

Resume Drafting and Review for International Students

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A FEW EXAMPLES...

Illustrating the Challenges in Resume Writing for International Students

TMI! I don't want to know your date of birth and marital status!

- International CVs frequently feature prominently information that we consider private in the U.S.
- Employers don't want to see this for legal reasons

This resume is too long. Is it really worth taking the time to read?

- International students are accustomed to CVs that are several pages in length; they are often formatted to take up MORE space than is necessary (the perception being that length=strength)
- Tell your students early and often that a one-page resume is standard in the U.S.
 - Note: They won't believe you
- Teach your students formatting tricks to get everything onto one page

Something is missing here... I can't tell when you graduated from your degree programs.

- Students in some countries omit degree dates as a matter of convention
 - Other students tend to put date ranges for their degrees
- Educate students on the standard U.S. format

Why did you have six different jobs in one year?

- Students often fail to properly identify temporary positions or internships
- Often this is a translation problem
- Don't translate, explain

What is a “third class scholarship”?

- Bad translations often plague resumes of foreign students
- It even happens with students from English speaking countries who assume knowledge the reviewer won't have regarding the educational system in their home country
- Don't translate, explain

What does a grade of 15 on the First State Exam mean?

- Students often fail to put their grades/credentials in context, which often has the effect of making their credentials look less impressive than they actually are
- Foreign grades/awards/etc. without context are meaningless
- Don't assume the reviewer will know the context

ADVISING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Tips and Tools

Goal of an International Student Resume

An international student's resume should:

- Clarify credentials for a U.S. reviewer with no experience in the home country
- Make sense to a reviewer from the home country
- Play up transferable skills
- Demonstrate excellent command of English

The CV versus the Resume

CV	Resume
Complete history – as long as it needs to be	Marketing tool – data is selected to fit an appropriate length
Biographical timeline	Highlights accomplishments
Contains information that may not be relevant to the position in order to paint a complete picture of the applicant	Data is culled and carefully curated for a particular position; highlights what the employer should know
Contains personal information	No personal information
Assumes a long attention span	Assumes a short attention span

The CV versus the Resume

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CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Gottret
First name: Dominique Philippe
Date of birth: 19 April 1981
Place of origin: Veyrier (Geneva)
Nationality: Switzerland



WORK EXPERIENCE

FROM-TILL	FUNCTIEN
7.2011 - on going	Credit Suisse AG (Zurich) <i>Attorney at law, OTC Derivatives and Prime Services</i> - Negotiation and drafting the whole range of over-the-counter derivatives, securities lending and repo master agreements, respective collateral arrangements and transactions - Legal structuring of financing transactions involving complex derivatives and tailor-made collateral arrangements - Advising internal stakeholders in all legal / regulatory matters regarding over-the-counter derivatives, securities lending, repo, collateral arrangements and transactions
11.2009 - 6.2011	LALIVE (Geneva and Zurich) <i>Attorney at law</i> - General corporate and commercial matters: drafting, negotiating and reviewing of various contracts, drafting of memoranda, preparation of minutes of shareholder and board of directors meetings - Mergers & Acquisitions: drafting of various contracts; conducting due diligence reviews and drafting of due diligence reports - Arbitration: international and domestic cases under ICG and Swiss Rules of Arbitration; e.g. cases about loan and licensing agreements; acting as co-counsel and as secretary of Arbitral Tribunal
10.2008 - 2.2009	LALIVE (Geneva) <i>Trainee Lawyer</i> - Drafted agreements, memoranda and letters in corporate, contract, competition and arbitration matters, conducted due diligence reviews
8.2007 - 9.2008	Bratschi Wiederkehr & Buob (Berne) <i>Trainee Lawyer</i> - Drafted agreements and claims and letters in corporate, contract matters, assistant in international arbitration and litigation.
3.2007 - 7.2007	District Court of Obersimmental Saanen (Canton of Berne) <i>Trainee Lawyer</i> - Drafted judgments, injunctions and orders in civil and criminal law.
9.2000 - 2.2006	Quinnie Cinemas LTD (Berne) <i>Cinema Operator (part-time employment for financing university fees)</i>

