# The Career and Professional Development Office
## Student Handbook
### Fall 2013

## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. About Us</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Non-Discrimination Policy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resumes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Winning Legal Resumes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identify Your Skills</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inventorying your Experiences/Resume Content</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Action Verbs for Resumes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sample Resumes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Letters</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Important Elements of Cover Letters</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recommended Cover Letter Outline</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sample Cover Letters</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Why is a Reference List Important?</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. References vs. Recommendations</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sample Reference List</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Samples</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. When is a Writing Sample Necessary?</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What is an Appropriate Writing Sample?</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How Long Should the Writing Sample Be?</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How Should I Package It?</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank You Letters ............................................................................................................. 35
  1. About Thank You Letters ............................................................................. 35
  2. Sample Thank you Letters ......................................................................... 37

Networking ....................................................................................................................... 42
  1. What Is Networking? ................................................................................ 42
  2. Why Bother To Network? ......................................................................... 42
  3. Developing A Network ............................................................................... 43
     a. Identify the Members of Your Current Network ....................... 43
     b. Making New Networking Contacts in the Legal World .......... 44
     c. Build and Expand Your Network ............................................. 44
  4. Conducting Informational Interviews ......................................................... 48
  5. Sample Informational Interview Questions ............................................... 49
  6. General Rules for Networking Success ....................................................... 50
  7. Lawyers and Networking – An Often Uneasy Match ................................ 52

Interviewing ................................................................................................................... 55
  1. Mock Interviews ........................................................................................ 55
  2. Research and The Employer .................................................................... 55
  3. Key Elements to Prepare for the Interview .............................................. 56
  4. Tips for the Interview ................................................................................ 60

Career Strategies ......................................................................................................... 62
  1. Career Tips for First Year Students ........................................................... 62
  2. Career Tips for Second Year Students ...................................................... 62
  3. Career Tips for Third Year Students .......................................................... 63
  4. Evening Students ...................................................................................... 64

Applying for Jobs Out of State .................................................................................. 66
  1. Advice for Students Seeking Employment in Another City or State ...... 66

Judicial Clerkships ...................................................................................................... 68
  1. Judicial Clerkship Resources .................................................................... 79
On-Campus Interviewing ................................................................. 89

1. Frequently Asked Questions About OCI ................................................... 89

Legal Career Options .................................................................................. 91

1. Private Firms ............................................................................................. 91
   a. Large .................................................................................................. 91
   b. Medium and Small ........................................................................... 91
2. In-House Counsel ...................................................................................... 92
3. Public Sector ............................................................................................. 92
   a. Federal Government ..................................................................... 92
4. Public Interest ........................................................................................... 93
5. Law Specialty Areas ................................................................................... 93

Alternative Careers and Non-Traditional Careers ........................................ 95

1. Alternative Careers ................................................................................... 95
2. Suggested Reading .................................................................................... 95

Survival Guide ............................................................................................... 97
Chapter 1

Introduction to the
Career and Professional Development Office

About Us

The Career and Professional Development Office continuously strives to provide students with the tools and resources to succeed in their self-directed job search. Our office offers career advising, networking, programming, and skills training with an emphasis on professionalism.

The Variety of Programming Methods includes:

- Career Advising
- Externship Programs
- Pro Bono Programs
- On-Campus Interview Programs
- Launch-a-Lawyer Mentor Programs
- Career Information Panels
- Public Interest Career Fair
- Open Houses
- Employment and Volunteer Listings
- Careers Portal Site
- Job Search and Skills Workshops
- Mock Interview Programs
- Resume and Cover Letter Review
Career Advising
Our Career and Professional Development Office provides individual career advising for our students encompassing all aspects of career services including: identifying career goals and objectives; planning job search strategies; advising students of available resources; and resume and cover letter review. Our door is always open and our staff is available for appointments and walk-in service.

On-Campus Interviews
Our On-Campus Interview program provides an opportunity for employers to come to our law school campus and interview law students for employment opportunities. Each year, we are pleased to welcome many private and public interest employers throughout Hawai‘i as well as several out-of-state employers.

Students sign up for on-campus interviews on a first-come, first-served basis. Our Fall On-Campus Interview program focuses on opportunities for 2Ls and 3Ls while our Spring On-Campus Interview program focuses on 1Ls.

Launch-a-Lawyer Mentor Program
One of our Law School’s greatest strengths has always been our ability to create and sustain a strong sense of community. Alumni and friends of the Law School are consistently willing to help our students as much as possible. Our Launch-a-Lawyer Mentor Program builds on our strong foundation of community and aims to introduce our wonderful students to the varied, intriguing personal stories of key people about what it means to lead a professional life in the law in Hawai‘i, while honing their networking skills.

Career Information Panels
Several times during the spring semester, practitioners in various law specialty areas as well as non-traditional career areas share with students about their work. A different practice area is featured at each session. Past topics have included environmental law, international law, business and corporate law, family and elder law, labor and employment law, and many more.

Pro Bono and Public Interest Career Fair
Our law school has a long-standing tradition of public service and commitment to pro bono service. These provide an opportunity for members of our public interest and pro bono community to meet our students and our students to learn about public interest practice in our community.
Law Firm Open House
The Law Firm Open House provides a forum for firm representatives to meet students and introduce them to the firm. Representatives share information and answer questions about their respective firms: practice areas, firm culture, representative clients/cases, career and volunteer opportunities, etc. Students have an opportunity to learn about local legal employers so they can make informed career decisions. In addition to the Open House hosted on-campus, law firms also have scheduled tours and mixers at their respective offices.

Career Resource Library and Website
The Career Resource Library (CRL) has a wide variety of general reference materials including student access to several national and international directories as well as informational brochures and handouts. Books about legal careers are also available to student through the law library. is available to all WSRSL students, alumni, and reciprocity grantees at the Law School front desk during regular business hours.

Employment and Volunteer Listings
Our Careers Portal provides job listings in Hawai‘i and throughout the nation. Other listings are available through our subscriptions including PSLaw, Equal Justice Works, the Government and Internship Handbook, and other resources posted on the Careers Portal and on the website.

Job Search and Skills Workshops
Students learn to prepare effective legal resumes and cover letters. Students are also instructed on how to develop successful interviewing and networking skills.

Mock Interview Program
Mock Interview programs occur in the fall and spring to help students practice their interviewing skills with attorneys from the legal community and receive feedback to improve their presentation.
Externship Program
The Externship Program enables a student to earn 2-12 credits for working under the tutelage of experienced and enthusiastic lawyers or judges in the courts, public agencies, the State Legislature, corporate law offices, or private law firms. Law students are responsible for locating and securing their own mentors. We do maintain a list of the mentors in last summer’s externship program and the names of the students who served as their externs.

Pro Bono Program
The preparation of lawyers who recognize the significance of their public service obligations is an important objective of the William S. Richardson School of Law. In 1992, the William S. Richardson School of Law adopted a Law Student Public Service graduation requirement. The class of 1995 was the first graduating class obliged to fulfill the requirement. The Law Student Public Service (better known as "Pro Bono") Program introduces the concept of pro bono service to law students and is an integral part of the academic program at the law school. It provides law students the opportunity to address unmet legal needs in the community while enriching their legal education.
William S. Richardson School of Law  
Non-Discrimination Policy for Career Services

All employers wishing to participate in the on-campus interview (OCI) program and/or on-campus recruiting activities must sign an acknowledgment form indicating they have read and will adhere to the non-discrimination policy of University of Hawai‘i, William S. Richardson School of Law. The School of Law non-discrimination policy statement is as follows:

The School of Law asks that all interviewers be familiar with fair employment and interview practices and that they refrain from making any illegal inquiries. In addition, the School of Law opposes, in the strongest terms, discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, gender, age, religion, physical disability, marital, parental or veteran status and sexual orientation. Employers who recruit on campus and utilize the placement services are expected to share this viewpoint and to act accordingly.

Students are instructed to inform the Associate Dean of Student Services and/or Director of Professional Development of interview questions which they interpret as discriminatory or inappropriate. In addition, any student who wants to discuss this matter is encouraged to speak with the Associate Dean of Student Services and/or Director of Professional Development.
Chapter 2

Resumes

Winning Legal Resumes

Resumes are an individual expression of who you are. They are also your one chance to make a great first impression. The idea is to set yourself apart from the rest of the crowd, while still maintaining the traditional professionalism required in the field of law. Remember, the resume is not a complete autobiography or recitation of your life’s story. It is a critical marketing tool and a prospectus for the future. The main task of a resume is to give a potential employer a reason to want to meet you. A good resume should:

- Be neat, eye pleasing, easy to read and well-written void of spelling and grammatical errors, typos and formatting errors
- Highlight your significant accomplishments and showcase your marketable skills
- Be logically displayed for a 30-second (or less) review

The Basic Guidelines

- **Overall Document Format**
  - Equal margins – 1” ideal but try to keep above ½”
  - Set off each section with 1-2 lines of space or a horizontal border

- **Paper**
  - Resumes should always be printed on an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper – do not use legal size
  - Use heavy bond paper that is white, off-white, cream or a very light gray. Make a statement about yourself with your choice of words, not with hot pink paper!
  - Except for writing samples and transcripts, resumes and other application materials should be on bond paper – no copies!
• **Font**
  - Preferably, choose one font style easy to read and vary in font size
  - Use a conservative font (e.g. Geneva, Palatino, Times New Roman, Bookman)
  - Use a balanced appearance of **bold**, *underline* and *italics* to stress marketable points
  - 12 pt font is best; however, try to keep above 10 pt if you need further formatting flexibility

• **Length**
  - In general, your resume is best if kept within one page. Acceptable qualifiers to this rule include extensive relevant work experience beyond college.
  - A good general rule of thumb is one page for every 10 years of experience. Keep the most important and/or relevant information on the first page and be sure to include your name and page number on every page.

Envelopes should be typed, not addressed by hand or labeled with self-adhesives.
Unlike resumes for jobs in other fields, legal resumes are relatively generic in style and layout, and always conservative. Your resume is a brief introduction to your skills and experience, and an invitation to the employer to meet you in person to discuss your qualifications in greater detail. Nevertheless, the employer may have received hundreds of resumes for a particular job opening. Because employers tend to spend only two minutes on an initial resume scan, make sure that your resume contains no errors that will disqualify you before sufficient time has been spent reviewing your background. In the initial job application stages, it is often simpler for an employer to determine initially which candidates to place in the “no” pile.
Your resume is a living document, that is, it is fluid and constantly changing. As you gain more experience and additional skills, both in law school and beyond, you will continue to refine your resume. As your career aspirations change or you respond to a specific job opening, you will craft resumes that fit the needs of your targeted employer(s) or more closely match your evolving priorities and goals. Even while you are in law school, you will probably create at least two resumes – or more. By your third year of law school, it is common to have created or refined your resume six or more times.
You should have different resumes for different types of employers. For example, one resume might focus on your background and interest in international human rights work, while a second resume might place more emphasis and attention on experiences and activities that highlight your business or technology skills.
Identify Your Skills

It is sometimes difficult to fully and effectively inventory and evaluate your own skills profile. Ask yourself: “What special abilities have I developed which allowed me to perform successfully in my previous activities/jobs?” Do not be concerned that you have little or no previous experience in legal jobs. Job skills are transferable. For example, the communications skills learned in a retail position will be useful in your future legal career when counseling clients. Categorize your skills as follows – all three categories are important and highly valued by employers!

- **Technical/Professional Skills** – skills that are related to performing within a job and acquired by education, training, reading, and/or hands-on experiences (i.e., internships, clerkships, volunteer opportunities). These skills are often listed in advertised job postings: e.g., legal research abilities, writing skills, working knowledge of a certain area of law (e.g., Uniform Commercial Code).

- **Functional Skills** – skills related to people, information, and things that are transferable from one field to another (e.g., organization, communication, management, leadership). These abilities are easy to overlook or downplay, but are highly valued by prospective employers and crucial to successful workplace performance.

- **Personal/Adaptive Skills** – skills often referred to as personality and/or character traits (e.g., patience, decisiveness, team player, self-starter, quick learner, detail-oriented, work well under pressure).

Outline your Experiences/Resume Content

- **Heading** (name, address, email, telephone)

- **Education/Honors/School-Related Activities** (reverse chronological order) Always begin the resume with your law school information, even if you have significant work experience prior to attending the William S. Richardson School of Law. Upon receiving your resume, the employer should recognize immediately that you are a law student, not an attorney.
  - Education typically begins with law school then undergraduate and graduate degrees (if applicable)
  - List degree/year obtained or expected; names and locations of schools.
  - Include your GPA if 3.0 or higher; class rank if in top 10%
• Use same format for law school and other school degrees
  • “J.D.” and “B.A.”, “JD” and “BA”, “Juris Doctor” and “Bachelor of Arts”
  • If numerous publications, list under separate “publications” heading

• Certificates/Licenses/Bar Admission(s)

• Professional/Work Experience

  • Be specific! Include title, months and years of employment, name and location of employer.

  • Descriptions should use action verbs, and it should be a simple matter for the employer to glance down the page and see where you have worked and when. We suggest students refrain from listing employment dates on the far left – the eye should first move to the job title before the date.

  • Instead of automatically listing job duties for each job, try to write “accomplishment statements” that single out and spotlight your major achievements. Accomplishment statements are far more compelling than a list of job duties and responsibilities.

  Think back on your previous positions and highlight any experiences that represent achievements. To pinpoint achievements, some people think in terms of baseball and ask, “What were my triples and homeruns in that job?” Once you identify the triples and homeruns, write out an explanation of what you did.

  It may be helpful to describe each experience using a P-A-R (Problem-Action-Result) formula. Describe the Problem (or challenge/responsibility) you faced in the position, Action(s) you took to reach an objective/goal, and the Result or accomplishment.

  Contrast the effectiveness of these two statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic/Generic Description</th>
<th>Using P-A-R Formula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performed legal research and drafted a response to a motion for summary judgment</td>
<td>Drafted successful opposition to pivotal motion for summary judgment in personal injury case involving more than $10 million in damages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List job duties where accomplishment statements are not feasible. Obviously, no one hits triples and homeruns in every job. If you don’t have any significant achievements in a particular job, it is perfectly acceptable to list your job duties and responsibilities, but it need not be an exhaustive list. Stick to the more significant ones that will be
meaningful to the reader. A list of sample phrases for job duties as well as accomplishment statements is included below.

- Use action verbs to start each statement and omit personal pronouns (i.e., “I” or “my”). A list of action verbs is included below.
- Quantify number of people, products, profits involved (e.g., “Supervised 15-20 community volunteers”).
- Use present tense for current activities and past tense for prior positions
- If you have no job experience, build on activities, volunteerism, and/or honors
- Include externships, internships and significant pro bono experience

**Volunteer, Clinical, and/or Internship Experience**
- This may be your **strong point**! Always consider how you can “put your best foot forward”, presenting yourself as an experienced, capable candidate.
- Particularly important for public interest and/or government employment
- Emphasize how volunteering for a community organization contributed to your professional growth
- Okay to have a separate “Volunteer” section if you have significant volunteer experience related to the position you are applying for

**Professional Memberships/Activities/Publications**
- If you only have affiliations/association memberships relating to school, then list under the respective school
- If you have other professional affiliations or association memberships, then you can have a separate section and option to include student org memberships in the “professional affiliations” section

**Special Skills** (fluency in a foreign language; advanced computer skills if truly beyond those skills expected)
- Emphasize fluency in a foreign language
- Don’t list computer skills unless they are unusual or you need “filler”. Employers assume that today’s students are computer literate

**Activities/Interests** (extra-curricular activities, hobbies, interesting pursuits)
Interests are unnecessary on the resume unless they are (a) unusual/unique enough to spark a conversation, (b) something that you think the employer would be interested in, or (c) truly needed as space filler. For example, listing “music” as an interest is vague and not particularly interesting, but “clarinet in the Honolulu Symphony” is information that you should probably retain. Also, if you have had limited work experience, you may need to keep a skills/interests section until you are able to flesh out your text with additional work experience
Focus on unusual or profitable hobbies, competitive sports, study abroad, international work/volunteer experiences, involvement in civic or charitable affairs or other activities you have excelled in. Emphasize quality v. quantity. In other words, try not to appear as though outside activities may overwhelm your work.

