Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in a Legal Job Search: Things to Consider when Advising Law Students

April 2024

The purpose of this document is to help educate law school career services professionals regarding student usage of artificial intelligence in the legal job search process.

In today's dynamic legal landscape, technology plays a pivotal role in shaping career opportunities. Law students can harness the power of artificial intelligence (AI) to significantly enhance the job search process. Below are some practical insights on integrating AI tools and strategies into legal career exploration.

1. Resume Optimization

- Use AI-driven resume optimization tools such as VMock to analyze and enhance resume content.

- Many companies use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to scan resumes for specific keywords related to the job description. AI can analyze job postings and optimize a student's resume with relevant keywords to increase the chances of getting noticed by ATS.

- AI can analyze the language used in a student's resume and suggest improvements to make it more impactful and engaging to potential employers.

- Students should not enter confidential information (e.g. name, address, e-mail, GPA, phone) into AI chatbots such as ChatGPT as all information entered is retained and is searchable.

- Students should avoid using AI to draft an entire resume because the document can become overly wordy. Instead, they should use the suggested language as a starting point.

2. Cover Letter Optimization

- AI can generate content for cover letters based on information candidates provide about themselves and the job and/or organization to which they are applying. It can suggest key points to include, such as relevant skills, experiences, and achievements.

- Encourage students to leverage AI to streamline the cover letter writing process. Word of caution: students should NOT have AI write the cover letter for them; rather, they should use it to brainstorm ideas. Employers can pick up on AI-generated cover letters.

3. Interview Preparation

- AI chatbots can be used to simulate interview scenarios and provide sample interview questions based on the job description.
- Use AI chatbots to refine interview responses.

4. Networking

- Leverage AI tools to identify potential employers and/or contacts within the legal industry.
- Utilize AI chatbots to help candidates brainstorm sample questions to ask at a networking event or informational interviews.
- Use AI-powered networking platforms to discover relevant industry events, conferences, and webinars.
- Implement AI-driven email tracking tools to enhance follow-up communication with professionals.

The key to successfully using AI to enhance a student's job search is specificity. Users should plug in as much information as possible about the application being generated to avoid overly generic or fabricated information. For example, when using generative AI to prepare for an interview, the user can input the job description, employer name, interviewer name, and interviewer bio, as well as the full text of the candidate's resume (without any personally identifying information), to generate recommendations tailored to the specific opportunity presented.

Please also keep in mind that individual academic institutions and employers may have specific policies with respect to the use of AI in preparing application materials. Applicants should review relevant policies before submitting AI-generated or AI-enhanced content.

Integrating AI into the job search strategy is not just about embracing the latest trends; it is about positioning oneself as a forward-thinking and adaptable legal professional. By incorporating AI tools at various stages of the job search, students can stand out in a competitive market and demonstrate their readiness to navigate the evolving landscape of the legal profession.

However a student uses AI in their job search, it is important to remember that this is just one tool in a student's arsenal, and the individual is ultimately responsible for any content that is created in their name. Students should carefully proofread AI generated materials for tone, style, and substance and work with their career advisors to develop a comprehensive job search strategy that leverages but does not rely on AI. While AI is an efficient tool, it does not replace the human element. Students will always benefit from the expert human resources available to them in the form of their career services professionals.

Sample Terms for Generative AI Chatbots:

1. Resume Review

- Help me improve my resume entries. Here is my resume. [paste resume text, don't include name or contact information] I am applying for an XX job. Can you suggest alternative bullet points to highlight my skills?

- Help me tailor my resume. I am applying to [enter job title and description] with [company name]. Here is my resume [paste resume text, don't include name or contact information]. Can you suggest five relevant skills/keywords that I should highlight in my resume?

- Here is my experience [describe work], create three to five bullets to describe my work at [employer].

- Using my resume below [paste resume text, don't include name or contact information], incorporate more action verbs.

- To help you identify if your resume is getting the right message across: Here is my resume [paste resume text, don't include name or contact information].

    - What are my strongest skills?
    - What are my accomplishments?

2. Interview Preparation

- Help me prepare for an interview. I have an interview for XX job with XX [name of interviewer] at [XX employer] in [city].

- Here is the job description [paste description]. Here is the interviewer's bio [paste law firm bio text or LinkedIn information].

- Here is my resume [paste resume text, don't include name or contact information].

- Can you suggest some specific areas that I can raise in my interview that are relevant to this position?

- Can you suggest questions that [interviewer] might ask based on my resume and the job description?

- What behavioral interview questions could the interviewer ask during my interview?

- What are some weaknesses in my resume for [this] position?

- What are my greatest assets for a position [with this firm/in this practice area], based on my resume?