

Tips for success in your job application

07 AUGUST 2017

Jaya Louvre

HEAD OF TALENT ACQUISITION AND DIVERSITY | UK

CATEGORY:

[ARTICLE](#)



Tips and advice

Jaya Louvre leads the recruitment team for London and Asia, and shares her tips for success here. Good luck with your application!

Attention to detail

First, there is no excuse for poor spelling or grammar. Attention to detail is such a key skill for a lawyer, so carefully checking your application before submitting it is absolutely essential.

Answer the question

We carefully design our questions to find out more about candidates' skill levels, but it's surprising how many people do not read the question, and therefore we don't get the information we need to assess the candidate.

Use simple language

We are looking for prospective lawyers who can communicate complex ideas simply and easily. We are real advocates of plain English. Therefore overly complicated legal jargon on your application form will not impress us – in the same way that it doesn't impress our clients!

Be yourself

I'm often asked what candidates should write to make their application form stand out. My response is never to write what you think we want to hear; simply be yourself.

Don't copy from our website!

You'd be surprised at the number of people who copy lines from our website, brochure or a legal directory to include in the 'Why Withers?' section. Why tell me what I already know about the firm I work for, when I'm much more interested to learn something I don't already know about you? Whilst it's key to know that candidates have done their research on the firm, the trick is to make sure that you are aligning your career aspirations and way of working with the opportunities available and the culture of the firm. I want to be thinking that this candidate sounds like they could succeed here as I read the form.

Be specific

Try to be specific rather than generic when talking about yourself. For example, if reading really is an interest, be specific about what you enjoy reading. This gives us a fuller picture of you and shows us that it's a genuine and real interest, rather than just a line to fill space on your form.

Be passionate about what you do

Candidates sometimes think that being the captain of the rugby or netball team is the only interest that recruiters like. I want to put you straight on this point; the actual interest is not particularly important. What I am looking for in this section is that you are interesting, have had exposure to a team and have also had sustained interests over a period of time. These skills can be as wide-ranging as collecting stamps or being involved in a community group or playing rugby.

Think about what you write

Many times I have seen candidates state that they want to be lawyers because they want to help people. Without further explanation, this does not differentiate your career choice as a lawyer from that of a nurse for example. So, think about the clarity of what you are saying. I often see the same response from a number of candidates. It might be worthwhile stepping back and thinking about whether your response is likely to set you out from the crowd sufficiently.

Don't leave it too late to apply

Whilst we would not fill our places before the closing date, it may be useful to know that we do start to review applications and schedule interviews before the deadline.

Authors

Jaya Louvre

HEAD OF TALENT ACQUISITION AND DIVERSITY | LONDON

Human resources

 +44 20 7597 6244

 jaya.louvre@withersworldwide.com