organizations, their interest is in revenue. While they want to enjoy working with you, it's important to remember that many of their decisions and choices are based on economic considerations and efficiency. Present qualifications that will add value to the firm.

Use every opportunity to forge a personal connection. Candidates who are personally known by someone (anyone!) at the organization are far more interesting than strangers. It is human nature to hire someone about whom you know something rather than someone about whom you know little or nothing. Speak to panelists after career panels, join local bar associations, do informational interviewing in your field – in short, use every opportunity you have to make a personal connection.

Understanding the employers' point of view clarifies their preferences and helps you to prepare excellent application materials and interview answers.



Want to make an appointment with a career counselor?

Call the CSO Front Desk at (415) 565-4619.

Everyday, the Career Services Office receives new listings. Log onto HastingsCareers.com and check often for new postings. Just a few highlights:

FALL POSITIONS

Ord & Norman, Law Clerk. Looking for 2L or 3L law student who would like to clerk part time for a small boutique law firm located in the SF Financial District. We specialize in tax litigation and estate planning, some business commercial litigation and transactional work. Looking for a bright, energetic, self-motivated and disciplined person to do mostly research work and writing of memorandums. Strong research skills are necessary. This is not a one-semester job. We are hoping to find someone who would like to work part time until their graduation date. No opportunity for a job offer after graduation. **Years Required: 2L, 3L. Materials Requested:** Fax, email or mail resume to: Office Administrator, Ord & Norman, 233 Sansome Street, #1111, San Francisco, CA 94104; Fax: (415)-274- 3838; E-mail: romerovigil@sbcglobal.net; **Deadline: 10/15/07**

Youth Law Center. Part-Time Law Clerk. The YLC is seeking law

students to work PT during the fall semester. Students will work closely with attorneys on pending federal and state civil rights litigation. Tasks include legal research and writing; drafting pleadings; and attending litigation strategy meetings and any local court proceedings. Students also do legal research and prepare memoranda on public policy aspects of child welfare and juvenile justice; and may also work on publications of the YLC. Applicants should have excellent research and writing skills. Experience in child advocacy work may be helpful. The YLC hires students who are work-study and volunteers. **Years Required: 2L, 3L. Materials Requested:** E-mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample and a list of three references to Mamie Yee, myee@ylc.org. **Deadline: 10/15/07**

Law Offices of Todd P. Emanuel. Intern. Small plaintiff's firm handling cases of serious personal injury and wrongful death. Our interns actively participate in trial preparation,, staff meetings, client meetings, drafting demand letters, legal research, propounding and responding to discovery, summarizing deposition transcripts and medical records, and document review, filing and organization. We prefer to hire an intern on the basis of receiving class credits/units. Unpaid. **Years Required: 2L, 3L. Materials Requested:** E-mail Todd Emanuel at tpelaw@aol.com. **Deadline: 10/15/07**

Law Offices of Mayor Joseph L. Alioto and Angela Alioto. Internship. Small plaintiff's firm with a focus on employment discrimination. Looking for promising law students to join our team and learn the details of

employment discrimination practice. Duties vary from legal research to the drafting and filing of pleadings at both federal and state courts, to the preparation and attendance of depositions, hearings and trials. We will work with the student to arrange flexible hours that will not interfere with school. We appreciate any commitment of time that will allow students to accumulate academic credit for their work. **Years Required: 2L, 3L. Materials Requested:** Fax resume and cover letter to 415-438-4638. **Deadline: 10/15/07.**

This Week's Events

Focus on the Long Distance Job Search

*Monday, 8/27; 3:40-4:30pm
Workshop/Room K*

Interview Tips from Legal Employers

*Tuesday, 8/28; 3:40-4:30pm
Panel/Room F*

Winning Interview Strategies from 3L OCI "Veterans"

*Wednesday, 8/29; 12:40 – 1:30 pm
Panel/Room F*

Effective Public Interest Fellowship Applications

*Friday, 8/31; 12:40 -1:30pm
Panel/Room F*