EDUCATION

FROM-TILL	DEGREE
10.2009	Supreme Court of the Canton of Berne: Attorney at law; admitted to the Bernese Bar after having passed oral and written exams.
4.2006 - 3.2007	University of Berne: Master of Law degree equivalent (lic. iur.) with specialization on commercial law. Thesis topic: "The term of a dominant position under the Swiss competition law – a comparison with the US and the European Union law". Thesis marked 5.5 (1.0 to 6.0 scale, 6.0 top grade). Finished average 5 year program in 4.5 years among the top students of the class 2007.
8.2005 - 3.2006	University of Stockholm: Participation in the Erasmus exchange programme in Sweden
10.2002 - 6.2005	University of Fribourg: Bachelor of Law (BLaw)
8.1997 - 3.2002	High School Feusi Berne: Type E (Law and economics)
8.1987 - 6.1997	Primary school Washington D.C. (USA) and Manuelschule Berne

CAREER-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIPS

FROM-TILL	FUNCTIEN/ACTIVITY
2011	Publication "Joint Venture in Switzerland" in Hewitt on Joint Ventures, Sweet & Maxwell (October 2011), together with Professor Jean-Paul Vulliamy
2010	National Report for Switzerland "Securing International Sales Transactions", prepared for the annual conference of the International Association for Young Lawyers (AIJA) together with the American Bar Association in Charleston, USA (awarded with the <i>Past Presidents' Award</i> for the best National Report 2010)
2009/2011	Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIJA (Banking and M&A Commission) Association of Bernese Lawyers (Berner Juristenverein)

LANGUAGES

German:	native	
English:	fluent	(studied in English (Stockholm), work experience)
French:	fluent	(work experience)
Swedish:	basic knowledge	(Language school at the University of Stockholm 2005/2006)
Russian:	basic knowledge	(Russian language school in Berne)

ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Ambassador of FAMED S.A. (Lodz, Poland) for Swiss markets

Floorball player (former licensed in the A-Elite-Serie in Sweden), diving (Open water diver certificate), skiing and tennis

Russian literature

The CV versus the Resume

DOMINIQUE PHILIPPE GOTTRET

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EDUCATION

Fordham University Law School, New York, New York
Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Banking, Corporate and Finance Law, expected May 2013

University of Berne, Berne, Switzerland
Master of Laws with specialization in Commercial Law, cum laude, February 2007
Thesis topic: "The Term of a Dominant Position Under the Swiss Competition Law, A Comparison with the U.S. and the European Union Law" (thesis marked 5.5 / 6.0)

University of Stockholm, Stockholm, Sweden
Exchange Student, Erasmus Program, 2006

University of Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland
Bachelor of Laws, July 2005

EXPERIENCE

Credit Suisse AG, Zurich, Switzerland

In-House Counsel, OTC Derivatives and Prime Services (July 2011 – July 2012)

- Advised trading and sales desks on all legal issues (including cross-border and regulatory matters) relating to securities lending, the repo business and full range of OTC products and linked credit and collateral issues, whether in relation to new, existing or anticipated transactions
- Undertook legal structuring of financing transactions involving tailor-made securities lending agreements as well as collateral arrangements for a varied investment and private bank client base
- Drafted and negotiated a broad spectrum of OTC derivatives documentation (including ISDA and Swiss Master Agreements) and Global Master Securities Lending Agreements
- Took responsibility for the supervision and training of legal interns as well as for new team members in the OTC Derivatives and Prime Services group of the Legal Department

LALIVE, Geneva and Zurich, Switzerland

Associate Attorney, Corporate Transactions and Litigation Group (November 2009 – May 2011)