**Tips and Traps**

- Do not use an objective statement or “references available upon request” line on your resume. Your objectives and/or career goals will be explained in your cover letter, and employers know that you will provide professional references when and if they are requested.
- Tailor your resume to the specific employer and be sure to focus on skills and experience sought by the employer.
- Resumes should be scrupulously honest, concise and positive.
- Proofread (for accuracy, grammar, punctuation, and correct telephone number).
- Have two other people proofread (perfection is key).
- Before including anything on your resume, ask yourself this: Does this information *significantly* contribute to your resume? If not, exclude it.
- Make sure that your voicemail message and email address are appropriate.
- Do not include personal information which might trap the employer into a discriminatory posture or cause you discomfort. Just as important, this information is not relevant to your qualifications as an attorney.
  - Age or Date of Birth
  - Marital status, name of spouse, and/or names of children
  - Health
  - Religion
  - Any other personal information
  - Photograph
- Unprofessional and inappropriate items to exclude:
  - Reasons for leaving
  - Compensation requirements (unless requested)
  - Inappropriate personal interests
  - Summary of qualifications or significant accomplishments sections
**Action Verbs for Resumes**

Use action verbs to describe your work experience and other activities on your resume. Action verbs help the potential employer understand what you have accomplished, show that your “skills sets” are transferable to the advertised position, and demonstrate confidence. Remember to keep action verbs in the present tense if you are still in that position; past tense if you are no longer. Replace passive descriptive with verbs such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accelerated</th>
<th>contributed</th>
<th>identified</th>
<th>provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accomplished</td>
<td>controlled</td>
<td>implemented</td>
<td>purchased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquired</td>
<td>coordinated</td>
<td>improved</td>
<td>recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acted</td>
<td>corresponded</td>
<td>increased</td>
<td>recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administered</td>
<td>counseled</td>
<td>instituted</td>
<td>reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admitted</td>
<td>created</td>
<td>instructed</td>
<td>reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advised</td>
<td>decreased</td>
<td>interviewed</td>
<td>represented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advocated</td>
<td>delegated</td>
<td>invented</td>
<td>researched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allocated</td>
<td>delivered</td>
<td>investigated</td>
<td>resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzed</td>
<td>demonstrated</td>
<td>launched</td>
<td>responsible for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved</td>
<td>designed</td>
<td>led</td>
<td>revamped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arbitrated</td>
<td>determined</td>
<td>maintained</td>
<td>reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arranged</td>
<td>developed</td>
<td>managed</td>
<td>revised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessed</td>
<td>devised</td>
<td>maximized</td>
<td>saved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assisted</td>
<td>directed</td>
<td>modified</td>
<td>scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attended</td>
<td>documented</td>
<td>monitored</td>
<td>served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authored</td>
<td>drafted</td>
<td>motivated</td>
<td>sold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authorized</td>
<td>edited</td>
<td>negotiated</td>
<td>solved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>began</td>
<td>eliminated</td>
<td>observed</td>
<td>streamlined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>built</td>
<td>engineered</td>
<td>optimized</td>
<td>structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canceled</td>
<td>established</td>
<td>organized</td>
<td>studied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communicated</td>
<td>evaluated</td>
<td>originated</td>
<td>summarized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compiled</td>
<td>expanded</td>
<td>oversaw</td>
<td>supervised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>completed</td>
<td>expedited</td>
<td>performed</td>
<td>taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>composed</td>
<td>finished</td>
<td>planned</td>
<td>trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceived</td>
<td>followed-up</td>
<td>prepared</td>
<td>translated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conducted</td>
<td>found</td>
<td>presented</td>
<td>updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consulted</td>
<td>generated</td>
<td>produced</td>
<td>verified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contracted</td>
<td>guided</td>
<td>proved</td>
<td>wrote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Resumes

Mary Peters

1234 ABC Street  Honolulu, HI  96822  808-555-5555  mp@hawaii.edu

EDUCATION:  William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Juris Doctor, expected May 2010
• College of Law and Howard E. Parks Memorial Scholarships
• Member, Environmental Law Society

University of Hawaii at Manoa
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, with distinction, May 2007
• Cum. G.P.A.: 3.87; Dean’s List
• Conducted campus tours in Ilocano on behalf of to encourage bilingual middle school students to pursue college education
• Provided orientation services to freshmen as upper-class student volunteer

EMPLOYMENT:  Good Better & Best, LLC, Honolulu, HI
Legal Assistant, February 2001-July 2002
• Drafted and edited successful motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment defending claims for workers’ compensation involving potential liability for permanent, total disability payments
• Assumed substantially all duties of another legal assistant during her three month leave, supporting sixteen rather than eight attorneys; awarded salary increase based on this performance
• Drafted and edited oppositions to significant procedural motions requiring quick turnaround times, sometimes as short as two hours
• Completed training of new legal assistants in one week, including explaining basic procedural process for workers compensation cases, providing instruction on computer and other office procedures, and reviewing and evaluating new assistants’ work product

State of Hawaii Attorney General’s Office, Consumer Protection Unit
Consumer Protection Assistant, May 1997-December 2000
• Provided basic dispute resolution guidance and referrals to state and federal agencies and other resources to complainants alleging consumer fraud and questionable business practices
• Implemented outreach program with local immigrant community centers and nursing homes to promote awareness of consumer fraud schemes among at-risk persons
• Worked extra hours to reduce backlog of consumer complaints from two months to three weeks

INTERESTS:
• Fluent in spoken and written Ilocano
• Travel to Mexico, Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East
Jennifer Boyd
1234 Main Street, #101 ▶ Kailua, HI 96734 ▶ 808-333-3333 ▶ jb@hawaii.edu

Education

William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, HI August 2002 - present
Juris Doctor Expected, May 2010
• GPA: 4.0/4.0
• Received Highest Section Grade in Legal Practice I
• Member, Business & Law Organization

University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI August 1997-May 2001
Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, May 2001
• Marketing Major GPA: 3.31/4.0 Major GPA: 3.53/4.0
• Scholarship for Entrepreneurship Studies, January 2001
• Dean’s List, May 2000, May 2001

Experience

Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Honolulu, HI July 2001 - July 2002
Assistant Manager, Branch Corporate Account Manager
• Earned two promotions within eight months through sales, marketing, and customer service efforts
• Managed all business operations at a sixty-car rental branch
• Improved and maintained highest customer satisfaction index in branch’s two year history

Center for Entrepreneurship, Honolulu, HI July 2000-2001
Project Coordinator for The Experiential Classroom, Logistics Coordinator for the Women’s Symposium
• Coordinated all academic, hospitality, and social events for a three-day international academic conference attended by 50 professors
• Initiated a regional marketing strategy for the Women’s Symposium attended by over 100 aspiring entrepreneurs

Honolulu Gymnastics Class Program, Honolulu, HI September 1998-May 2001
Class Program Manager, Gymnastics Coach
• Doubled enrollment to 150 students within two months by designing an advertising campaign, incorporating special prices, and creating a monthly newsletter
• Received the Scholarship for Entrepreneurial Studies through the use of entrepreneurial efforts within an existing organization to relieve the club of debt

Activities

Royal School, Honolulu, HI September 2002-present
Reading Volunteer

University of Hawaii Youth Gymnastics, Honolulu, HI September 2001-present
Youth Gymnastics Coach
Jonathan R. Smith
1234 Any Street, Honolulu, HI • 808-555-1234 • jsmith@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, HI
J.D., Expected May 2010
• Member, Pacific Asian Law Student Organization

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
B.A., Political Science; Minor, History
• Golden Key National Honor Society
• Dean's List

EXPERIENCE

Smith, Doe, Jones, Anderson & James, Englewood, CO September 2001 – Present
Law Clerk
• Drafted successful opposition to pivotal motion for summary judgment in personal injury case involving catastrophic injuries and more than $10 million in damages
• Drafted complaint in complex contract case involving dispute over multi-million dollar parcel of real estate
• Prepared settlement agreement to resolve $30,000 construction contract case between general contractor and property owner
• Performed legal research on broad scope of issues in complex civil cases

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO January 1998 - May 2000
Tutorial Hall Manager
• Supervised team of twenty employees to ensure academic success of students while maintaining an atmosphere conducive to growth and learning
• Implemented programs to facilitate personal and academic development of students

ABC Telecommunications, Anytown, PA June 1997 - January 1999
Production Analyst
• Reviewed and critiqued performance and administered remedial training to more than 500 telemarketers at 10 remote sites serving major consumer services companies and other organizations such as American Express, Capital One, Citicorp, and Smithsonian Institute
Jonathan R. Smith

United States Navy  USS Eisenhower  July 1993- July 1997

Aviation Storekeeper Third Class  Norfolk, VA

• Managed the maintenance, inventory, and distribution of classified aviation equipment, valued in excess of $800 million
• Provided support and assistance to twelve-ship Eisenhower Battle Group engaged in patrolling Persian Gulf and delivering air support over Iraqi No Fly Zone
• Managed security services for various sections of nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower
• Supplied material to 10th Mountain Division of U.S. Army during Haitian crisis.

PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

• Honorable Discharge from United States Navy  July 1997
• Merit Citation from Commander, Eisenhower Battle Group  April 1995
• Meritorious Unit Commendation Medal (Haiti)  July 1995
• Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Yugoslavia)  May 1994

ACTIVITIES

`Ahahui o Hawai`i  August 2000- Present

William S. Richardson School of Law

• Worked with senior school officials and faculty to develop and implement improvements to native/indigenous peoples’ curriculum.
• Developed, with Career and Professional Development Office, new job posting and placement program for employers and students interested in native/indigenous peoples’ law.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

• Instructed disadvantaged elementary school children in Hampden, VA about value of education and available opportunities

INTERESTS

• Downhill skiing, reading novels, backcountry camping, hiking, and mountain biking
Christine L. Baker

1234 Kalani Street, # 111, Honolulu, HI  80222  (808) 333-9999      cbaker15@hawaii.edu

Education

William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, HI, G.P.A. 3.94/4.0; Class Rank: 5/228
Juris Doctor Expected, May 2004
  •  UH Law Review, Staff Editor, 2002-2003; General Editor, 2003-2004
  •  President, Environmental Law Society, 2003-2004; Member, Business Law Society, 2002-2004
  •  Moot Court Board, 2002-2003, lead, Natural Resources Competition, 2002
  •  Member, American Inns of Court – Hawaii Chapter, 2002-present

University of Texas, Austin, TX, Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, December 1998
  •  ISA Study Abroad Program, Granada, Spain, Summer 1997

Professional Experience

Summer Associate, Anderson Johnson, Austin, TX         Beginning
July 2003

Summer Associate, Good Better Best LLP, Honolulu, HI    May 2003 - present
  •  Researching Blue Sky laws related to institutional investors; creating database of pertinent statutory exemptions
  •  Reviewing and analyzing Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (“RESPA”) pertaining to cooperative brokerage agreements; drafting client memorandum setting forth exemptions from RESPA

Intern, Judge James Rafferty, First Circuit Court, Hawaii                                     February - April 2003
  •  Reviewed mechanics’ lien filings; discussed legal issues with Judge Rafferty; researched applicable case and statutory law; drafted order for Judge Rafferty’s review
  •  Reviewed county court file and defendant’s appeal to the district court pertaining to conviction for driving while ability impaired; researched applicable criminal procedure law; drafted order for Judge Rafferty’s review

Intern, Environmental Protection Agency, Honolulu, HI         May – June 2002
  •  Reviewed and analyzed Supreme Court decision in SWANCC and subsequent case law addressing similar environmental issues; prepared memorandum detailing research
  •  Analyzed applicable federal law and regulations and drafted complaint against oil facility alleging violations of Clean Water Act

Interests & Volunteer Activities
  •  Competitive gymnast, 1982-1993; Elite gymnast, Junior Olympics team member, 1988-1993
  •  Raised $5,000 for the Arthritis Foundation, 2001; Raised $1,000 for the Arthritis Foundation, 2002
JOHN F. DOE  
1234 Makahiki Lane, Apartment 303  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822  
(808) 425-7707  
jdoe@hawaii.edu

EDUCATION

William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, Hawaii  
J.D. expected, May 2003  
Class Rank: 16/245; GPA: 3.433/4.0  
• Staff Member, University of Hawaii Law Review  
• Publication: “Polar Dispute Resolution,”  

University of Oregon, Mapleton, Oregon  
GPA: 3.7/4.0  
• Fencing Team, Pacific Northwest Conference Champion 1999  
• Researched and wrote articles regarding Oregon State Legislature for The Oregon Daily Emerald, Student Newspaper

EXPERIENCE

Law Clerk, Nonesuch & Somesuch, LLC, Kahului, Hawaii, August 2002-present  
• Assist with civil cases, including estate planning, domestic relations, corporations, environmental law, labor law, product liability and litigation  
• Research and brief supervising attorney on due process issues inherent in guarantor liability action  
• Conduct title searches and prepare real estate settlement documents

Student Volunteer, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, August 2001-August 2002  
• Represented clients before Hawaii courts and agencies in landlord-tenant disputes, social welfare matters, domestic relations, contract and related civil cases  
• Supervised 5 volunteers and monitored case progress  
• Conducted in-take interviews with prospective clients  
• Developed series of checklists to aid in preparation of landlord-tenant and domestic relations cases

• Assisted in drafting regulations implementing the Competition in Contracting Act of 1990

ACTIVITIES/INTERESTS

Volunteer, Children’s Museum; fluent in Japanese; marathon runner, enjoy reading science fiction, snowboarding and technical climbing.
ANN M. SMITH
900 5th Ave., Apt. #1-106, Honolulu HI 80227       808.345.1111         asmith1@hawaii.edu

EDUCATION:  William S. Richardson School of Law, Honolulu, Hawaii  
J.D. expected, June 2005  
•  Member, Advocates in Public Interest Law  
•  Student member, ACLU and Hawaii State Bar Association

University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah  
B.A., English, May 2002  
•  Dean’s List, 3.70 GPA  
•  Member, Golden Key Honor Society and Pre-law Society

Central Pennsylvania Business School Summerdale, Pennsylvania  
ASB Court Reporting, August 1985  
•  Selected on the basis of exceptional reporting skills as 1 of 10 students to report depositions taken in personal injury class action arising from the nuclear meltdown at Three Mile Island.

EXPERIENCE:  Doggone Walking Services, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1999 to 2001  
Sole Proprietor  
•  Launched successful and unique pet-sitting and animal care business that grew quickly, exceeding gross revenue projections within 1 year and making it necessary to hire 2 employees to service business growth.  
•  Featured on the evening news of Salt Lake City’s NBC affiliate as a unique and successful area business.

Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1999-2000  
Office Assistant  
•  Identified deficiencies in billing procedures and designed and implemented remedial process that substantially reduced delinquent fees.  
•  Negotiated resolution of disputes with customers over liability for childcare expenses based on research and evaluation of billing and attendance records.

Esquire Deposition Service, Troy, Michigan, 1997 - 1998  
Freelance Court Stenographer  
•  Produced deposition transcripts under strict time constraints in major patent and products liability cases for attorneys representing General Motors, Ford and Chrysler.  
•  Routinely reported depositions involving more than 20 attorneys in class action asbestos litigation.  
•  Obtained federal government security clearance to provide transcripts for the United States Department of Agriculture.
Baltimore County Circuit Court, Baltimore, Maryland, 1994 - 1997
Official Court Stenographer
- Routinely provided basic legal research when requested by the judge.
- Reported all courtroom proceedings of civil and criminal jury and bench trials from personal injury to death penalty cases.
- Developed and implemented courtroom system to efficiently manage daily copy transcripts necessary for 3-month jury trial involving contract and legal malpractice dispute.

Betz & Strouse Reporting, Baltimore, Maryland, 1987 - 1988
Freelance Court Stenographer
- Provided deposition transcripts and supervised proofreaders for complex civil cases, including personal injury class-action suits against Greyhound Bus Lines and Amtrak.

Freelance Court Stenographer
- Reported deposition transcripts of class-action cases related to black lung disease of coal miners.

Freelance Court Stenographer
- Provided transcripts of administrative proceedings before the Pennsylvania Workman’s Compensation Board and Public Utility Commission.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:  Registered Professional Reporter
Member National Court Reporters Association
Utah Certified Shorthand Reporter

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS:  Murray City Zoning Board, Annexation Division
- Appointed to Zoning Board through competitive process based on knowledge of annexation procedures, community involvement, and recommendation of mayor.

INTERESTS:  Rescue and provide foster care to homeless and abused animals through nonprofit organizations such as Best Friends Animal Sanctuary and Wasatch Humane Animal Rescue.
Chapter 3

Cover Letters

Important Elements of Cover Letters

The cover letter is your first – and possibly only – opportunity to engage a prospective employer. It is a key marketing tool to convince the employer to take the time to look at your resume. Think of it as “bait” that you are using to “hook” the reader. Attorneys or law firm recruiting coordinators look through hundreds if not thousands of resumes and search for a reason to dismiss your application. You give such a reason by writing a cover letter that is rambling and poorly written or contains typographical or grammatical errors.

The primary purpose of your letter is to get an interview. The second purpose is to communicate “the intangibles” not readily apparent from the facts on your resume. It should be written in a tone that is direct, unassuming, and conveys enthusiasm.

Five Rules to Keep in Mind:

1. Put Yourself in the Employer’s Shoes

Never forget who your audience is and why you are writing this letter: it should be employer-focused. In your first paragraph, you need to quickly and clearly answer the employer’s unspoken questions:

“Who are you?”
“Why have you contacted me?”
“Why should I be interested in meeting you?”

To answer the last question, you need to do some research on the employer. An effective cover letter will:

(a) highlight skills and abilities of most interest to the specific employer reading your letter based on your knowledge of their needs
(b) demonstrate that you are familiar with their particular organization.

The most effective job search mailings target individuals you’ve met or who have been referred to you through your networking efforts. Be prepared with additional questions for this new contact based on your knowledge of their background and employers you’ve researched. If you leave the meeting with one or two more names of people to contact, you’ve accomplished one of your goals.
2. Don’t Re-State Your Resume

Your cover letter should not re-state your resume. The cover letter is an opportunity to make explicit how the skills you developed will be beneficial to this particular employer. The second paragraph of your letter should articulate explicitly where your characteristics and experiences meet their needs. Your introductory sentence or two can assert accomplishments, e.g., “I have developed strong writing skills” or “solid analytical abilities,” but you must have examples that support your claims or conclusions (awards, commendations by employer, professor). If you cannot think of any experience or award that demonstrates this quality or attribute to support your proposition, don’t make the claim. It cannot just be your opinion (or your mother’s!).

