

Tips for Paralegal Resume

Common Key Skills and Action Verbs for Paralegal Resumes

Ensure your resume gets past the initial screening by applicant tracking systems (ATS) and hiring managers by focusing on target words. Most positions have common key skills and action verbs that are important to the role. This applies to a paralegal position too. The employer wants to see that you have these necessary, fundamental skills before considering you for an interview. For a paralegal position, make sure to include the following essential skills and action verbs throughout your resume and cover letter:

Key Skills & Proficiencies	Action Verbs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client interviews• Communication skills• Confidentiality minded• Detail-oriented• Document drafting• Legal software• Microsoft Word• Organization• Team player• Technology proficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft• Execute• Implement• Liaise• Multitask• Prepare• Research• Respond• Screen• Transcribe• Write

Tips for Writing a Better Paralegal Resume

Highlight your relevant experience for the role

Most lawyers don't have the time for extensive onboarding, so they prefer a paralegal who's experienced and knowledgeable in their field. A paralegal may be taught legislation, but the most valuable learning comes from job experience. If you have extensive work experience already, make sure to highlight the skills you've learned with specific examples.

Example #1:

- **Good** relevant description: My eight years of experience working in family law firms has allowed me to become an expert in this field. To date, I have assisted in over 500 divorce cases and 200 inheritance cases.
- **Bad** relevant description: I have worked in two law firms that specialize in family law, so I am quite knowledgeable in this particular area of law.

Example #2:

- **Good** relevant description: I have conducted over 2,000 client interviews in my eight years of work experience. As a result, I have a clear process for interviewing and understand which probing questions to ask.
- **Bad** relevant description: I enjoy conducting client interviews.

Highlight your education that relates to the position

A paralegal isn't required to have a four-year bachelor's degree; you can become a paralegal with a two-year associate degree. However, many companies and law firms prefer a paralegal with a bachelor's degree or additional education beyond an associate degree. Additionally, it's entirely optional to complete a paralegal certification program. If you have either of these, it's essential to highlight them so you can stand out from other candidates.

Example #1:

- **Good** relevant description: I earned my Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies from Smalltown College in 2015, which provided me with the foundational knowledge I need to succeed.
- **Bad** relevant description: Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies, Smalltown College 2015.

Example #2:

- **Good** relevant description: I greatly value education, and after completing my four-year degree, I completed a paralegal certification program.
- **Bad** relevant description: I have my paralegal certification.

How to align your resume with the job description

When reviewing a stack of resumes for a position, the hiring manager needs to quickly narrow it down to a handful of final candidates. This is true for the competitive paralegal field. Logistically speaking, a hiring manager doesn't have time to interview and consider every candidate thoroughly. As a result, a few potential candidates need to be identified. Managers do this by screening for keywords, looking for a resume that matches their crafted job description. Make sure to identify keywords from the job posting and include them in your resume.

Example Paralegal Job Description

Anthony & Clark Law Firm is looking for an **experienced** paralegal who understands family law. This position requires an **independent** starter who feels comfortable conducting thorough client interviews, **analyzing** cases, and preparing filings. We are looking for a **team player** who is **detail-oriented**.

Responsibilities:

- Conduct client interviews without prep from attorneys
- Assist with preparing and filing pleadings
- Take notes during confidential client meetings
- Review and respond to discovery requests
- Summarize court transcripts
- Complete research for upcoming cases

Qualifications

- Minimum two-years work experience
- Minimum associate degree
- Experience in family law

According to the job description, the ideal candidate should have the following skills and qualifications: work experience, independence, client interviews, team player, detail-oriented, associate degree, research skills, confidentiality.

Paralegal Work Experience Example

Paralegal

ABC Family Law Firm, 2016–2020

- **Independently** handled the prep, execution, and reporting on all **confidential client interviews** for the firm
- Conducted **detail-oriented research** with the **team** of paralegals to prep attorneys for upcoming cases
- **Preparation of pleadings**
- Thorough **summarization of court transcripts**

Now that you've identified the necessary skills and qualifications, it's time to make sure you include your matching skills and experience in your resume.

Source: Meade, Jacob. "Paralegal Resume Examples in 2023." Resume Builder, 2023, resumebuilder.com/paralegal-resume-examples