- Drafted and reviewed stock and asset purchase agreements; performed due diligence review and drafted due diligence reports; liaised with foreign counsel for cross-border transactions; drafted formation documents for various types of entities; supervised signings and closings for multi-party transactions
- Drafted and reviewed international commercial contracts
- Acted as counsel and as secretary of Arbitral Tribunal in international and domestic cases under ICC and Swiss Rules of Arbitration

Mandatory Legal Clerkship in law firms and in the District Court of Obersimmental Saanen, Berne, Switzerland
March 2007 – September 2009

BAR ADMISSION

Admitted to practice law in Switzerland (October 2009)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Jean-Paul Vulliamy and Dominique Gottret, *Joint Ventures in Switzerland*, in Hewitt on Joint Ventures, Sweet & Maxwell (2011)

Dominique Gottret, *Securing International Trade Transactions*, National Report for Switzerland prepared for the annual conference of the International Association for Young Lawyers (AIYA) together with the American Bar Association (2010)

MISCELLANEOUS

Languages: Native German, fluent in French and English
Memberships: New York City Bar Association (Member of the International Trade Law Committee), American Bar Association, International Association for Young Lawyers
Award: Past Presidents' Award (awarded for the best National Report in 2010 by the International Association for Young Lawyers)
Interests: Tennis, scuba diving and Russian literature

The CV versus the Resume

- Most problems in resumes of foreign students stem from the differences between foreign CVs and U.S.-style resumes
- Don't use the language of “converting” a CV to a resume – a resume should be drafted from scratch, informed by the CV – attempts to convert the CV to a resume generally fail

Lost in Translation

- Attempting to translate credentials, experience, awards, etc. often results in confusion
 - Lack of context
 - Strange word choices
- Never simply translate; rather, explain
 - Occasionally a translation does offer the best explanation (e.g., translating a Chinese LL.B. degree), but more often than not, a translation simply creates confusion
 - Don't default to translating

Resume Length

The common culprits:

- Generous formatting
 - Be a Word wiz – you might end up feeling like tech support, but the students need to know how to format properly to conserve space
- Too much unnecessary information
 - Teach students to look at the purpose of every line in their resumes
- Overuse of bullet points

Take Note: Issues in Headings

- Address/phone number format
- Nicknames (can be helpful, but should also include their legal name)
- Last name/first name
 - Which comes first?
- “Ms.” or “Mr.” if helpful

Take Note: Issues in “Education”

- Institution names – how to translate?
 - Look at university website
- “Equivocating” degrees
 - “J.D. equivalent” – not recommended
 - Recommended formula: include the degree in the native language or a translation (only if the translated term means the exact same thing in the U.S.), then explain in parentheses
 - “five year law degree”
 - “two year graduate-level program in international law”

Take Note: Issues in “Experience”

- Job titles do not translate well. Students will need help to figure out the U.S. equivalent of the position they held
 - Example: “Legal Assistant”
- Be clear about temporary positions and internships
- Be conscious of overly-vague job descriptions

Back to Basics

- Don't assume any prior knowledge or context for writing a resume – start from the beginning
- Give lots of examples and vary them
- Encourage them to follow the examples closely
 - Standard form?
 - Pro: Constrains “creativity”
 - Con: One format does not always work well for everyone, especially given varying levels of experience

Back to Basics

Students may be uncomfortable with the new format

- Remind them that U.S. employers look at different things here than in their home countries. Our resumes are designed to appeal to U.S. employers and to highlight the qualifications they are looking for.

Example: Many students want to line dates up on the left – it doesn't make sense to them to do it any other way. But that format is much better suited to a CV than a resume.

Tips for Efficient Counseling (an ounce of prevention...)