3. Style

A successful cover letter is concise, quickly absorbed, sounds genuine and rings sincere. Don’t write complex, convoluted sentences, or use obscure words in an effort to sound sophisticated and highly educated. Instead, you will come across as pompous and insincere and your letter will be discarded before the reader gets to the signature line.

Confidence and competence will be best conveyed through simple, straightforward language. Don’t use outrageous superlatives. Remember that you are a law student building your legal career on a solid academic and practical foundation. Avoid phrases such as “I’m the perfect candidate for this position because…” or “I am confident I will exceed your expectations in every way.” Blunt statements like these two ring hollow and sound insincere. Make plausible claims and be sure to support them with credible accounts from your experiences.

Use active voice. Passive voice is often plodding and drags your presentation down. Active voice conveys a much stronger, more positive impression. It also demonstrates you are the “excellent writer” you claim to be.

A well-written, professional cover letter will stand on its own merits. Don’t resort to gimmicks such as disguising your resume as a subpoena or printing your cover letter in technicolor. They are not recommended ways to score points in the traditionally conservative legal profession.

4. Lying – Don’t!

Don’t manufacture a story, or embellish an experience or credential to impress a prospective employer. One lie begets another and, typically, you get caught somewhere along the way and the results will be devastating. Integrity is critical in this profession. You want to begin developing a reputation for being trustworthy and honest now.
5. Avoid Typos and Grammatical Errors

Proofread your work, and then have a friend do it too. Your sentence structure, punctuation and spelling should be flawless. Don’t give the employer a reason to toss your application in the “reject” pile.

➢ Does the inside address match the salutation? Always address your letter to the person responsible for legal hiring, not simply “Hiring Partner.” Confirm the spelling of the recipient’s name and his/her gender and title by calling the office receptionist, by checking Martindale-Hubbell at www.martindale.com, the firm’s website or the Hawaii State Bar Association Directory, which is published by the Hawaii State Bar Association and can be found at www.hsba.org.
➢ Make sure the right letter goes into the right envelope.

These things may seem intuitive, but many qualified candidates are immediately rejected for seemingly “minor” errors. Attorneys will cut you no slack for a simple typo or, even worse, letters that are sloppy, reflect poor editing or proofing. Nor should they! If you can’t produce a final product that is flawless about yourself, why would an attorney trust you to competently handle client matters? Don’t rush to get them out or prepare the letters when you are too tired to be aware of mistakes. Take the extra time to do the job well and you will receive a better response to your letters.
Recommended Cover Letter Outline

*Note:* Use proper business letter format and make sure your address, phone number and e-mail appear at the top of the page. Use good quality bond paper.

1. **Introductory Paragraph**

Remember that this paragraph answers the questions:

- “Who are you?”
- “Why have you contacted me?”
- “Why should I be interested in meeting you?”

In other words, this paragraph immediately establishes your employment interest and generates interest in you.

If you have a mutual acquaintance, or someone referred you to the individual you are writing, use that in your opening line:

[Name of referring party] recommended that I contact you.

Follow this with an explanation of what you are seeking, for example:

*As a first year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law with a strong interest in natural resources law, I am very interested in pursuing a law clerk position with your firm.*

Or something along these lines:

*[Referring party] has described your practice in the area of intellectual property as “cutting edge.” As a first year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law with a technical background and keen interest in patent law, I am very interested in clerking for your firm.*

If you don’t have a mutual acquaintance or referral, try to draw on something you learned from your research to explain why you are writing to this particular firm.

2. **The Body of the Letter – Paragraph Two**

In the words of Kimm Walton, author of *Guerrilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams*, this section of the letter is where you “wheel in your big guns.” Describe specific training, achievements or experiences that highlight your strengths and abilities and demonstrate the value you can bring to this particular employer. Remember: don’t simply
repeat the information in your resume. Highlight items of particular relevance to this employer in this paragraph. Keep in mind you are answering the employer’s unspoken question: Why should I meet you?

3. The Final Paragraph – Paragraph Three

State your action plan! This is where you tell the employer what you will do in terms of follow up. Tell her you will follow up within 10 days to see if an interview or meeting can be arranged. Thank the addressee for her time and consideration. Here are a few examples:

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the possibility of summer employment with your firm. I will be in Maui during my holiday break, December 15-31. If I haven’t heard from you before that time, I will call you to schedule an appointment. Thank you for your consideration.

If my experience and background meet your requirements for a new associate, please contact me at the address or telephone number listed above. I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your consideration.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss how my background may fit your needs. I will contact you within the next two weeks to see if we might arrange a meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

If for some reason you are unable to follow-up (generally not recommended), close by saying:

If my experience and background meet your requirements for a new associate, please contact me at the address or telephone number listed above. I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your consideration.

Sample cover letters are included in this chapter. If you are writing cover letters for judicial clerkships, there are sample cover letters geared specifically for clerkship applications in the chapter on Judicial Clerkships.
Sample Cover Letters

Date

Samantha Stewart
1234 E. Curry Lane
Honolulu, Hawaii  96822

Mr. John Jefferson
Good, Better & Best, LLP
4800 North Broadway
Denver, Colorado  80001

Dear Mr. Jefferson:

I am a second year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law. I am applying for an associate position at Good, Better & Best. Virginia Hench, my professor of Criminal Law, suggested that I apply to your firm. She describes Good, Better & Best as a well-respected criminal defense law firm that has successfully handled many challenging cases.

As my resume reflects, I am currently working as an intern at the Public Defender’s Office in Honolulu where I have gained significant experience assisting in trial preparation. Additionally, I participated successfully as a member of the Criminal Defense Moot Court Team, recently reaching the National Competition Level. In both capacities, I continue to sharpen my public speaking, evidentiary, and writing skills. My research skills have improved as a result of my work as Research Assistant to WSRSL Law Professor Jill Ramsfield and as Technical Editor for the Criminal Defense Law Journal.

I am extremely disciplined and accustomed to setting goals and working hard to achieve them. My consistently high grade point average is indicative of my ability to manage several tasks simultaneously. The skills and experience gained through balancing work, leadership positions and academics will enable me to make an immediate contribution to your office.

Enclosed are my resume and transcript. If you require additional materials, please let me know. I look forward to meeting with you regarding the associate position. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

Samantha Stewart
Enclosures
Jane Jones
5280 Mile High Drive
Paradise, Hawaii 96822

Susan Smith
Hiring Attorney
Stone Steel & Hardrock Law Firm
100 Yellow Brick Road
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am a second year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law seeking an associate position at Stone Steel & Hardrock. I have talked with David Nice, a current associate with your firm and he encouraged me to contact you because of my extensive background in start-up companies. David spoke highly of the firm’s corporate practice and my own research supported our discussion.

I am extremely disciplined, accustomed to setting goals and working hard to achieve them. As my resume indicates, I have experience in successfully managing and selling start-up companies. Recently, I launched a computer company in Germany, largely due to business contacts I have throughout Europe from my studies abroad. My business background and language abilities could be helpful to your corporate department as it expands into the European market.

According to the Honorable Judge John Smith, for whom I clerked this past summer, my research and writing skills have improved enormously. I researched a wide variety of legal topics and wrote briefs on matters before the court. I am confident that the training I received from the Judge provides me with a solid foundation as a new associate.

I would bring to the law firm of Stone Steel & Hardrock the same commitment and dedication I brought to my other endeavors. I will follow-up with your office next week to determine the status of my application. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Jones
Encl.
Dear Mr. Gray:

I am a first year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law seeking summer employment with your law firm. I have enclosed my resume for your consideration. I am very disciplined and have a strong work ethic as reflected in my undergraduate studies and previous employment positions.

As my resume details, I worked several jobs in college to offset my living expenses. Nonetheless, I achieved a strong grade point average and was active in the French Club and University Theatre Group. Additionally, I volunteered at the local Boys and Girls Club and developed strong mentoring relationships with two teenage boys.

As a waitress and bartender at two local restaurants, I rose to manager status after only six months on the job. In each position, I demonstrated the ability to work under pressure, deal with multiple demands and remember my sense of humor.

I am eager to learn and will bring my strong commitment and drive to my work at your firm. I hope you will give my application your full consideration. I will call your office within ten days to inquire about a mutually convenient time to meet. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christina Jones

Encl.
Date

James Johnson
789 First Street
Waianae, Hawaii 12345

Mr. Bart Miller
Land and Water Fund of the Rockies
2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200
New York, New York 54321

Dear Mr. Miller:

I am a first year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law seeking a summer internship with the Land and Water Fund of Hawaii. Your organization’s goals of environmental protection and restoration align with my career objectives and passion for the region.

I have strong capabilities as a writer and editor. As an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, I wrote and edited articles for the school newsletter while pursuing a major in English. While working for the XYZ Pharmaceutical Company in California, I further honed these skills, drafting and revising documents to comply with the strict federal requirements of the Food and Drug Administration.

I chose to attend the Richardson School of Law because of my love for the region and focus on environmental law and conservation. I am Vice President of the Environmental Law Society at the law school. In that capacity, I organize and supervise fundraising events, assist in the planning of educational programs, and coordinate student memberships. As my GPA of 3.85 reflects, my extracurricular activities have not detracted from my academic studies.

I am a diligent student and a very hard worker and would highly value the opportunity to make a contribution to the Land and Water Fund this summer. I am willing to work on a volunteer basis and will be available for up to twenty hours per week after Memorial Day. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and further discuss my qualifications for an internship position in your office. Thank you.

Sincerely,

James Johnson
Encl.
Dear Ms. McVey:

I graduated from the William S. Richardson School of Law in December and took the bar examination in February. I am interested in applying for an associate position with McVey, Laird & Chien. My research indicates that your firm specializes in insurance defense, which is an area in which I have substantial experience for a recent law school graduate.

As a clerk for an auto subrogation firm during the past two years, I was exposed to a tremendous variety of insurance issues in connection with civil litigation. Due to the extremely hectic caseload of the firm, I assumed a great deal of responsibility. I quickly became adept at multi-tasking and prioritizing in order to expedite the processing stages of initial lawsuits while still continuing to work on active cases. I improved my writing skills significantly while drafting litigation documents for county and district courts. The firm was very pleased with my work but unfortunately has no permanent positions available right now.

Before attending law school, I worked for four years for the insurance broker ABC & Company. In that position, I worked closely with national insurance carriers, which gave me additional experience with the insurance industry. Working under tight deadlines and mediating between opposing parties, I developed the ability to work well under pressure. I received the "Peak Performer" award for my performance during the fourth quarter of 1999 and the first quarter of 2001.

I have enclosed my resume and transcript, for your consideration. I look forward to discussing my qualifications for the associate position in more detail with you. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

Andrew Ryan

Encl.
Chapter 4

References

Why is a reference list important?

Employers will rely upon your references to tell them about how you will function within their organization. They want to understand how reliable you are, how good your people skills will be, how diligent you will be at work. These are very important, and cannot be revealed any other way. That is why it is so very important to have references that will be able to vouch for you. Treat those references well so that they can honestly say good things about you. It is very helpful to have references who have been your supervisor in legal work environments, or professors who can attest to your writing skills.

Always ask a reference first! This is very important. Consider a wide selection of individuals that know you from various settings (i.e., business, school, volunteer work). The average number of references listed is two to three. Always ask permission before submitting the name of a reference.

References vs. Recommendations

Occasionally employers will require letters of recommendation rather than a list of references. Ask the employer whether they would like you to collect the letters and submit them as a package with your application, or if they would like the letters sent directly to the employer. Provide your recommender with a full name and address of the employer along with any relevant information about the employer and the position you are applying for. It is also nice to provide a self addressed and stamped envelope when letters must be sent directly to the employer. Make sure that you give your recommender ample time to prepare the letter.
Sample Reference List

Successful Student
1234 GonnaGetAGoodJob Street
Honolulu, Hawaii  96822
(808) 123-4567
hikino@hawaii.edu

REFERENCES

Alice Attorney, Staff Attorney
Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, Inc.
223 S. King Street, Suite 400
Honolulu, HI  96813
(808) 599-2436

Peter Paulson, Partner
Ashford &Wriston
Alii Place
1099 Alakea St., Ste. 1400
Honolulu, HI  96813
(808) 539-0415

Polly Professor, Assistant Professor
University of Hawai`i at Manoa
William S. Richardson School of Law
2515 Dole St.
Honolulu, HI 96822
(808) 956-6238

Judge John J. Johnson, Jr.
Circuit Court, First Circuit
777 Punchbowl St.
Honolulu, HI 96813
(808) 539-4084

NOTE: If for some reason your connection with the person giving you a reference is unclear, in a brief phrase tell the employer in what capacity the individual knew you. This might be done when your reference no longer works at the organization listed on your résumé.
Chapter 5

Writing Samples

The Career Development Office of Yale Law School offers a succinct explanation of writing sample basics*...

When is a writing sample necessary?

If you are sending your resume to employers, you should only include a writing sample if specifically requested. Most law firms and public interest organizations do not want writing samples at the initial stage of the application process. However, nearly all judges require a writing sample with the initial clerkship application materials. Many public sector employers will request a writing sample after they determine that they are interested in hiring you. While some law firms will request a writing sample at that time as well, others never request one. When signing up for employers during the Fall Interview Program, you can check the RIPS website to see if the employer has requested that you bring a writing sample to the initial interview.** Very few employers make that request. However, if you have a writing sample ready, you may wish to bring it to your interviews in case it is requested during the interview. Even if a writing sample is not specifically required, you should realize that your cover letter, résumé, and every piece of paper you submit will be viewed as a writing sample. Everything should be technically perfect—no spelling or grammatical errors—and as well-written as you can make it.

**Please note: WSRSL students participating in the on-campus interview program will find lists of application materials requested by each employer in the Careers Portal when signing up for an interview.

What is an appropriate writing sample?

Legal employers would rather see legal analysis; something like a memo or brief is preferred over a research paper, and something on a legal topic is preferable to a non legal paper. The ultimate criterion, however, is the quality of the writing. If you are convinced that no legal memorandum or brief comes close to the quality of one of your research papers, choose your best writing. In addition, less outside editing is better, which is why previously published pieces are not automatically at the top of the list. If you use a document prepared for a prior employer, you must get the employer’s permission and make sure you have made all necessary modifications and redactions to preserve client confidentiality. The topic of the writing sample is not much of a concern for law firms. Public interest organizations naturally
would be more interested in something written about the area of their work. It offers an additional indication of the applicant’s interest in the subject; however, a writing sample on a different topic is not disqualifying (and legal employers recognize that first year law students have limited choices for writing samples). Judges also generally don’t care about the topic of the sample.

How long should the writing sample be?

Although there is no definitive ideal length for a writing sample, 5-10 pages typically serves the purpose of demonstrating your writing ability. If all of your potential writing samples are much longer, consider using an excerpt (e.g., one argument from a longer brief) and providing a brief explanatory note.

How should I package it?

Create a cover sheet for your writing sample. It can have a simple heading—just your name centered at the top of the page and “Writing Sample” centered underneath it. Use your cover sheet to give any necessary background information about your writing sample. For example, if you use a writing project prepared for class (as most first-years do), give the name of the class and a brief description of the assignment. If your assignment contained forced limitations (the type of research you are allowed to conduct, the side of the argument you are required to take, etc.), explain those limitations on your cover sheet. If you are excerpting from a longer document, add whatever background is necessary to make the excerpt understandable. If you are using a document prepared for a former employer, explain that you have obtained the employer’s permission and made all necessary modifications. The typical cover sheet explanation is two paragraphs; do not exceed one page. You do not need to use “resume-grade” paper for your writing sample or cover sheet.

*Used with permission*
Chapter 6

Thank You Letters

About Thank You Letters

One of the first questions students and alumni ask is whether it is imperative to write a thank you note following a meeting with an attorney. Will it really be the deciding factor in whether they hire you or someone else?

Possibly. The same standards apply for a thank you note as for the initial cover letter. If it contains grammatical or typographical errors, is poorly composed, or reflects poor judgment (sending a funny Hallmark card, for example) it could result in knocking you out of the race.

Conversely, even if it is perfect, it will not ensure that you get the job. The goal is to reinforce the decision made during the interview to offer you the job.

A thank you note should be sent immediately after meeting with an attorney for any reason: an informational interview, a job interview, lunch or even coffee. It is important to acknowledge the information, as well as the gift of time, that the person has given you.

As reflected in the samples attached, a thank you note need only be 3 short paragraphs or it can be longer if warranted. It should convey the following sentiments:

- Your gratitude for the time they set aside for you to discuss X.
- Summarize a few key points discussed and what you gained from hearing their perspective if it was an informational interview;
- If it was a job/clerk interview, reiterate in 1-2 lines why you maintain a strong interest in joining their office and what you bring to the position;
- Conclude by reiterating your appreciation and state a plan-of-action if there is one. I look forward to hearing from you when a decision has been reached on my candidacy or I will keep in touch with you during law school as we discussed or I will follow-up with XYZ as you suggested.
The last question frequently asked regarding thank you notes is whether they can/should be emailed, faxed, hand-written or typed. There is no “right” answer. It is a decision you must make based on your impression of the attorney.

