

Resume Writing Tips for Paralegals

- Create a professional email address to use on your resume and with all business contacts. Email addresses such as lovebug22@yahoo.com or janiesmommy02@gmail.com do not create a professional image.
- If you are not proficient at a skill, do not include it on your resume. Including the statement “adequate typing skills” does not inspire confidence.
- Highlight the duties and responsibilities at your current or prior jobs that relate to the job you are applying for. It is not necessary to include things such as duties including going to the post office and answering the phone. Include things that relate to the job itself such as:
 - Litigation:
 - E-filing (state/federal)
 - Trial binders and exhibit management
 - Deposition summaries
 - Calendaring and deadlines
 - Corporate/Transactional:
 - Entity formation
 - Contract drafting/redlining
 - Regulatory compliance
 - Board meeting prep
 - Probate/Family/Real Estate:
 - Court filings
 - Client communication
 - Document prep
 - Research and case coordination
- Do not just include duties but include key achievements also. Achievements show value; duties just describe tasks. For example, instead of “Drafted pleadings,” say “drafted complaints, motions, affidavits, and discovery requests with minimal supervision.”
- Use simple clear fonts for your text. *Fancy text is hard to read.*
- Be consistent with fonts and spacing.
- Keep it to 1-2 pages.
- Do not use overly decorative designs.
- Always use spell check, grammar check, and ensure correct punctuation. Avoid exclamation points.
- Add a section for core competencies (see NALA’s list of Core Competencies as an aid). If you are a new paralegal or do not have a lot of legal experience, highlight any of these core competencies you may have possessed in previous jobs.
- Ask a colleague or another professional to review your resume.
- If you put an objective on your resume, be specific and avoid generalized clichés. Think of this as your “elevator pitch.” Keep it under 5 sentences.
- Include all professional development programs you have participated in during your work career, such as obtaining your certification through NALA. Highlight any certifications clearly, such as Advanced Certified Paralegal or Certified Paralegal.

- Accomplishments in your work career are important. For example, if you receive an award for leadership, include that accomplishment on your resume.
- Use action words like prepared, managed and developed.
- Include any software you are proficient in such as Clio, Lexis, Westlaw, MS Office, etc. Especially include any eDiscovery software or legal calendaring systems.
- Use strong, measurable bullet points instead of wordy sentences and paragraphs. Make it easily skimmable.
- If you are a new paralegal and/or do not have much experience, include specific examples of your work (even if it is work you did as a paralegal student) such as drafted pleadings, motions, interrogatories, or requests for production; memorandums; researched case law; and/or summarized depositions and medical records. (Remember to always redact any identifying or confidential information.)