- Give them lots of examples and resources at the outset
 - A comprehensive written guide aimed specifically at international students
 - Don't forget international J.D. students as well
 - A live program with a video recording that is accessible after the fact
 - Lots of sample resumes
- Ensure that they actually use these materials
- Vary the messenger – they often won't believe you, but will believe peers who have been successful in the job market

TIPS AND TOOLS FOR REVIEW OF FOREIGN RESUMES

Tips for Reviewing Resumes

- Become educated
 - Figuring out different legal systems and markets takes time
 - Use the NALP Foundation's International Directory of Lawyer Qualifications as a springboard
 - Approach your learning as you would a scavenger hunt
- Become familiar
 - Read and critically review as many resumes as come across your desk
 - Talk to your lawyers who are foreign-trained or work with non-US clients
 - Talk to your NALP colleagues and search firm reps
- Get back to basics
 - Review resumes in chronological order
 - Keep an open mind about different educational and accreditation standards
 - Visit the websites of accrediting institutions and peer firms

Helpful Resources

- General background:
 - HG.org: <http://www.hg.org/>
 - NALP Foundation's International Directory of Lawyer Qualifications
 - Wikipedia
- Bar Associations:
 - The Bar Council (UK Barristers):
<http://www.barcouncil.org.uk/becoming-a-barrister/how-to-become-a-barrister/>
 - The International Bar Association:
[http://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student Committee/qualify lawyer database.aspx](http://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student_Committee/qualify_lawyer_database.aspx)

Helpful Resources

- Japan Federation of Bar Associations:
http://www.nichibenren.or.jp/en/about/judicial_system/attorney_system.html
- The Law Society of England and Wales (UK Solicitors):
<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/careers/becoming-a-solicitor/>
- The Law Society of Hong Kong:
<http://www.hklawsoc.org.hk/public/default.asp>
- National Bar Council of France: <http://cnb.avocat.fr/>
- Industry Reviewers
 - Chambers & Partners: <http://www.chambersandpartners.com/>
 - IFLR 1000: <http://www.iflr1000.com/Default.aspx>

Helpful Resources

- Legal 500: <http://www.legal500.com/>
- PLC Which Lawyer:
<http://whichlawyer.practicallaw.com/which/whichlawyer.do>
- Vault: <http://www.vault.com>
- Industry News
 - Asian Lawyer:
http://www.americanlawyer.com/asian_lawyer/index.jsp
 - Asian Legal Business: <http://asia.legalbusinessonline.com/>
 - Law360: <http://www.law360.com/>
 - Legalweek: <http://www.legalweek.com/>
 - The Lawyer: <http://www.thelawyer.com/>

FOREIGN LEGAL EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATION

Understanding various foreign jurisdictions

Most Common Law and Civil Law Jurisdictions

- Law is an undergraduate discipline – LL.B. or equivalent
- Requirements for bar admission vary
 - May require a mandatory clerkship
 - May require an exam
 - Sometimes graduating with a law degree is sufficient
- Bar passage not necessarily required to engage in the practice of law as we define it
 - For many jurisdictions, bar passage allows lawyers to appear in court or perform other select duties, but other elements of law practice are permitted without formal admission (e.g., in house practice)

Germany

- Law school is an undergraduate discipline, but there is not necessarily a “law degree”
- Undergraduate law studies culminate in the First State Exam, administered by the state, not the university
- In order to be fully admitted to practice law, candidates must also complete a 9-12 month clerkship called a *referendariat* and must complete the second state exam
- Scores on the first/second state exams are very important
- It is common for students to go on to complete a doctoral degree in law (Dr. jur.)

France

- Receive many different degrees at various stages of law study:
 - *License de droit*: 3 years (previously there was also the DEUG at 2 years)
 - *Master I*: fourth year (formerly the *Maitrise*)
 - *Master II*: fifth year
 - *Recherche* (formerly DESS) or *professionnel* (formerly DEA)
 - Students often get more than one *Master II*
- For full admission, students must complete the CAPA (bar school), including a six month internship, and must pass an exam

United Kingdom

- The “traditional route” is fairly straightforward
 - LL.B. → Legal Practice Course (LPC) → two-year mandatory clerkship (training contract)
- It is becoming more common, however, for aspiring lawyers to do what is known as a “conversion course”
 - Graduate Diploma in Law → LPC → Training Contract

Contact Information

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