The most conservative approach is to type and mail a thank you note on plain bond paper. If a certain tone of warmth and friendliness was established during the meeting, or if it is a person you know well, a hand-written note on a plain bond note card is fine, assuming your penmanship is attractive and legible.

However, some attorneys are quite comfortable with using the computer, a fact easily gauged by asking some general questions about computer use in their office or practice. This can cut across age and gender lines. An emailed thank you note may be perfectly acceptable. However, it should be in business format and contained in the body of the email. Do not attach it as a Word document.
Sample Thank You Letter (After Interview)

Date

2345 Lawyerly Street
Honolulu, HI 12345
(808) 555-1234

Linda Tompkins
Hiring Partner
A-Z Law Firm
444 Water St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Ms. Tompkins:

It was a pleasure to meet you yesterday to discuss a (summer clerkship position) (associate position) at the A-Z Law Firm. My interest in your firm was significantly strengthened after visiting with the other attorneys and learning about their practices.

Mr. Gilmore, Ms. Shear and Ms. Whitcomb described their respective practices in employment, commercial and real estate law with refreshing candidness. I appreciated their honesty about the rigors of law practice in a small firm. I am quite accustomed to working under pressure and juggling different projects. In college, I held a full-time job while maintaining a strong B-average. Moreover, my commentaries on current political issues were frequently featured in the campus newspaper, The Bull Ship. In law school, I was a staff editor for the Transportation Law Journal, participated in Moot Court, and was a member of the Doyle Inn of Court.

A-Z Law Firm is exactly the type of organization I have envisioned myself joining: a small, general practice law firm where I will have hands-on experience early in my career. I understand that you are still interviewing other candidates and that a decision will not be made until the end of the month. Thank you for considering me for the associate position and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Gillian Filmore
Sample Thank You Letter (After Informational Interview)

Date

Jennifer Beam
Attorney-at-Law
1278 Havana Street
Aurora, CO 80202

Dear Ms. Beam:

Thank you so very much for the time you spent with me last Friday describing your family law practice. I feel that learning how to develop my legal career from experienced attorneys such as yourself is an important piece of my education.

I appreciated hearing about your career path and was very impressed by your strong opinion that one’s legal career begins on the first day of law school! Clearly, the internships you chose as a law student and your subsequent clerkships enabled you to improve your research and legal writing abilities as well as knowledge about the issues inherent in domestic law matters.

Thank you for affirming my “career electives,” as you so aptly called them! In addition to being a student member of the American Inns of Court – Hawaii Chapter, I also interned for the Honorable Michael Martinez in the Family Court Division of the 2nd Judicial District. Currently, I am participating in the Child Advocacy Law Clinic of the Hawaii Children’s Law Center. Thank you for giving me additional names of other family law practitioners. I will be interested in learning their perspectives on the rigors of the practice.

In closing, please feel free to call me if there is ever a possibility of a clerk position in your office, or if I could do some spot research for you. I have enclosed another copy of my resume for your convenience. Again, thank you for your invaluable advice and words of encouragement. I hope that our paths cross again soon.

Sincerely,

Sam Student
Sample Thank You Letter (After Informational Interview)

Jane Student
123 Pontiac
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
(808) 657-3843
jstudent@hawaii.edu

Date

Gayle Joyce
First Assistant Attorney General
Department of the Attorney General
1525 Sherman Street; Floor 5
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Ms. Joyce:

I enjoyed meeting you yesterday and wish to thank you for talking with me about your career in criminal law. As I mentioned, I am meeting with attorneys who are practicing in areas of law that interest me. Your perspectives on the national and regional trends in criminal prosecution as well as qualities you look for in a potential employee were extremely informative.

I appreciated your candidness about the importance of gaining as much practical experience as I can during law school, e.g. participating in moot court, writing competitions, or one of the many clinics here at the law school. Your advice to give serious thought to the type of work environment that I would enjoy as well as setting long-term goals (to be modified as I gain experience and clear preferences) was most helpful. After hearing about how you “built” your resume, I understand how important thinking about these issues are as I begin my career.

Additionally, I enjoyed hearing about your own experience as a student intern in the Attorney General’s office and how that helped lead you to your current position. I was unaware of the fact that the Attorney General’s office rarely hires recent graduates. That alone is a strong argument in favor of interning in the office during law school in order to get to know the attorneys in the legal department.

I know how busy you must be and I am sincerely grateful for the time you gave to me. I will keep you posted on developments in my law school career and subsequent job search.

Sincerely,
Jane Student
Sample Thank You Letter (After Panel Presentation)

Sally Smith  
1234 Seasons Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
Home Phone 808-674-8490  
E-mail ssmith@hawaii.edu

Date

Arthur Quinn  
Attorney General’s Office  
620 Queen Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Quinn:

I wanted to drop you a note of thanks for coming to the William S. Richardson School of Law last week to speak to us about your area of practice. I thoroughly enjoyed having the opportunity to hear you, along with the other panelists, talk about the opportunities available in state government.

Your career in the Natural Resources and Environmental Section of the Attorney General’s Office sounds fascinating and is the type of career that I’m interested in pursuing. My undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences coupled with my recent intern experience at the Environmental Law Clinic at the Law School has cemented by interest in pursuing a career in environmental law. As I begin my career, I am cognizant of the importance of building my resume with experience that will ultimately lead me to a position such as yours. To that end, I would appreciate the opportunity to come and meet with you in your office to discuss the particulars of your career path. I have enclosed my resume for your information.

Thank you again for your participation in the Career and Professional Development Office program last week. I will follow-up with your office next week to see if we can arrange a convenient time to meet.

Yours truly,

Sally Smith
Date

Maura Wiggins
1200 S. High Street, #123
Honolulu, Hawaii  96822

Constance C. Talmage, Esq.
Hawaii Public Interest Alliance
1875 Lawrence Street, Suite 200
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Ms. Talmage:

I enjoyed speaking with you last week at the William S. Richardson School of Law Career Fair. I sincerely appreciated your special consideration of my application for the Hill & Robbins Fellowship despite my being a first year law student. I am confident that my background and experience in public interest law would be useful to the Hawaii Public Interest Alliance.

Your comments gave me a good understanding of the mission of the Hawaii Public Interest Alliance as well as your expectations for the fellowship position you are seeking to fill. As we discussed, my experience as an intern at the ACLU of Pittsburgh taught me the enormous impact that public interest groups can have. Because I am interested in working toward beneficial systemic changes in my new community, interning with the Hawaii Public Interest Alliance would assist me in this endeavor.

I look forward to speaking with you further about my candidacy in the near future.

Sincerely,

Maura Wiggins
Chapter 7

Networking

What Is Networking?

As a job technique, networking is: “Connecting and interacting with others through informational interviewing for the purpose of exchanging information and acquiring advice and referrals to assist you in achieving your ultimate job search goals - getting interviews and offers.”

Why Bother To Network?

A. It’s a Decentralized, Chaotic Job Market

1. Networking works and is an essential job search tool because the job market (both the advertised and hidden) is decentralized.

2. The advertised job market has limitations
   a. It probably represents no more than 10-25% of actual job openings.
   b. It tends to represent positions at the extreme ends of the job spectrum (low paid unskilled or highly paid, highly skilled jobs), even though the majority of positions fall somewhere between these two extremes.
   c. Many positions are filled or have probable candidates prior to being advertised.

3. The hidden job market has the greater opportunity
   a. 75-90% or more of the job opportunities are found here, despite the fact that this market lacks a formal structure.
   b. Networking provides an organized system or structure to penetrate this market.

B. Networking is a Multi-Purpose Skill You Will Use Throughout Your Career

1. Initial job search: To get that first internship or paid position.
2. Lateral job search: To make a lateral move in the legal market as an experienced attorney, or to explore another field to pursue an alternative career path.
3. Client development: To get and retain clients.
4. *Community Service, Politics, and Other Extracurricular Activities:* To obtain the coveted Board of Directors, judicial or political appointments and community leadership positions.

**Developing a Network**

**A. Identify the Members of Your Current Network**

1. Make a “contact list,” identifying as many people as possible in these categories. Include the following people on your contact list:

   - Relatives
   - Friends
   - Neighbors (past and present)
   - Social acquaintances (including group and club members)
   - Classmates (college, graduate school and law school)
   - Career and Professional Development Center staff
   - Law School faculty
   - Law School alumni
   - Clergy
   - Politicians (local, state and national)
   - Trade and bar association members
   - People you have met at conferences or conventions
   - Speakers you’ve admired at meetings, conferences and law school programs
   - Professionals from various fields whom you have consulted in the past 12 months (e.g. doctor, dentist, optician, therapist, lawyer, real estate agent, stock broker, travel agent, hairdresser)
   - Previous employers and co-workers

2. Categorize your contact list by:

   a. Those who are in influential positions or have hiring authority.
   b. Those likely to have job leads.
   c. Those most likely to refer you to others.

3. Establish a system for keeping track of your contacts. Consider setting up a file, notebook, or note card system recording the following information for each contact:

   a. Name, address, fax, e-mail and phone numbers.
   b. How and when you met this contact.
c. Who this contact referred you to.
d. Correspondence you’ve had with this contact.
e. The contact’s specialty, unique interests, etc.

4. Select 25 individuals from your list to target for your first round of contacts.

B. Making New Networking Contacts in the Legal World

1. Take advantage of the different forums available to you
   a. Join the Hawaii State Bar Association and sections as a student member. The dues for students are very low.
   1. Once you join, start going to meetings and conferences sponsored by the bar association and sections. The Hawaii State Bar Association has sections in many of the areas of practice such as business law, environmental, criminal, construction, etc. If you are interested in practicing in a specialty that has a section, there is no better way to meet and interact with prominent attorneys in that area of practice.
   2. Additionally, students interested in the specialty bars (e.g. Native Hawaiian Bar Association, Filipino Bar Association, Korean American Bar Association of Hawaii, etc) can join and participate in programs offered by these groups.
   b. Join other professional or trade organizations such as the local Chamber of Commerce.
   c. Attend networking events at the Law School
   d. Join other community organizations where you will meet professionals, even if they are not lawyers.
   e. Volunteer! There are many opportunities to volunteer within the legal community where you can perform meaningful legal work and meet attorneys who are also volunteering their time.
   f. Create your online professional profile on LinkedIn.com.

C. Build and Expand Your Network

1. How to Initiate Contact:
   a. Write letters to the people you consider the most likely to help launch your job search in your immediate network. Let them know you are conducting a job search, but emphasize that you are doing preliminary research. You are only seeking information and advice at this time -- not a job. Ask them for a few minutes of their time to discuss your information needs.
b. The laws of probability apply: the more people you contact, the more useful information, advice and job leads you will receive. But don’t send out more requests than you can follow-up with in a professional manner.

c. The process will yield a series of small networks linked to your original contacts. Write thank you notes to everyone you meet with and keep in touch if you feel a connection was made. People appreciate being told what happened as a result of their help. (See the chapter on Thank You Letters).

d. Once again, never ask for a job directly; always ask for information, advice and referrals. Be sure you are prepared with at least 10 – 15 questions before you meet with the attorney. Consider questions relevant to learning more about the individual attorney’s practice area, the local legal market from their perspective, how they conducted a job search at the start of their careers, and what characteristics they look for in a new attorney. It certainly is acceptable to take notes.

e. Telephone vs. Letter Approaches
   1. Use the telephone only to reach people in your network whom you already know.
   2. For people you do not know, write a letter and follow-up with a telephone call.

f. Key Elements of the Approach Letter (see following sample letter)
   1. Use an appropriate opener
      
      For referrals:
      Say you are considering a career in their area of expertise (be specific). His/her name was given to you by _____, who suggested he/she might be in a good position to talk to you more fully about the practice of _____.

      For “cold turkey” (no referral) approaches:
      Try subtle, yet honest flattery, e.g., state you are aware that he/she has been a leader or expert in the field of _____, or whatever is both truthful and appropriate for the situation.

   2. Make the request
      
      Demonstrate thoughtfulness and courtesy by mentioning that you understand he/she is very busy. You hope to meet with him/her for no longer than 30 minutes to discuss specific questions relating to their area of practice.
3. **Body of letter**

Provide a brief “infomercial” or summary of your professional or academic career, emphasizing key strengths/functional skills that will be relevant to reader. Describe your career objectives or areas of interest as determined thus far.

State in your letter that while the purpose of your meeting is to gather information and advice, you are enclosing your resume in advance of your anticipated meeting, not as a request for a job per se, but solely to provide him/her with knowledge of your background.

4. **Close it right**

Mention that you will call the person at a stated date/time to determine if an appointment can be arranged. You must take the initiative and follow up the letter with a telephone call; it is your responsibility to schedule the meeting.

g. Engage in online professional groups and blogs. Building your network has gone online. Check out the groups directory in LinkedIn and find three with your interest and focus. Joan and engage. This activity will show you are connected in your professional goals and create new networks of referrals.
Date

Audrey Alum  
123 University Way  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Mr. John Smith  
Good, Better & Best LLP  
1700 Pauahi Tower  
1001 Bishop Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Smith:

Peter Jones, a former associate with your firm, suggested I contact you because of my experience and interest in litigation. As a recent graduate of the William S. Richardson School of Law who is interested in a career as a prosecutor, I was hoping I could meet with you to get your advice and talk to you more fully about the practice of law and litigation.

While working at the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney’s office in the employment law division, I gained extensive experience in litigation. Through drafting various motions and interviewing clients, my legal skills improved dramatically. Xavier Duran, my supervising attorney, was very pleased with my performance and encouraged me to pursue a litigation career. I am confident the skills I gained while working under his direction will provide a solid foundation as a new associate.

As a pro bono volunteer for the Hawaii Criminal Law Society, I have represented 5 clients in criminal law related matters. This experience allowed me to excel in all aspects of client representation including: interviewing and counseling clients, developing and maintaining client relationships, and researching and writing both pre-trial and post-trial motions and briefs. As such, I have successfully argued 3 motions before Honolulu District Court Judges. Trial advocacy is my passion and I am excited to begin my career in this area.

I have enclosed my resume for your perusal. I would like the opportunity to speak with you about breaking into the Hawaii legal community and ways to gain experience as a litigator. I will call you next Wednesday in the afternoon to see if we can set up a time to meet. I know you are very busy, and therefore I will be able to be completely flexible with your schedule. In the meantime, please feel free to call me if you have any questions at 303-555-1234. Thank you for you time and I look forward to talking to you next week.

Sincerely,

Audrey Alum  
Encl.
Conducting Informational Interviews

1. Keep focused. What you seek is:
   a. Advice and information about what practitioners do on a daily basis in their area of practice; what skills are required and how best to develop expertise in the area.
   b. To expand your network by obtaining one or more names of additional contacts who may provide further information (or job leads!).
   c. To make a favorable impression so that you will be remembered in the future should an opportunity arise.

2. Interview Format
   a. Plan to cover your questions in 30-45 minutes or less
   b. Do research on the firm/attorney. Sources of information include Internet, library, firm brochure, and annual reports. Show that you are taking an interest in them as you are asking them to take an interest in you.

3. Initiate the interview by emphasizing your appreciation, e.g.:

   Thank you for taking time to see me today. I appreciate your willingness to take time out of your busy schedule to speak with me about my career plans.

4. Ask probing questions to elicit information about the nature of the area of law, e.g.

   I am in the process of exploring several areas of practice. I am talking with attorneys such as you, who have a great deal of experience in the area of ______. I am particularly interested in learning more about opportunities and the future outlook for this field and the skills and background you think are necessary to practice in this area.

5. Be able to discuss each item on your resume – thoroughly! If you choose to put it on your resume, it is fair game for the reader to ask one or two questions about each one if desired! Anticipate questions that may be asked and have one or two examples readily available in your mind that illustrate different skills and strengths you developed.

6. Focus on “how” and “what” questions concerning specific jobs or careers:

   What special skills or expertise does one need to work in this area of law?
   What are some of the particular advantages and disadvantages of this practice area?
   What is the future outlook in this area of law?
7. Solicit advice for developing a successful job search strategy. You may want to know their ideas on how to:

- Acquire the required skills for the position you seek
- Market yourself in the particular practice area
- Identify both advertised and unadvertised job vacancies
- Develop new job leads
- Identify/resolve prospective employers’ possible objections to hiring you

Sample Informational Interview Questions

- What is a typical day on the job like for you?
- What percent of your time do you spend each day in various activities of your work? (this can be tailored to the individual attorney’s practice)
- How free are you to do your work as you want to?
- What types of pressures or problems do you contend with?
- What do you consider to be the most satisfying and the most frustrating aspects of your work?
- What types of promotions/professional development opportunities are available to you?
- What types of things should I be doing to prepare myself for this type of work?
- If you could start all over again in launching your career, what steps would you take?
- Have you ever practiced or considered practicing in another field/area of law?
- Do you have an opinion/information about the job market for attorneys in your field?

