

FASKEN

Application Tips

The following information may assist you in compiling your student application package for law firm positions.

viLaw Portal

- Many firms accept applications exclusively through the viLaw Portal. The information you enter when creating your viLaw profile is used throughout the system. Ensure it is current and free from typos (including errors in capitalization).

Name

- When introducing yourself during the application process (and at the beginning of any meeting or interview) be sure to use the name you prefer to go by.
- If you are commonly referred to by a name other than your given name, please be sure to include the name you would like firms to call you in your application.

Address

- Always include a permanent address in addition to your school address (if different).
- Ensure your address is complete including apartment number (if applicable) and postal code.
- If your contact information changes during the recruitment process, be sure to advise firms as early as possible.

Telephone

- If you provide more than one phone number, indicate which number you can be reached at for interview booking, and during recruitment week.
- This is a good time to check your voicemail greeting and update it if necessary. You will also want to ensure that your account has capacity to accept new messages (i.e., that it is not full).

Email

- Provide the email address you use most frequently. This is important as many firms use email as a primary method of communication.

Cover Letter Contents

- If you have an interest area, identify it. This may assist the firm in arranging an interview with a lawyer from an area in which you are interested.
- Indicate which law school you are attending, and what year you are in.
- You do not need to repeat details included in your résumé, but it can be helpful to provide a short overview of your background and experience.
- Try to include something about you that stands out. However, try to avoid being overly cute, funny, etc. or using gimmicks in your application.
- Your cover letter should reflect your connection to the city or province to which you are applying, if any.

Cover Letter Details

- Attention to detail is a key skill for lawyers, so it is one you will want to exhibit in your cover letter. Proofread, proofread, proofread.
- Do not rely on the computer to do your proofreading and spellcheck. A spelling or grammatical error in your cover letter will inevitably negatively affect the reviewer's impression of your application.
- Firms frequently receive letters containing merge errors where the address refers to one firm, and the body of the letter refers to another. Please watch out for this.
- Confirm the firm contact information in your letter is current and refers to the contact person in the correct city. Is the person you are writing to still responsible for recruitment? Have you spelled the name of the firm and the name of that person correctly? Check the firm's website for the latest information.

Résumé

- Extra-curricular experience is important, and particularly for students who have relatively little work experience. Volunteer work, school activities and organization memberships indicate a well-rounded individual and may also demonstrate a student's leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Include an interests section that tells interviewers something about you. List language skills, if applicable.
- Keep your résumé to around two pages, if possible.
- Explain gaps in the chronological order of your experience history.
- You do not need to include lengthy descriptions of summer employment (such as part-time employment in the service industry) which is not directly related to the practice of law, but still include these roles.
- Do not exaggerate your experience.

Grades

- Provide copies of your pre-law grades and any law school grades available to date, including law school transcripts.
- You may wish to include a brief explanation of a particularly poor mark or semester, although this may be a discussion best left to the interview stage. Hopefully, those mark(s) will show as an anomaly, and most individuals reviewing your application can relate to one poor mark.

Submitting an Application

- Submit your application as early as possible. Although the Law Society establishes deadlines for submitting applications, do not wait until this date. Firms appreciate students submitting their applications before the deadline.
- By submitting early, you allow firms to review your application earlier and to acknowledge receipt in a timely fashion. This gives you the security of knowing your application has been received. Submitting earlier also gives the firms more time to review your application.

Final Words

- We hope you have found these suggestions helpful. We at Fasken wish you all the very best in the application process