Concluding Your Meeting

Finally, end the interview with requests to be referred and remembered. For example:

*Thanks so much for all of your help. I have learned a great deal today. I would like to ask one more favor. I am trying to talk with several attorneys in this area. Do you know a few other attorneys who might be willing to meet with me, as you have today?*

Don’t make your networking prospects uncomfortable by asking them directly for a job or job lead. Your approach should be subtle and professional. Remember that you were given time to discuss career information, advice and referrals.
I would appreciate it if you could keep me in mind if you learn of any openings. Please feel free to pass my name or resume on to anyone you feel might be interested in my background.

Follow Up After the Meeting

Always follow up your informational interviews with thank you letters. Express your gratitude for the person’s time and advice, referring specifically to a point of your conversation you found particularly helpful, and reiterating your wish to be remembered and referred. The letter should be typed and sent out within a few days of your meeting. (See the chapter on Thank You Letters).

Other Considerations

Business Cards

Consider having a business card made for networking. You will often find yourself in a situation where you meet someone who says, "Now, how can I get in touch with you if I hear about a job?" Instead of tearing off a piece of paper and writing down your name and number, it would impressive if you could say, "Let me give you one of my cards!" Include your complete contact information, including your email address.

General Rules for Networking Success

1. Look for a job that is a fit for you, rather than try to fit yourself into an available position.

2. Target your job search toward specific positions, organizations and individuals; most “shot-gun” approaches tend to be ineffective.

3. Conduct a persistent prospecting campaign to continually expand your network and replenish contacts that lead to more contacts and informational interviews. If your job search bogs down, you need to substantially increase your prospecting activities, as well as the number of informational interviews you conduct.

4. Always send a thank you letter to those who take the time to talk to you. Thoughtful people are remembered.
5. Find and **actively participate in** activities and organizations that are easily accessible to you and provide ample networking opportunities, for example:

- Publish an article on the area of law that interests you.
- Write a “fan letter” to the author of an article in the local bar journal.
- Work as a research assistant for a professor who teaches in the area of law that interests you.
- Join local bar associations, such as the Hawaii State Bar Association as a student member and attend programs and activities.
- Attend Career Services programs and conferences at which outside practitioners will be speaking. Introduce yourself following the program and follow up with a note of appreciation and request to come to their office to talk further.
- Attend alumni receptions and programs and actually talk to the alumni!
- Take a non-paying job or internship doing whatever your dream job is.
- Participate in mock interviews sponsored by the Career and Professional Development Office.
- Join lawyers’ sports teams (e.g., football, basketball, softball).
- Create your online professional profile in LinkedIn.com.

6. Look for opportunities to do favors for other people (e.g., share job leads, make introductions, and give useful information back to your networking contacts). Networking involves give and take! Don’t just think short-term! If you help others, they will be more willing to help you – now and in the future.
Lawyers and Networking – An Often Uneasy Match

Richard DelliVeneri

A Theoretical Explanation

Many career development professionals consider networking as the single most effective job search strategy. It’s the subject of numerous articles, lectures, workshops, and career advising sessions. However, despite the emphasis given to networking, many job seekers prefer to steer clear of it. Those of us who work with lawyers and law students often comment on how frequently we meet with feelings of discomfort or outright resistance when the topic of networking is broached. Interestingly, this anecdotal observation may be supported by a theoretical premise based on lawyers’ personality types.

An article by Larry Richard in the July 1993 edition of the ABA Journal featured an interesting glimpse into the personality types of American lawyers. Entitled “How Your Personality Affects Your Practice-The Lawyer Types”, it explored the personality characteristics of lawyers within the framework of the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator®, also known as the MBTI®. It’s a widely used assessment tool developed over more than fifty years and designed to identify an individual’s personality as one of sixteen types.

The MBTI personality type results from identifying a person’s preferences on four separate dichotomies, each consisting of two opposite poles. Preference in this context refers to a way of doing something that is more natural and takes less effort.

According to the theory, while we can use both of the functions in each dichotomy, we have a natural preference for one over the other. Those who administer and interpret the MBTI often illustrate this point by having clients sign their name with both hands. Depending on whether the client is left- or right-handed, one signature will feel natural and easy, the other awkward and difficult.

For this discussion, the MBTI dichotomy of interest is the extraversion – introversion, or E-I dichotomy. It deals with the way we prefer to focus our attention and get energy. Those who prefer extraversion direct their attention and get energy from interacting with people and taking action. They typically are sociable and expressive and prefer to communicate by talking. People who prefer introversion direct their attention and get energy differently. They focus on the inner world of their thoughts, memories, and feelings, typically being private and contained and preferring to communicate by writing.

Based on this typology, one would expect people who prefer extraversion to feel more comfortable with networking than those who prefer introversion. Interestingly, the distribution of lawyers on the E-I dichotomy seems to support anecdotal observations that a greater percentage of lawyers and law students tends to find networking uncomfortable. The Atlas of Type Tables published by the Center for Applications of Psychological Type (CAPT) includes a table for lawyers. It shows that about 59% of lawyers represented in CAPT’s database prefer introversion.

These numbers are consistent with those developed by Larry Richard and featured in his ABA Journal article. He conducted a national survey of 3,014 practicing attorneys who
were asked to complete the MBTI. The results of that survey showed that about 57% of the attorneys expressed a preference for introversion.

**Some Solutions**

If many lawyers and law students dislike networking because of an inherent personality preference, what can they do to overcome their natural aversion to it? The answer to this question lies in part on the MBTI theory. Remember that according to the theory, while we have a preference for one dichotomous function over the other, we can and do use both. It just takes more effort and energy to use the one that doesn’t feel natural. This means that if personality preferences lead us to view networking as awkward and uncomfortable, we need to focus on mustering the extra effort and energy that will be expended. Justifying this extra effort should be easy, considering that by many accounts 70% or more of all available jobs are never advertised. They are part of the “hidden job market” that is best accessed by networking.

Many times, a reluctance to do something is motivated by fear. It can be a fear of failure or rejection, or some other result that brings with it a tangible sense of discomfort. Networking is an activity that can provoke fear and anxiety in some. Overcoming that fear is essential, and a first step in that direction is developing a better understanding of what networking is, and what it is not. A popular image of networking depicts a glib and cunning person cruising a party or other gathering with a fistful of business cards, ready to pounce on an unwitting victim with a hard sell message of shameless self-promotion. This is not networking. The true picture of networking paints a scene where people create mutually beneficial relationships with each other, focused on exchanging useful information. Notice that mutual help lies at the heart of this process. It is vitally important to keep in mind that when you seek advice and information in the context of a networking opportunity, you should be thinking of ways to return the favor by providing advice and information the other person would find useful.

A second step in the direction of overcoming networking fear is to learn and practice the technique in non-threatening situations. Bookstores and libraries abound with resources devoted to this subject. Websites represent another rich source of information on the “how-to” of networking. Learning the basics from these resources and practicing with family and friends can lead to greater confidence in approaching real networking opportunities. Workshops on networking also offer valuable experiences in a non-threatening environment. The workshops are generally designed to address the learning styles of adults, and include a variety of training methods that are fun and instructive.

Here are some more tips to help in developing networking skills:

1. **Always be prepared.** You never know when a networking opportunity will arise. Seizing the opportunity means you will need to deliver your personal “infomercial” when you’re telling a new acquaintance about yourself. The brief infomercial must be tailored to explain in no more than a couple of minutes who you are, what you’re good at, and what you’re looking for.
2. **Ask for advice and information.** When you’re networking as part of a job search campaign, you should never directly ask for a job. Instead, ask for advice and information. People are likely to feel uncomfortable and put-off by someone who asks for a job. But they’re generally receptive and forthcoming when someone expresses the confidence and trust to ask for their advice and treat them as a source of valuable information.

3. **Be patient.** In our fast-paced, almost frenetic culture, we’ve been conditioned to expect results right away. Networking is a process that takes effort and time. If you don’t get the results you want immediately, don’t despair. Your networking is building important relationships that over time can and will help you achieve your goal.

4. **Reach out.** Don’t limit your networking activities to people you already know. Be adventurous and creative in identifying those communities you want to be a part of and find ways to meet new people in them.

5. **Offer your help.** Networking is a two-way street. You should be looking for ways to offer helpful information to those who give their time and advice to you.

6. **Whenever possible, network face-to-face.** There’s no substitute for getting to know people, and having them get to know you face-to-face. Sometimes, phone conversations are the only practical means for meeting with a networking contact. But, if at all possible, try to arrange your networking opportunities so you can begin building relationships in person.

7. **Always say thank you.** It’s so important to express your sincere thanks to a person who has given his or her time, information, and advice to you. The best way to do that is by taking the time to write and send a thank you note through the mail. It shows a level of personal attention that just doesn’t come through in an e-mail message.

8. **Commit to networking for the long term.** Building your network is not a task that ends with finding a job. Instead, it’s a process that requires your ongoing attention and effort. The relationships you’ve developed through networking should not be neglected or abandoned. Look for ways to keep in touch and let the people in your network know you’re available to offer information and advice when they’re in need.

If many lawyers and law students do have a reticence for networking that stems from a personality preference, it will be essential for them to make a special effort to overcome that reluctance. Networking as a tool to develop one’s career is too important to ignore or fear. As a skill, it must be learned, practiced, and refined. Anyone can do it. It just takes time and a commitment to working with people in mutually beneficial ways.

Chapter 8

Interviewing

Mock Interviews

Interviewing is like anything else you have learned to do well; it is a skill you improve with practice. Schedule a mock interview with one of our advisors. Participate in our Mock Interviews. At the very least, ask a friend or relative to interview you. Solicit the mock interviewer’s candid feedback and discuss ways to improve your performance.

To prepare for the mock interview and help alleviate those pre-interview jitters, read The Essential Book of Interviewing by Arnold Kanter. By knowing what to expect in the interview setting, you will feel more comfortable and confident. Also, keep in mind that the interviewer expects a little nervousness early on in the interview. The key is to control your anxiety so that it does not prevent you from doing what you need to do in the interview: communicate who you are and why you are the best candidate for this employer.

Research and the Employer

Research the Library, law firm or agency you are interviewing with and the interviewer or interviewers you will meet. You can call your contact a few days before the interview to learn the names of the attorneys you will meet. Skimming the firm brochure five minutes before the interview is NOT sufficient. If the interviewer concludes that you know little about the firm/company, she is likely to dismiss you because of your apparent lack of interest.

Utilize online resources, LexisNexis and Westlaw. Visit the federal agency, law firms, corporations, public interest and government agency websites and directories. Seek out recent newspaper and magazine articles about the employers as well. Ask advisors, other students, faculty, and alumni what they know about the firm. Consider calling the firm to get their marketing brochure in advance of the interview. Other websites with useful information include the NALP employer directory (www.nalp.org), Martindale Hubbell (martindale.com), The Vault (vault.com), and FindLaw (findlaw.com).

The research you do will better prepare you to converse comfortably with your interviewer and to articulate intelligent, thoughtful questions about the firm and the opportunities it offers. Do not feel compelled, however, to work into your interview every bit of information you have uncovered. You may come across as a know-it-all, a show-off or obsequious to the point of annoyance. Use your research, but use it judiciously.
Key Elements to Prepare for the Interview

1. **List of Accomplishments:** After carefully reviewing the employer's information, make a list of accomplishments and job skills that make you attractive to this particular employer.
   a. Evaluate your strengths and make a list of specific examples that will illustrate your value to the employer. (See the chapter on Resumes for a list of skills.) Don't limit yourself to past legal job experiences. Most skills developed in non-legal jobs, as well as volunteer work, are transferable to the legal profession. You must, however, be able to articulate your qualifications thoroughly. It is not sufficient to say you are a hard worker; give a specific example - i.e., when you put in extra hours to complete a project by a deadline. If you are a team player, emphasize the time you pitched in and completed a co-worker's project when she was hospitalized unexpectedly.
   b. One area frequently overlooked by law students is an employer's need to generate new business. If you haven't done so already, create a notebook for networking (see the Networking chapter). If you have one already, review the entries in the notebook. If it is well organized and neat, consider bringing it with you to the interview. It represents your initial efforts to expand your connections in the legal world which is a key step in future business development. Some of the most successful rainmakers in private law firms keep notebooks listing every contact they have ever made. Demonstrate your ability and willingness to develop this critical part of practicing law in a private firm.

2. **Plan Your Agenda:** Develop an agenda and practice your points
   a. Prepare a five-point agenda before you go to the interview, highlighting key points about yourself that you want the interviewer to remember. Your agenda might include: 1) that you are an excellent writer (give specifics, i.e. your high grade in Lawyering Process, the writing award you won, the winning brief you authored last summer, the article you wrote that was published), 2) a foreign language skill (if relevant to the employer), 3) the marathon you ran last year (which demonstrates drive and discipline), 4) your ability to work with little supervision (give a specific example from past work experience), and 5) the fact that you are committed to living in that city (family ties, previous work experiences in that city, etc.).

3. **Your Resume:** Know your resume *cold* and be prepared to answer questions about any item on it.
   a. Be prepared to talk in depth on legal issues you researched in previous positions.
   b. Evaluate your resume for weaknesses and gaps. Be prepared to deal with these issues. Avoid lengthy conversations about any weaknesses or negative job experiences. Put a positive spin on everything in your past and never badmouth a previous employer. Be ready for questions like "Why didn't you
get an offer from the firm you worked for last summer?" or "Why didn't you work last summer?" If your grades are not the best, be prepared to deal with this issue in the interview. Acknowledge the issue but try to put a positive spin on the situation. For example, if this is the case, you could say, "My grades aren't as high as I expected given my high achievement in college but my GPA has gone up each semester."

4. **Prepare Answers to Common Questions Before the Interview:** Consider how you would respond to the following frequently asked questions by writing down answers to each one:

   a. **Personal**
      - How would you describe yourself?
      - Why do you think you will succeed as a lawyer?
      - Why should we hire you?
      - Is there any reason why we shouldn't hire you?
      - What is the greatest obstacle you've faced in your life?
      - What did you learn from dealing with this obstacle?
      - When are you available to begin working?
      - What do you consider your greatest strengths?
      - What are your weaknesses? (Be candid and acknowledge a weakness but "spin" it into a positive by demonstrating how you are working on that weakness).
      - Use three words to describe yourself.
      - What are you looking for in a firm/corporation/nonprofit?
      - Do you prefer to work independently or with supervision?
      - Do you work well under pressure?
      - What do you like to do for fun?
      - How do you maintain a well-rounded life?
      - Why should we select you for this position over the other applicants?

   b. **Law School**
      - Why do you want to be a lawyer?
      - Why did you decide to go to law school?
      - Why did you choose the William S. Richardson School of Law?
      - What was your favorite class? Least favorite?
      - Who is your favorite professor? Why?
      - Should we be concerned about your grades/class rank?
      - Why didn't you pursue Law Review/Moot Court?
      - What activities did you participate in?
      - Are you involved in any activities outside of law school?
      - Do you find it hard to manage your time between law school and work?
      - Has law school prepared you for the practice of law?
      - Have your ideas about being a lawyer changed since your started law school?
c. **Previous Jobs**
   How would a previous employer describe you?
   How did you get your last job?
   What did you gain from that experience?
   How do you function in a fast-paced work environment?
   Describe the ideal/least effective supervisor.
   What problems have you encountered in previous jobs?
   What is the most interesting job you've ever had?
   What do you consider to be a positive work environment?
   Have you ever worked with a difficult person? How did you handle the situation?

d. **Commitment**
   Have you decided what city you would ultimately like to settle in?
   Why did you sign up for an interview with us?
   What do you know about our firm?
   Who else are you interviewing with?
   Why do you want to live in ____________?
   What practice area do you see yourself in?
   Are you interested in doing pro bono work?
   What are your salary expectations?
   Why do you want to work at this firm?

e. **Goals**
   Where do you see yourself in 5, 10 or 20 years?
   What personal goals are you seeking through a legal career?
   If you weren't in law school, what would you be doing right now?
   What long-term satisfaction do you expect to obtain from a legal career?
   How do you expect to balance work and personal life?

f. **Ethics**
   How do you feel about lawyers advertising or soliciting clients?
   Is there any type of work you would not feel comfortable doing at our firm?
   How do you think your ethical standards compare with others in your law school class?
   What do you consider to be the most difficult ethical challenge lawyers face?

g. **Public Interest/Government Jobs**
   How do you expect to manage your loan burden?
   Can you commit X years to this organization?
   Are you interviewing in the private sector?
   How committed are you to serving the poor?
   Are you fluent in X language?
   What hours do you expect to work here?
   What are your long term plans?
5. **Prepare Questions to Ask the Interviewer:** Come into the interview with questions that are appropriate for this stage in the interview process. (Your questions at an initial screening interview may differ from those asked at a second, “call-back” round of interviews.) Your questions should reflect your knowledge about the firm, although not be phrased in such a manner that you come across as a know-it-all or “show off.” You should also communicate sincere interest in the interviewer’s response to your questions. Remember, the interview is your opportunity to screen employers. While they size up your credentials, personality and potential, try to learn as much as you can about their work environments, management style and business goals. You want to know whether this employer is a good fit for you. Will it offer you what you need to achieve your career goals at this point? Remember, enthusiasm is a characteristic you want to convey about yourself. Consider asking the following:

- What characteristics does it take to succeed in this firm?
- Tell me how you picked firm XYZ for yourself?
- How does each department of the firm acquire new lawyers?
- How does each department develop new work?
- At what point in an associate’s career here are you expected to bring in clients?
- What is the culture like at this firm?
- What kind of projects will I typically be working on?
- What was the most satisfying project you worked on this year?
- What do you like best about this firm?
- How will my performance be evaluated?
- Who will supervise my work?
- How is work allocated to [employees in my position]?
- What training opportunities are offered to [an employee in my position]?
- Does the summer program have a mentor program?
- How are assignments distributed during the summer?
- Do summer associates/new associates rotate among departments?
- What percentage of summer clerks is typically offered positions with the firm/organization/corporation?
- How fast are you growing?
- Are some areas of your practice growing more than others?
- What are the criteria for advancement?
- Are attorneys involved in outside activities (bar committees, pro bono work, charities)?
- Does the firm have a pro bono policy? What is it?
- Is there a formalized training program for new attorneys?
- How soon does a new attorney have direct client contact?
- How soon does a new attorney get experience in taking depositions/appearing in court?
- How many years, on average, does it take to become a partner?
• Describe a typical day for you.
• How would you describe the firm/organization/company and the people who work here?
• How is the firm/organization/company structured? Is there a management committee? Who is on that committee?
• Do new associates participate in committees within the firm?

6. **Dress to Get the Job:** Your appearance is extremely important. Do not be tempted to dress in the more casual styles popular now. You want to convince the employer that you will be a good representative of the firm/organization/company. If you dress unprofessionally, the interviewer will assume that you will not look professional when you meet with clients or appear in court. You'll never go wrong if you dress conservatively.

Rules for Men: Good quality dark suit (navy, gray or black), white shirt, conservative tie, polished shoes. No strong cologne.

Rules for Women: Tasteful, solid color suit with skirt (dark colors are preferable), neat hairstyle, medium to low-heeled shoes, no sandals or open-toed shoes, flesh colored panty hose, toned-down make-up, no strong perfume, low key jewelry.

**Tips for the Interview**

Keep in mind that the interview begins the moment the employer calls you to set up a time for the interview. Be polite and enthusiastic on the phone. Also, don't forget that you are still interviewing if you go to lunch with the employer. The employer will be observing your behavior under all circumstances.

• **Tips for Interview Day**
  o Be early.
  o Be nice to everyone, including support staff.
  o Be a courteous driver in parking lots, etc. You never know who you might see.
  o Bring extra copies of your resume, references, transcript, and writing samples.
  o Walk into the office with confidence and a friendly demeanor.
  o Use a firm handshake.

• **Tone**
  o Let the interviewer set the tone.
  o Make the most of the first few minutes of small talk. You want the interviewer to like you. Strive to make a connection with the interviewer.
  o Be professional. Remember, even though the interviewer may be close in age to you, this is not the time to let your guard down. Keep your comments professional. An answer to questions like “Tell me what you did for the year in between college and law school” should not be “Had a lot of fun!”
  o Be a good listener.
• Remember to avoid one-word answers to questions. Let them be lead-ins to a conversational style.
  • Show enthusiasm.
  • Show respect.
  • Answer the question being asked directly. Don’t hedge.
  • Thank him/her at the end, shake hands and ask, “Where do we go from here?”

• Thank You Notes
  • Remember to send thank you letters immediately. (See the chapter on Thank You Letters).
Chapter 9

Career Strategies

Career Tips for First Year Students

The National Association for Legal Career Professionals (NALP) has developed guidelines regarding your job search. Law school Career and Professional Development Offices may begin offering services to 1L students after November 1. In addition, first year students may not contact any legal employers for summer employment prior to December 1; and legal employers may not approach you until December 15. These guidelines are in place in order for you to be able to concentrate on your studies during this crucial time.

You can best spend your time studying as hard as you can and getting involved in law school activities in order to “position” yourself within the law school community. Good grades are always important, especially for certain legal employment markets.

You should also begin to attend programs to meet practicing attorneys in Hawaii. These programs can also help you determine which practice areas may be of interest to you. Check the calendar often, and come to as many programs as possible. The Career and Professional Development programs spotlight attorneys who are happy to talk with students after the program or in their offices at a later time. Participate in and join the Hawaii State Bar Association as a student member. Join any clubs, student organizations, or other activities that interest you. You should also get a legal job during the summer after your first year. Try an externship for credit, volunteer position, or a paid position to gain practical experience.

SUMMARY:

✔ Study hard!
✔ Attend orientation sessions
✔ Participate in and join the HSBA, and get involved!
✔ Attend Career and Professional Development programs such as specialty series to learn about the law!
✔ Get a paid, volunteer or externship position for next summer!
✔ Make an appointment to see an advisor for help with resumes, job search strategies, cover letters, etc.

Career Tips for Second Year Students

The summer between your first and second year should be spent working as a law clerk on an externship, voluntary or paid basis and/or working as a research assistant for a professor.
Although it can be difficult to get a **paid** position this early in the game, working as an extern for credit (or unpaid and not for credit) is also an excellent way to gain valuable experience. Working as an intern is a wonderful way to determine if you would be interested in working for this organization, and being an intern early can open the door to a permanent position later for you in your career. As an intern, an attorney may take you under his/her wing and let you experience pieces of the job that you would not be exposed to as a paid clerk. For example, as a paid clerk, your supervisor may not bring you to court to watch a hearing or let you sit in on client meetings because you are not adding value to the bottom line. However, as an intern, you would often be invited to participate in these types of activities.

During the fall semester, the Career Services Center administers on-campus interviewing. (Please see the chapter about on campus interviewing for more details.) You are welcome to participate in this event, but remember these firms are usually very grade driven. Do not despair. Approximately one-fourth to one-third of your class will get summer employment through on-campus interviews. This is not the way most people get their jobs after graduation. Most people find permanent employment through networking and interning. In addition, some judges begin accepting applications for judicial clerkships during the summer break before your third year, which would begin the year after you graduate. Attend the judicial clerkship workshops in the spring of your second year.

If you do not secure summer employment through OCI, begin networking and informational interviewing. (Read appropriate chapter regarding networking.) Attend Center programs to meet practicing attorneys and learn more about different practice areas and environments.

**SUMMARY:**
- Consider whether OCI is right for you.
- Consider applying for a judicial clerkship.
- Attend Center programs to meet practicing attorneys.
- Get a paid, volunteer or externship for next summer.
- Make an appointment to see an Adviser for additional help with resumes, job search strategies, cover letters, etc.

**Career Tips for Third Year Students**

As a third year, you should continue to work as a law clerk or intern in an area of practice that interests you. This should not be the time to **begin** your search for permanent employment; rather you should be continuing your search. You should have a substantial list of contacts through your networking efforts by now. Keep up the good work. Remember, networking never ends!

Many firms will be coming on campus to interview again through OCI, but the opportunities are much more limited for third year students. Keep checking online job postings, and keep in touch with your networking contacts. Let everyone you know, lawyer or not, that you are looking for permanent employment after graduation.
Sign up for a mock interview to hone your interviewing skills. Get involved with clinical programs to gain more practical experience. Attend HSBA section CLEs and other events to continue to network. Make sure you follow up with everyone you meet.

Keep your eye on job postings. Make sure your resume and cover letter are in perfect condition. Take a look at your networking efforts and refine them as needed. For instance, you may need to redefine the target group you have identified. Keep writing and meeting with attorneys regarding advice and information. Follow up with people you have not spoken with in a while, and draft a new letter for more informational interviews. (See chapter on networking for more specific details.) Most people get their permanent jobs through someone they know, so get out there and start “knowing” some people! Attend Career and Professional Development programs and apply for jobs that are interesting to you.

SUMMARY:
✓ Now is the time to reap the benefits of a strong network foundation!
✓ Participate in mock interview programs.
✓ Check the Careers Portal for job postings that appeal to you.
✓ Attend Career and Professional Development career programs.
✓ Make an appointment to see an advisor for additional help with resumes, job search strategies, cover letters, etc.

Evening Students

The Career and Professional Development Office is sensitive to the unique needs of our evening students. In addition to scheduling individual appointments, we are available to help you with advising needs via e-mail and phone or by appointment. In addition, we can provide the handouts that are given during day sessions.

As an evening student, you must think about how you will seek legal experience while you are in law school. The fact that a number of evening students are employed full-time in responsible, well-paying positions can pose a challenge. However, it is important to recognize that acquiring legal experience while you are in law school definitely increases your marketability. Legal experience demonstrates that you are serious about pursuing a legal career, that you have acquired the necessary skills to practice, and you will have references who can speak of your ability as an attorney. Please understand, a clerking position will be lower paying, may exclude benefits such as health insurance, etc. and will offer little responsibility compared to your present position. If this is not an option for you, please consider other options:

- Explore the possibility of working on law-related projects in your present position.
- Be sure to get to know your professors and perform research for them if possible. These positions are often very independent and would allow you to perform the work in your spare time.
• Participate in moot court, write for a law journal, apply to writing competitions and join legal organizations so you can meet contacts.
• Whenever possible, participate in clinics.
• Try to get legal work on a project basis where you can work at home in the evenings and on weekends for a solo practitioner or small firm.
• Make an appointment with a Career Counselor who can assist you in strategizing about other ways you can build your resume while you’re in law school.
Chapter 10

Applying for Jobs Out of State

Advice for Students Seeking Employment in Another City or State

- **Contact the State Bar Association** in the state where you are searching for a job. Also, contact the bar association in the city where you’d like to practice. Become a student member of these organizations. Ask for their publications that have any job listings or access to members-only websites. These publications will also help you become familiar with the local bar news.

- **Join sections of the local and state bar associations.** There may be a Young Lawyers Division or a subcommittee in your practice area. Once you join, try to attend a meeting and meet the leaders of these committees.

- **Attend Continuing Legal Education classes** in practice areas in which you are interested and network with as many people attending as possible.

- Contact the State Bar Association about the requirements for obtaining **bar admission**. The ABA maintains a listing of all state bar offices at www.abanet.org/legaled/baradmissions/bar.html.

- **Contact WSRSL Alumni** in the city and state where you’re planning to practice. You can also find alumni by searching www.martindale.com. Write letters to these alumni expressing interest and then follow up with telephone calls (see the Networking and Informational Interviews sections in the Career Services Handbook). Once you make some contacts, visit the city/state where you plan to move and make appointments to meet these people.

- **Reciprocity** – one of the best places to access local job listings is through the law schools in the city/state where you plan to practice. Sometimes, a law school will allow WSRSL students to use their Career and Professional Development Offices just as if they were students attending that school. In order to determine if a particular law school offers reciprocity, go to that school’s website and find out what the reciprocity policy is. Remember, there is generally a three month limit from the time you are granted reciprocity privileges so time your access to that school’s resources carefully. You don’t want to start too early and have it expire before you are really ready to enter the job market. Also, find out if the law school allows you to use its online job resources. If the law school in the city/state you wish to practice offers
reciprocity, contact our WSRSL Director of Professional Development to start the process.
Chapter 11

Judicial Clerkships

Judicial Clerkships: Questions and Answers

1. What is a judicial clerkship?

A judicial clerkship is a one to two year assignment where you are the clerk (essentially research assistant) for a particular judge. Some judges are now hiring law clerks on a permanent basis (sometimes called "career" clerks) instead of a one or two year term.

A judicial law clerk's work varies depending upon the judge with whom s/he is working. Typically, judicial law clerks review motions and briefs, research the law, and draft opinions.

At the appellate level, a law clerk's duties involve a great deal of research and writing. Appellate law clerks commonly draft memos explaining issues in cases before oral argument and assist judges in drafting opinions afterwards. Clerks also attend oral arguments in cases on which they have assisted their judges. Clerking at the United States Court of Appeals often involves some travel since cases are only heard in select cities.

In general, judicial law clerks working at the trial court level, especially in the federal courts, manage cases, draft opinions, and do extensive legal research to resolve written pre-trial motions (e.g., motions to dismiss, summary judgment). This position often involves considerable exposure to federal pre-trial and trial practice and to members of the local bar. At the state level, in addition to performing legal research, law clerks for trial judges sometimes act as deputy clerks or bailiffs, assisting in scheduling hearings and trials as well as managing jury panels.

Other types of clerking experiences that are often overlooked by students are Staff Attorneys and Pro Se Law Clerks. Various courts at both the federal and state levels hire attorneys who serve as law clerks for the entire court. Staff attorneys often review appeals and correspondence, assist in case management, and draft opinions. Pro se law clerks are common in the federal courts. Generally, they handle pro se matters such as prisoner habeas corpus petitions, civil rights complaints, employment discrimination complaints, and social security disability appeals.
2. Why should I clerk?

- **Great Job:** In a survey of law clerks conducted by the National Association for Legal Career Professionals (NALP), 97% stated they would gladly clerk again. The bottom line is that clerking is a GREAT job and a wonderful way to spend a year or two (or more) after law school.
- **Intellectually Stimulating:** Clerk positions are often more intellectually stimulating than associate positions at firms.
- **Experience:** This is an intensive period of post-graduate learning. By observing how the judicial decision-making process works, you will learn practical information about how to draft briefs and present cases effectively. Legal employers know that as a judicial clerk, you will have honed your research and writing skills.
- **Perspective:** You will have the opportunity to view the system of justice from the other side of the bench. Unless you become a judge, you will never again have this opportunity.
- **Mentorship:** Judges often become life-long mentors to their law clerks. This kind of relationship can be very valuable - both personally and professionally.
- **Self-Assessment:** A clerkship allows you to take additional time to decide what practice area(s) you are interested in pursuing. Judicial law clerks are exposed to a wide variety of legal practice areas and often rethink long-term goals during their clerkships.
- **Prestige:** Clerking at a state or federal court is universally viewed as a valuable and prestigious position and excellent credential.
- **Enhance job prospects:** Most law clerks meet many prospective employers during their clerkship. Legal employers value a judicial clerkship greatly. Additionally, a judicial clerkship will overcome bad grades. Of course, with bad grades, it will be very difficult to get a judicial clerkship, but it can be done. A judicial clerkship will make mediocre grades seem invisible!
- **Reference and contact:** You will have an extremely useful recommendation and contact. When your letter says, “Judge so-and-so suggested I contact you,” you’ll grab their attention!
- **Reasonable hours:** You will typically be working more reasonable hours than your friends in private practice.

3. I want to practice in Hawaii. Should I look for a clerkship in this state only?

Geography is an important consideration. Generally, a clerkship in the state where you plan to practice is advantageous because of the contacts you make while clerking. You should not, however, limit your search based on this factor alone. Clerking is prestigious regardless of where you do it. Besides, a one or two year clerkship in another state (or territory) could be a lot of fun - there are judges who sit in the U.S. Virgin Islands after all!
4. Do I have to be in the top 10% and on law review?

No. Of course, it doesn’t hurt, and if you have these credentials, it is going to be an easier road for you. If you do not have stellar credentials, you need to go for another angle. You need to really let your personality shine through on your cover letter. Sometimes a judge will choose you just because you have something in common with him/her or you have something unusual in your background. For example, we have a First Circuit Court judge who looks for “great sense of humor and an ability to laugh at oneself” in potential clerks. This raises an important point - make sure you have all the “good stuff” on your resume. Be sure to include things like overseas travel, Outward-Bound experiences, volunteer commitments, raft guide experience, etc. In order to get over the law review problem, (i.e., you’re not on it), you need to submit a great writing sample.

You need to stand out in the crowd if you are not on law review and do not have great grades. Things you can do are: work as an extern or unpaid intern for the judge during the school year; take a seminar course where you will do a lot of writing and really edit the sample until it is perfect; compete in writing competitions and moot court competitions; and take advantage of any opportunity to meet judges (e.g., joining American Inns of Court).

Keep in mind that grades and Law Review are less important at the state court level.

5. To what kind of court should I apply?

Any kind of clerkship is generally a great experience but you may want to give some thought to whether you would prefer working for a trial court or an appellate court. There are significant differences between the two. If you want to be a litigator, it would be ideal to obtain a clerkship with a trial court.

Next, consider the level of the court. If you are interested in an area of law that is practiced exclusively in the federal courts, you should actively pursue clerkships in the federal court system. Similarly, if you are planning to practice family law, for example, a federal clerkship might not be as useful as a clerkship with a state court judge.

If you are interested in clerking at the federal court level, there are many courts besides the Supreme Court, Circuit and District Courts, as follows:
Federal Courts

Most state judges at the appellate and highest trial court level offer clerkships.

State Courts (Hawaii)
There are other opportunities to keep in mind when applying for a clerkship.

- Judges in foreign courts often hire law clerks. International courts that may offer clerkships include the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the International War Crimes Tribunal, the Court of Justice of the European Communities, and The European Court of Human Rights.
- Don’t forget the U.S. Court of International Trade and the Tribal Courts as well.
- There are clerkship positions available in entities outside of the judicial branch. Over thirty U.S. governmental departments and agencies utilize Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) and some of the judges hire law clerks.
- The Judicial Fellows Program is a one-year fellowship following a federal clerkship. Fellows work at the U.S. Supreme Court, the Federal Judicial Center, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, or the U.S. Sentencing Commission on projects pertaining to the administration of law.

6. How do I pick a judge?

You must select the judges to whom you apply very carefully. It is not a good idea to apply to any judge whom you do not research in advance. You have to decide you would definitely work for a particular judge before you send him/her an application because judges do not look favorably on those who turn down a job offer.

There are a variety of resources for finding out additional information about judges. (See the attached list of resources.)

   a. Read some of the judges’ opinions - recent cases, noteworthy opinions, or opinions in areas of law that you have a particular interest.
   b. Read the judges’ biographies. Almanac of the Federal Judiciary and The American Bench: Judges of the Nation are both great resources for information about judges that may not be widely known.
   c. Talk to the judges’ former law clerks. (Lists of WSRSL alumni who have clerked for judges the past few years are available on the Judicial Clerkship Information List).
   d. Find recent news stories about the judges by searching on Lexis, Westlaw, or doing a Google search.
   e. Articles written by a judge may give you far more insight into the judge’s thought process than his/her opinions. Search Lexis and Westlaw for articles.

Learning more about a judge before you apply will also give you an advantage over other applicants because you can be more specific in your cover letter, you can tailor your resume, and you might be able to select a writing sample that may have more appeal to a
particular judge for some reason. Having detailed knowledge about a judge is also critical if you are selected for an interview.

The reputation of the judge or the court should not be given undue weight. All clerkships are prestigious. The reputation of the judge or the court is only significant if you are interested in pursuing an academic career, a Supreme Court clerkship, or joining a large law firm.

7. When is the deadline for applying?

There is no “one” deadline for every judge. You need to check the Judicial Clerkship Information List and/or each judge by calling his/her chambers to find out the deadline for application and the required application materials. This information has been collected for many, but not all, of the judges located in Hawaii and can be found on the Judicial Clerkship Information List.

If you are applying to any of the federal courts, you should be aware that a majority of federal judges use OSCAR, an online application system, to process and receive clerkship applications. Also, federal appellate judges begin the hiring process on the day after Labor Day during students' third year in law school. If you apply to a judge adhering to this policy, you should not submit any materials to the judge before Labor Day of your third year. Additionally, your law professors who may be writing letters of reference on your behalf may not send them until after Labor Day. Many of the federal district court judges have adopted this policy. For more information about federal law clerk deadlines and hiring policies, go to http://www.law.hawaii.edu/careers/judicial-clerkships.

Do not forget to apply to newly appointed judges, who hire their law clerks even before they are sworn in. This can happen at any time of year. Also, be aware that emergencies happen, and sometimes law clerks have to leave a clerkship before their term ends, leaving an unadvertised vacancy. You could still obtain a clerkship this way, although it is unusual. Finally, it is possible to get a clerkship after you have been practicing; although this is rare.

8. What are the procedures for applying for a judicial law clerk position?

In general, your application should include a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and two to three letters of reference. Please note, however, that some judges have different requirements. You should refer to the Judicial Clerkship Information List or contact the judge’s chambers to find out exactly what the judge requires.

Plan to spend some time drafting and refining your cover letter and resume. The Career and Professional Development Office can assist you with this process.
A. Cover Letter

Your best starting point on writing a good cover letter is to review the chapter on cover letters in the Center’s Student Handbook. This chapter provides a good overview and some sample cover letters. Other cover letter samples geared specifically to judicial clerkship applications are included in the Resources section. Other tips to keep in mind:

1. Make certain the letter is well written and no longer than one page.
2. Do not write a terse, formal letter. Tell something about yourself. Judges often like to hire people who have something interesting in their background.
3. Highlight your strengths in the cover letter. First and foremost, emphasize your writing skills. This is particularly crucial if you are not on the Law Review or another journal. If you are applying to a court that does specialized work, emphasize your skills in that area. For example, when applying for a clerkship with the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, you would want to emphasize technical or engineering experience or a background in patent work.
4. To the extent you have a particular reason for applying to the judge, say it.
5. Letters sent to other geographic areas should state a reason, if you have one, for wanting to live in that region.
6. Also, indicate that you will be in the area on a certain date for an interview, should an interview be necessary. You should communicate that you will be willing to absorb the expenses associated with travel. Judges do not have funds to cover travel expenses.
7. Indicate in the cover letter what persons will be writing letters of reference on your behalf. Also indicate that these letters of reference will arrive under separate cover if you haven’t included them with your packet of materials.
8. Do not use platitudes, hyperbole or cliché in your cover letter. Judges see hundreds of cover letters and are turned off immediately by anything remotely resembling exaggeration, boastfulness, insincere flattery, etc. Highlight your strengths but do not be tempted to oversell yourself!
9. The cover letter must be perfect. It is, essentially, your first writing sample and if it is not well written or contains typos, your application will be rejected immediately. Be sure to address the letter properly (see the resources section for a list of proper ways to address letters and envelopes).

Having said all of the above, you should keep in mind that some judges (and their current law clerks who often screen all of the applications) prefer a straightforward cover letter that gives just the basic information transmitting the application for a clerkship. The only way to find out what a particular judge prefers is to call his secretary or law clerks and ask in a friendly, professional manner.
The Writing Sample

Writing is a critical element of a judicial clerkship. Thus, judges generally place great emphasis on the writing sample. Your writing sample should be chosen carefully. It should be well written and well organized. Judges will evaluate the writing sample to determine not only how well you write but also how well you can analyze and organize the issues.

1. Invest the time to create a good writing sample. This piece needs to be flawless. Review a variety of products you have written and pick one or two that you think are best written. You may want to meet with one of your law school professors or with a consultant from Writing Center to discuss your choice and ways of improving it.

2. Length: 5-10 pages. Often, employers will not have time to read an entire sample, so they appreciate evidence that you can be concise. You can offer to supply additional samples if requested.

3. Types: Legal employers want evidence of your ability to do legal analysis similar to what will be expected on the job, so legal memoranda (office memos) and briefs are often best. Papers used for law school classes and law review articles are also good.

4. The writing sample needs to be representative of what you can produce by yourself. Original work is preferable, and you should avoid pieces that are heavily edited. If you submit work that was an assignment for a class, and you received feedback from your professor on an earlier draft, be sure to explain this on a cover sheet for the sample.

5. Before using any work you have completed for an employer as a writing sample, be sure to obtain that employer’s permission. Concerns about confidentiality or litigation strategy may make it inappropriate to submit the document to a judge as a writing sample. If your previous employer gives you permission, you will also need to protect confidentiality by blocking out all identifying names and case numbers.

6. If your writing sample was written months before, spend the time to update it. Shepardize the cases and make sure the legal precedents are current.

C. Letters of Recommendation

1. Some judges ask for letters of recommendation but many judges will accept reference lists first. Check the Judicial Clerkship Information List or contact the judge’s chambers to find out that judge’s preference. Generally, trial court judges will accept reference lists and appellate court judges will accept letters of recommendation.

2. Number of letters of recommendation: Two to three is typical but check with the judge’s secretary to find out exactly how many letters of recommendation are required.
3. Who should you ask to write a letter of recommendation? In general, you should select people who know you and are well acquainted with your writing abilities.
   a. Typically, you should ask law school professors who know you well and in whose classes you performed well. You need to schedule a meeting to get to know any professor who really doesn’t know you.
   b. Consider asking individuals who know the judge. This is very helpful because judges take these letters more seriously.
   c. You can ask lawyers for whom you clerked.
4. Prepare a packet of materials to give to the people who have agreed to write a letter of recommendation. The packet should include copies of your resume, transcript, and writing samples. Even people who are well acquainted with you and your abilities will appreciate being able to refer to specifics contained in these materials.
5. Also provide these individuals with the correct spelling of the judge’s name and his/her complete address. Make sure the letter of recommendation will be addressed to the specific judge, not “To Whom It May Concern.”
6. Recommendation letters can be sent directly to the judge or you can include them in the packet of materials that you submit to the judge. If confidentiality is an issue, the people writing letters of recommendation can place them in a sealed envelope that you then include in the packet.

D. Resume

Please refer to the Center’s Student Handbook for information on resume writing. You should utilize the Center Office for individual advising to discuss your resume in more detail.

1. Include distinctive experiences (anything, within reason, that distinguishes your resume from all the rest on the judge’s desk). Consider including community service, career achievements before law school, foreign languages spoken, unusual travel experiences, music or other unusual abilities or interests. If you find out in your research of a particular judge that you share a common interest, include it in the resume. You might be selected for an interview solely because you share this interest with the judge.
2. Your resume should be on one page, but you may go to two pages if you have extensive work experiences and your resume is too cramped on one page. If you go to two pages, you need to fill the second page. Leaving a large section of “white space” on the second page is not appropriate.
E. Transcript

The WSRSL Grade Reports are considered unofficial transcripts and should be included with your application materials. You should keep copies of your Grade Reports in a career file. In the event you no longer have copies of your Grade Reports, you can obtain them from the Registrar’s office.

F. Interview

Above all, keep in mind that judges are people. Judges work closely with their law clerks so they want a law clerk with whom they think they will enjoy working. Sheer ability in terms of job skills is not enough. Personality and interpersonal communication skills are important in the interview.

1. Realize that your interview begins when the judge’s secretary calls you to make an appointment for the interview. EVERYONE with whom you come in contact, such as secretaries, court bailiffs, and court reporters will have an opinion about you. Treat these people with respect. Any person on the judge’s staff who has a less than ideal interaction with you can cause your application to be rejected.

2. Be prepared to speak intelligently about the law, your classes and why you selected them, the topic of your seminar class, the substance of your past work experiences, your writing sample, and your plans for the future.

3. Read a representative sampling of the judge’s opinions. Be familiar with recent opinions as well as noteworthy opinions. Pay attention to dissents and concurring opinions. These are opinions that the judge felt strongly about and will be more likely to remember and discuss. Awareness of opinions:
   a. Will impress the judge and give you an opportunity to interject into the conversation.
   b. May indicate substantive areas that the judge will want to discuss.

4. Research other aspects of the judge. There are a variety of resources for finding out additional information about judges.
   a. Read the judge’s biography. Almanac of the Federal Judiciary and The American Bench: Judges of the Nation are both great resources for information about judges that may not be widely known.
   b. Talk to the judge’s former law clerks. (Lists of WSRSL alumni who have clerked for judges the past few years are available on the Judicial Clerkship Information List). Talk to them to determine what the judge is looking for and find out more about his/her interview style.
   c. Find recent news stories about the judge by searching on Lexis, Westlaw, or doing a google search.

5. After an interview, judges often have candidates speak to their current clerks. Take it seriously. Judges are often influenced by their current clerks’ comments.

7. Prepare questions! Demonstrate that you know something about the judge and the court. (See the list of sample interview questions of Behind the Bench: The Guide to Judicial Clerkships – available in the Career Library).
8. Participate in one of the Mock Interview programs scheduled in the fall and spring. Do what it takes to prepare for the interview process. A mock interview will help you practice your “articulate responses” and ease those pre-interview jitters.

G. Follow Up with a Letter of Thanks

It is always a good idea to write a formal letter of thanks to the judge after an interview. You can use the thank you letter to send some follow up information such as an additional writing sample or an official transcript, if requested by the judge. Also write a thank you letter to the judge’s current law clerks if they interviewed you as well. Sample thank you letters are included in the Career Services Handbook.
Judicial Clerkship Resources

To make an informed decision about which judges to apply to for clerkships, you must do your research. The following resources will help you find out what you need to know about the judges to whom you are interested in applying.

For clerkships in Hawai`i, go first to our Judicial Clerkship resource list on the Careers Portal. There you will find the names of all Hawai`i judges, their requirements for applicants, time lines, and the names of alumni clerks.

**Almanac of the Federal Judiciary**
Lawletters, Inc.
- Volume 1: Profiles of U.S. District Court Judges
- Volume 2: Profiles of U.S. Court of Appeals Judges
Contains detailed biographical information on all federal judges including publications, noteworthy rulings, affiliations, associations, and lawyers' evaluations. Also available on Westlaw.

**The American Bench: Judges of the Nation**
Reginald Bishop, Forster & Assoc.
Contains biographies of federal and state judges. Covers judicial structure of each state and contains judicial boundary maps.

**Behind the Bench: The Guide to Judicial Clerkships** (available in Resource library)
Debra M. Strauss, TheBarBri Group, Inc.
Comprehensive new book covers everything you need to know - the value of a clerkship, the keys to success in finding one, a description of the various types and overview of the different courts, how to choose the best for you (court and judge), nuts and bolts on completing applications, and interviewing tips.

**Federal Judges Biographical Database**
Federal Judicial Center
Available at http://air.fjc.gov/history/judges_frm.html, this database contains biographical information on federal judges.

**Judicial Clerkship Web Site**
Available at www.judicialclerkships.com, this database provides comprehensive information on judicial clerkships. It lists all of the names and addresses of all state and federal courts in the United States. It has biographical information on judges. It also lists available clerkships.

**NALP Federal and State Judicial Clerkship Directory**
National Association for Law Placement (NALP)
The NALP Clerkship Directory contains information regarding the hiring practices of state judges (available on LexisNexis).
In 2000, NALP conducted an extensive survey of judicial law clerks. The results of the study can be found at www.nalp.org/nalpresearch/clrksumm.htm.

The timeline for applying for clerkships that was adopted by federal judges and endorsed by NALP is discussed at www.nalp.org/schools/judgerel.htm. For additional information on the new Law Clerk Hiring Plan and timeline, go to www.cadc.uscourts.gov/Lawclerk/lawclerk.asp.

NALP has recently published two articles on judicial clerkships:


National Center for State Courts
Available at www.ncsconline.org. Includes links to federal, international and state court websites as well as a number of local and municipal court websites.

Want's Directory of State Court Clerks & County Courthouses
Want Publishing Company
Contains names, addresses and telephone numbers of state courts. Also includes a listing of State attorneys general and their staffs.

Want's Federal-State Court Directory
Want Publishing Company
Contains names, addresses and telephone numbers of federal judges, Canadian Court clerks and courthouses, and addresses of highest courts around the world. Also contains state court directory listings and helpful organizational charts. Note that this information is also available on-line, at www.courts.com. It is updated with new appointments.

Westlaw
Featured on Westlaw are the West's Legal Directory of Judicial Clerkships (WLD-CLERK) and the Almanac of the Federal Judiciary (AFJ). The following overview demonstrates the databases and searches most useful for discovering information about judges and judicial clerkships on Westlaw:

Database: WLD-CLERK Contains West’s Legal Directory of Judicial Clerkships, which is a database derived from judges’ responses to questionnaires. To find a listing for a particular judge, type his/her name in the Hiring Judge text box. You can also utilize as searchable the test boxes for Selection Criteria (e.g., type in "law review") or Past and Present Clerks (e.g., type in "Hawaii").

Database: WLD-JUDGE West'sLegal Directory of Judges. Includes contact information as well as information on the judge's education, work history, published works, and significant decisions. Enter the particular judge's name in the Judge's Name blank.

Database: WLD-COURT Contains West's Legal Directory of Courts, which provides information about state courts as well (enter the word "state" in the Court blank).

Database: AFJ Carries the Almanac of the Federal Judiciary described above.
Database: WLD  To find the names of attorneys who have clerked for a particular judge, click "Terms & Connectors" in the Search type box, and enter the search, e.g., stephen/breyer/s clerk.

Database: ALLNEWS  Search to find recent stories about noteworthy cases in which a particular judge has been involved, e.g., judge/barrington/parker.

Database Search - Judicial Opinions  To find opinions the judge has written, run a segment search in the database of the court in which the judge is located. For example, ju(parker).
## Addressing Cover Letters to Judges

### Federal Courts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addressee</th>
<th>Address on cover letter and envelope</th>
<th>Salutation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Chief Justice</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Chief Justice of the United States The Supreme Court 1 First Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20543</td>
<td>Dear Chief Justice (last name):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Justice</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Associate Justice The Supreme Court 1 First Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20543</td>
<td>Dear Justice (last name):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### U.S. Court of Appeals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Judge</th>
<th>The Honorable (full name) Chief Judge United States Court of Appeals for the (Number-th) Circuit Address</th>
<th>Dear Judge (last name):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Judge</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Senior Judge United States Court of Appeals for the (Number-th) Circuit Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge (last name):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) United States Court of Appeals for the (Number-th) Circuit Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge (last name):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### U.S. District Court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Judge</th>
<th>The Honorable (full name) Chief Judge United States District Court for the (District Name) Address</th>
<th>Dear Judge (last name):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Judge</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) Senior Judge United States District Court for the (District Name) Address</td>
<td>Dear Judge (last name):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>The Honorable (full name) United States District Court</td>
<td>Dear Judge (last name):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
U.S. Magistrate Judge:

Judge

The Honorable (full name)
United States Magistrate Judge
United States District Court for
the (District Name)
Address

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge:

Chief Judge

The Honorable Judge (full name)
Chief Judge
United States Bankruptcy Court
for the (District Name)
Address

Judge

The Honorable Judge (full name)
United States Bankruptcy Court
for the (District Name)
Address

Other Federal Courts

Chief Judge

The Honorable (full name)
Chief Judge
Name of Court
Address

Judge

The Honorable (full name)
Name of Court
Address

State Courts

State Supreme Court:

Chief Justice

The Honorable (full name)
Chief Justice
Supreme Court for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
Address

Justice

The Honorable (full name)
Supreme Court for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
Address

State Court of Appeals:

Chief Judge

The Honorable (full name)
Address
Chief Judge
Court of Appeals for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
Address

Judge
The Honorable (full name)
Court of Appeals for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
Address

Dear Judge (last name):

District Courts:

Chief Judge
The Honorable (full name)
Chief Judge
District Court for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
(Number-th) Judicial District
Address

Judge
The Honorable (full name)
District Court for the State
(Commonwealth) of (State)
(Number-th) Judicial District
Address

Dear Judge (last name):
Sample Cover Letters (Judicial Clerkship)
Emily P. Jones
1234 Any Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 ♦ 808-555-1234 ♦ ejones15@yahoo.com

Date

The Honorable John D. Doe
United States District Court
for the District of Hawaii
400 AlaMoana Boulevard
Honolulu, Hawaii 96805

Dear Judge Doe:

I am a third year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law. I am applying for the position of judicial law clerk in your chambers beginning in the fall of 2009.

We met recently at the Business and Law Organization meeting at the law school when you came to speak about commercial litigation. I am interested in becoming a litigator and learned a great deal from your remarks. I never realized that juries view commercial cases from a tort perspective while the clients think only in terms of contract. This insight is one I will remember throughout my career. I am sure that your remarks about commercial litigation represent just a small fraction of the practical and valuable information I could learn while working for you.

A good lawyer communicates well in writing. As my resume reflects, I have sought out many opportunities to improve my research and writing skills. I received the highest grade in my legal writing class as a first year student and was a finalist for the Well-Done Writing Award. During my second year, I worked as a research assistant for two professors at the law school, researching and drafting chapters for their respective casebooks. This past summer, I clerked for the Honolulu firm of Able & Able. There, I wrote twelve memos and three briefs concerning a wide variety of issues. These experiences should provide me with the tools to succeed as a judicial law clerk.

I have enclosed a resume, transcript, and writing sample consisting of one of the briefs I wrote this summer. Arriving under separate cover will be letters of recommendation from Professors CanDoWell and YouBetcha as well as Mr. Mike Able, my previous employer.

It would be an honor and a privilege to clerk for you. Thank you for your consideration of my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Emily P. Jones
Encl.
Dear Judge Jones:

I am a third year law student at the William S. Richardson School of Law applying for the judicial clerkship position available in the fall of 2010. Enclosed please find a resume, writing sample, transcript, and two letters of recommendation for your consideration.

Last fall, I interned in the Maui County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office. This experience confirmed my commitment to spend my career in the courtroom as a state prosecutor. My co-workers in the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office and my law school professors have advised me that it would be most beneficial to clerk for a year before applying to the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office because the view from behind the bench provides a critical perspective on the entire criminal justice system.

I have worked hard in law school to build the skills necessary to become a good lawyer. My legal research and writing skills have improved significantly over the past two years. As a first year law student, the brief I wrote for my legal writing class was chosen for consideration for the Legal Practice Writing Award. Last year, I was selected to participate on the Law Review. I have written a law review article concerning the new practice of allowing jurors to ask questions during trials. Also, during my internship, as well as my law clerk position with the Honolulu firm of Good, Best & Better, I researched and wrote numerous memos on many legal issues. These experiences will provide me with a solid foundation as a judicial law clerk.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Smith

Encl.
Dear Judge Jones:

Please consider me for a judicial clerkship beginning in Fall of _________. I am a _________ year law student at the William S. Richardson School of law and believe I have the skills necessary to be an effective law clerk.

In my career, I have pursued a lifelong interest and passion for language and writing. As a voracious reader I had the ideal job before law school. Among other fine publishers, Atlantic Monthly Press, Grove Press and University of Minnesota Press paid me to read and summarize forthcoming books for client bookstores. Over a two-year period, I have read 300 books, ranging from fiction and political science to natural history and fly-fishing. I sometimes found it hard to believe that I earned a living doing what I enjoyed so much.

My appreciation of well-written prose has been a significant benefit in law school. I enjoy legal writing and have gained considerable experience doing so through my position as Managing Editor of the Water Court Reporter, a quarterly publication on Hawaii water law, and as a faculty research assistant.

Enclosed please find my resume, transcript, letters of recommendation and an article I wrote as Managing Editor of the Water Court Reporter. I would like to meet with you and discuss how I could assist your work. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration of my application.

Respectfully,

Karen Anderson

Encl.
Dear Judge Johnson,

Please accept this letter as application for a position as a law clerk. My resume, transcript, and a writing sample are enclosed for your review and consideration.

As my resume indicates, I believe that I have the necessary skills to perform as a law clerk. I also offer, however, an eclectic background that will allow me to bring a broader perspective to my work responsibilities.

I would describe myself as firmly committed to excellence. I have always responded to challenges in a very positive fashion. My discipline and drive initially manifested themselves through tennis. Balancing tennis with studies, I became one of the nation's top ranked juniors, tried out for the U.S. Olympic team and competed on the Association of Tennis Professionals World Tour, earning a world ranking in 1999.

I have also met intellectual challenges with the same vigor. While in college, I developed a passion for reading through which the breadth of my interests and experiences multiplied. I became one of the first twenty Peace Corps volunteers in Turkmenistan, a break-away republic of the former Soviet Union. I worked with the International Monetary Fund to convert the Turkmen currency from rubles to manat and taught English amidst disease and poverty, often without heat, hot water, or plumbing.

Now my focus has turned to law. I bring to this pursuit the same energy and commitment that have enabled me to excel in the past. I look forward to an opportunity to interview with you. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia Smith
Encl.
Chapter 12

On-Campus Interviewing

Frequently Asked Questions About OCI

What is OCI?
On-Campus Interviewing (OCI) is the recruiting program through which many law firms and companies hire summer associates and first year associates.

What OCI is NOT:
It is important to recognize that OCI is not the only way to get a job. Approximately one-fourth to one-third of each class obtains a job through OCIs. Indeed, 90% of students experience job search success through externships and internships, networking, informational meetings, etc.

Who can participate in OCI?
OCI is open to all continuing students at the School of Law.

If I am not in the top 10% of my class should I still apply?
Many OCI employers are interested in more than class rank. However, as a rule, grades play an important role to most OCI employers.

How should I prepare for an interview?
The best preparation is to participate in mock interviews, as well as attending other OCI related workshops. Mock Interview sign-ups are on a first-come, first-served basis and space is limited, so sign up ASAP.

Where will the interviews take place?
All interviews will be held on campus. OCIs are coordinated through our Careers Portal, our online carer management system. You can check your interview information online including the names of your interviewers and room assignments.

Can any of these employers discriminate against me?
Participating OCI employers sign our non-discrimination statement. If you have reason to believe that an employer is not complying with this policy, please contact our office immediately.
OCI can be stressful and can involve tough decisions. Where can I go for advice? The Center’s staff and counselors are always available to help you in your career search. Whether it is OCI or any other questions or concerns please feel free to call, drop in, fax or email us.

Follow this hyperlink for the Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions NALP guidelines for candidates
Chapter 13

Legal Career Options

Careers in the Law: How Does it Break Down?

Private Firms

Large

Typically these firms offer clients a full range of services. Their legal departments can range from 100 to over 2,000 attorneys, they may have additional offices in other cities and countries, and/or a list of high profile corporate clients. Because these firms typically pay the highest salaries, they have highly competitive hiring processes that focus on students in the top 5-10% of their class. Most of the large Hawaii firms come on campus every fall to participate in On-Campus Interviewing. (Please see the OCI chapter for more details.) Be aware that attrition in such firms can be high due to the pressure resulting from the billable hour requirements. Associates must work long, hard hours in order to move up the partner track. Some law firms have a single partnership level whose members share in the firm's equity. Others have two or three levels of partnership, with only the top level conferring equity. Hiring in these firms usually takes place during OCI only for law students and entry-level attorneys.

Medium and Small

There is little that can be generalized about small and medium size firms. Sometimes these are firms that have spun off of a large firm and other times these firms simply started out as “boutique” firms. The practice areas can be very generalized or very specialized. The best way to join a small or medium size firm is by networking or by working there part-time during law school. Benefits to working in this environment may include more autonomy, more hands-on practical experience early on, client contact early on, and early partnership. Possible cons may include a lower salary at the beginning, the expectation that you need to bring in clients early in your career, being asked to perform more administrative tasks and less sophisticated clients. Salaries range all over the board in this type of firm. Expect a range of $45,000-70,000.
In-House Counsel

Many companies have a legal department that advises them on day-to-day business activities and oversees work performed by big firms (outside counsel). Typically, but not always, companies prefer to hire transactional attorneys with three or more years of specialized experience in, for example, securities law or contracts. The salaries here are usually fairly competitive, but the hours are generally better. One of the benefits is that there is only one client. In private practice, you are typically working on many deals or cases for many different clients. As an in-house attorney, you will work on many projects, but will always be working for the same client. The other important benefit is the lack of a billable hour requirement.

Public Sector

Federal Government

Federal, state, and local governments employ thousands of lawyers. One major employer is the Department of Justice, which hires lawyers to prosecute cases on behalf of the federal government. The secret is out about federal jobs. The pay is pretty good, the work is typically very interesting and the hours are reasonable. Also, no billable hours! But, it is often very difficult to break into these jobs directly out of law school. It helps if you know someone and have great credentials. Usually that means you need to intern for an agency while you are still in law school.

The most common entry point for those seeking to become federal government attorneys is a job as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. Virtually every other cabinet-level agency also hires legions of lawyers. Opportunities also exist within regulatory agencies, such as the Internal Revenue Service, Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Commodities Futures Exchange Commission—and in the military, in the Judge Advocate General Corps.

State and Local

Don’t forget about the Attorney General’s Office, the Public Defender’s office and County Prosecuting Attorney’s Offices. These are wonderful places to work and pay fairly well. Also, you get the feeling that you are wearing the “white hat” when you walk into court and that can help significantly in job satisfaction. You will get a significant amount of job responsibility early and do not need to worry about “rainmaking” or the billable hour. Again, these jobs are difficult, but not impossible, to get. Remember that it’s WHO you know in addition to having strong skills. Get out there and extern or volunteer early. These agencies like to hire people they already know. (Future prosecutors: don’t forget the local prosecutor’s offices!)
Public Interest

Among popular public interest positions are those with the Legal Aid Society, American Civil Liberties Union, the National Center for Youth Law, NOW, NARAL, the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, MALDEF, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and the Environmental Defense Fund. Competition for these positions is fierce, and the pay is relatively low—with the exception of positions at environmental law organizations, which tend to be better funded. The advantage of these positions is that they're both intellectually stimulating and socially meaningful. The work usually consists of a lot of brief writing and advocacy, and in some cases there is a great deal of client contact.

Law Specialty Areas

Included here is a list of some specialty areas in which you can practice law. (Please note: not all specialty areas are included.)

Admiralty and Maritime Law
Antitrust law
Appellate Practice
Banking and Commercial Finance Practice
Bankruptcy Law
Civil Litigation
Corporate Practice
Criminal Law
Elder Law
Entertainment and Sports Law
Environmental Law
Family Law
Government Contracts Practice
Government Practice
Health Care Law
Immigration Law
Insurance Law
Intellectual Property Law
International Law
Labor and Employment Law
Legislative Practice
Military Judge Advocates/JAG
Municipal Finance Practice
Public Interest Law
Real Estate Law
Securities Law
Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice
Tax Law
Telecommunications Law
Tort Law: Personal Injury and Insurance Defense Litigation
Trusts and Estates Law

In determining what area you would like to focus on, be sure to attend the Center’s Career Day series. In this program, we invite two or more attorneys in a practice area to come and speak to students on the basics of their practice area. You should also review the resources we have in our Resource Library (e.g. NALP’s The Official Guide to Legal Specialties: An Insider’s Guide to Every Major Practice Area). We have many books that will help you decide which area to specialize in. In addition, our staff is available to help you make these decisions.
Chapter 14

Alternative Careers and Non-Traditional Careers

Alternative Careers

Many of you have decided or are considering that practicing law is not for you. Many of you came to law school knowing that you did not want to practice law. What else can you do with your law degree?

Make an appointment to come talk to one of our Career Counselors. We have resources available to help you make this transition. We facilitate self-introspection through “homework” assignments that help you decide what your interests are, your values, your strengths and weaknesses and ultimately what environment will make you happy.

Be forewarned; this is not a short process. However, there are obvious reasons to do it early in your career. We will help you through the process of determining what kind of career path you wish to initially pursue. In addition, please see our Resource Center for many books and resources regarding alternative careers.

Suggested Reading


*Turning Points- New Paths and Second Careers for Lawyers, Published by ABA

*Breaking Traditions: Work Alternatives for Lawyers, Published by ABA.
*JD Preferred: 400+ Things You Can do With a Law Degree (Other Than Practice Law), Published by Federal Reports, Inc.

Federal Law-Related Careers Directory: A Guide to Over 150 Law-Related Careers, Published by Federal Reports, Inc.

*The Road Not Taken: A Practical Guide to Exploring Non-Legal Career Options, by Kathy Grant and Wendy Werner. Published by National Association for Legal Career Professionals.


*Resources available in the Career Library.
Chapter 15

Survival Guide

LEGAL JOB GURU KIMM WALTON, AUTHOR OF WHAT LAW SCHOOL DOESN’T TEACH YOU ... BUT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW OFFERS THE FOLLOWING ADVICE...

SURVIVING AS AN ASSOCIATE

MASTER YOUR WRITING SKILLS

We can’t emphasize enough the importance of producing clear, concise written materials, regardless of your law firm size, specialty or setting. To create superior pieces:

Proofread, proofread, proofread!

Do not believe assigning attorneys who tell you that they just want a “rough draft.” Their idea of a rough draft is not the same as yours. Make sure everything you turn in is your best product and that it has been proofread and edited.

Check your facts. Don’t assume anything.

Do not turn your assignment into a lengthy historical analysis of case precedent unless you have been explicitly directed to do so by your assigning attorney. Analyze the law as it relates to your fact pattern and avoid rambling on about unrelated issues. Your ultimate goal is to solve the client’s problems. Turning the project into a law review article is not usually the most efficient or effective way to address your client’s needs.

BE SMART WITH YOUR TIME

First, get as many facts and as much clarification from the assigning attorney as possible, before you even leave his/her office. For example:

Find out background information about the case and make sure you understand how your assignment fits into “the big picture.”

Determine when your project needs to be done and how much time the assigning attorney believes you should take to complete it. (Beware, new associates will often need three to five times longer than the assigning attorney estimates!)
Ask the assigning attorney to suggest a source where you can begin your search. Find out if there are internal forms or memo files to explore so you don’t “reinvent the wheel.”

While everyone recognizes that new associates are on a learning curve, it is important not to spend hours or days researching projects you don’t understand. Check in with the assigning attorney as you progress with your project to make sure you are on the right track. Nothing is more frustrating than spending days on an assignment only to find out that your work was useless because you made incorrect assumptions, or got bogged down researching irrelevant issues or the issue was modified and no one told you!

Seek Out Feedback and Accept Criticism

New associates commonly complain about the lack of feedback they receive regarding their work performance. Don’t fall into this trap: accept responsibility for your own professional development and seek out feedback from assigning attorneys. Though they might be busy and hard to reach, be assertive and persistent in asking for their opinions about your work. The best time to ask for feedback is after completing a draft, but before finishing the project.

Don’t be defensive about criticism if you do receive it. Your draft may be returned with more red than black ink, but use this as an opportunity to learn about this attorney’s style and improve your own writing skills.

Be Flexible

Every attorney has different criteria for a “good” work product. Try to conform to the specific demands of each assigning attorney. Review the memos your assigning attorney has written to get an idea of his/her style. Knowing your audience is the first step to finding success.

Be Friendly to Everyone--from Partners to Paralegals

Meet and stay in touch with all the partners you are working with. Some partners will encourage regular contact and will make it easy. Others may seem unapproachable and you will have to work harder to communicate with them. It is in your best interest to make the effort – don’t expect them to.

Get to know other associates. They often know the ropes and can be invaluable sources of information. Treat them as professional colleagues, mentors and sounding boards.
Treat members of the clerical staff with respect. Introduce yourself to them immediately and learn their names! The quality and timeliness of your work product is often in their hands, so be sure you treat them as the professionals they are.

**Stay Out of the Gossip Mill**

This should be self-explanatory. Office politics are complicated. If you embroil yourself in political and/or personal conflicts, you may get burned. Be the professional that you claim to be and steer clear of conversations about other employees. If you do, you will earn trust and respect from everyone.

**Get Your Hands Dirty**

Treat every assignment as a challenge. Dive in and become an expert on the matters entrusted to you. By doing so, you will become indispensable and will be positioned to receive more prestigious and interesting assignments down the road.

**Enjoy Work and Life. Don’t Live to Work!**

Learning the nuts and bolts of practicing law is both challenging and exciting. During your first few years of practice, your learning curve will be tremendous as will, at times, your stress level. Find outlets to cope with on-the-job stress and the discomfort you may feel as you grow in your professional development and face more responsibilities and higher performance expectations.

Did you run or lift weights to cope with the stress of law school exams? Keep up your exercise routine as you begin practice. Make time for yourself every day. Read fiction or listen to music to unwind. Volunteer at your church or a battered women’s shelter. Are you one of the several graduating students who are supporting a family? Don’t neglect or abandon your friends, family and extracurricular activities when you begin law practice. Strive to maintain balance in your life. You will be a happier, healthier lawyer and a better person for it.