



© Greg Gurnea, Seibert & Higgins, 1974.
Watercolour, 75 cm X 75 cm



“Plan For Your Legal Career: Don’t Stress About It”

André B. Bacchus
Assistant Director of Professional Development
Heenan Blaikie LLP

February 13, 2008

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Introduction



- **Various Career Options**
- **Candidate Traits That Employers Seek**
- **Careers In Public Interest**
- **Resources**
- **How To Prepare Your Application Package**
 - **Preparing Your Resume & Cover Letter**
 - **References**
- **The Interview Process**
- **Your Career Development Strategy**
 - **Hidden Opportunities**

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Various Career Options



Private Practice

(Business / Criminal / Real Estate / Immigration etc.)

Government

(Clerkships / Municipal, Provincial or Federal Roles)

Social Justice

(Legal Aid / Human Rights / International Orgs. etc.)

Alternative

(Non-Practising - business / journalism / academia etc.)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Private Practice



Private Practice – “Full Service Firm”

(Representing Commercial Clients in a Variety of Areas of Law)

Business Law

(Securities, M&A, Project Financing, Comm. Real Estate...)

Litigation

(Contractual Disputes, Competition, Securities Enforcement...)

Labour & Employment Law

(Public & Private Employers Across Various Industries)

Tax Law

(Advising Domestic & International Clients)

Intellectual Property Law

(Advising on Patent & Trademark Issues for Various Sectors)

Entertainment Law

(Film, Television & Media Clients – contracts to copyright etc.)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Private Practice



Private Practice – “Generally Speaking”

(Representing Individual Clients or Businesses)

Real Estate

(Advising on Residential Transactions, Urban Planning...)

Civil Litigation

(Representing Individual Parties or Businesses)

Labour & Employment Law

(Representing Individual Employees, Unions...)

Criminal Law

(Representing Individual Parties or Businesses)

Immigration

(Advising Individual Parties or Commercial Clients)

Family Law

(Assisting With Divorces, Custody Matters, Wills & Estates...)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Government



Government

(Municipal, Provincial, Federal, Crown Agencies etc.)

Municipal Government

(Councils, Committees, City Gov. Departments & Agencies...)

Provincial Government

(Ministries, Crown Corps., Agencies...)

Federal Government

(Federal Departments, Crown Corps. Agencies...)

Crown Agencies

(Gov't Funded Orgs., Committees, Task Forces...)

Institutions

(Consulates, Hospitals, Educational Institutions...)

Foreign Consulates / Embassies

(At home or abroad...)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Social Justice



Social Justice

(Not-for-Profits, Gov't Funded Groups, International Orgs.)

Not-for-Profits

(United Way, Cancer Society, CANFAR...)

Government Funded Groups

(Legal Aid Clinics, Community Agencies...)

International Organizations

(UN, WTO, Criminal Court, Amnesty...)

Personal Internships – Ian Scott

(Internship you create with a public interest organization...)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Alternative



Alternative

(TA / RA, Corps., Lobby Groups, New Agencies, Travel, Relax...)

Teaching / Research Assistant Roles

(Refine research skills, learn about areas of the law...)

Corporations

(In-house legal teams, marketing, research, client service...)

Lobby Groups

(Conducting research, drafting material...)

News Agencies

(Writing articles, conducting research, marketing...)

Travel

(Experience the world, take an adventure)

Relax

(Enjoy the break, pursue a hobby, volunteer...)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Candidate Traits



- **Initiative**
 - Do you take it upon yourself to come up with creative solutions / ideas or do you go that “extra mile”?
- **Motivation**
 - Do you follow through on your commitments?
- **Ownership**
 - Do you take responsibility for your choices?
- **Interpersonal Skills**
 - Do you communicate clearly and work well as part of a team?

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Public Interest Careers



Private Practice

(Business / Criminal / Real Estate / Immigration etc.)

Government

(Clerkships / Municipal, Provincial or Federal Roles)

Social Justice

(Legal Aid / Human Rights / International Orgs. etc.)

Alternative

(Non-Practising - business / journalism / academia etc.)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Public Interest Roles



- **Types of Candidates**
 - Initiative / Committed / Strong Skills
- **Public Interest Opportunities**
 - **Myth's**
 - ♦ Lack: \$\$\$'s; Prestige; Personal Satisfaction etc.
 - ♦ Jobs have "set" hours & are "easy-going"
 - **Getting Started**
 - ♦ Know: Yourself / Your Interests / The Market
 - ♦ Hiring occurs throughout the year & differently
 - ♦ It may take a few steps to get there

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Resources



- **Career Services Office - Website**
 - Job Postings
 - Resources and Links
- **Government Websites**
 - http://www.toronto.ca/employment/summer_employment.htm
 - <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/summejbe.html>
 - http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/centres/empl_e.htm
- **Not-for-Profits**
 - PSLawnet: www.pslawnet.org
 - Charity Village: <http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/main.asp>
- **Create Your Own Opportunity**
 - Networking (talk to friends, past employers, faculty etc.)

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Application Package



- **Cover Letter**
 - 1 page in length
- **Resume**
 - 2 pages in length max.
- **Transcripts**
 - All Post Secondary Transcripts
- **References**
 - Professional
 - Academic

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Cover Letter



- **Format**
 - Use the same heading style as your resume
 - Tone should be professional
 - Highly organized & succinct
 - Use 11 point or 12 point font
 - Leave sufficient space
 - Spell-check and proofread (several times)
 - Print on regular white bond paper
 - Cover letter should be no more than 1 page

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Cover Letter - (continued)



- **Content**

- Contact information (name, e-mail etc.)
- Salutation & Re: Line
- Paragraph 1 discuss:
 - Who you are
 - Why that particular firm / organization (interest)
- Paragraph 2 & 3 discuss:
 - The skills you have acquired & how you acquired them (school / work / other)
- Paragraph 4:
 - Conclude & Thank

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Cover Letter - (continued)



- **Content** - (continued)

- Remember to personalize the letter by discussing what attracted you to the firm / organization and why your experiences would benefit you there
- Avoid drawing conclusions about yourself without demonstrating how you acquired the particular trait
- Remember to demonstrate what makes you unique (ie. specific skills / experiences you have had)
- Demonstrate good judgement
- Be meticulous & deliberate with your words

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Cover Letter - Sample



FIRSTNAME M. LASTNAME
SUITE ADDRESS • TOWNSHIP, ONTARIO M5S 1S2 • (416) 555-1212
firstname.lastname@heenanblaikie.com

August 23, 2005

Mr. Jennifer McMahon
Director, Professional Development
Heenan Blaikie LLP
200 King Street, Suite 2000
South Tower, Royal Bank Plaza
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K6

Dear Mr. McMahon,

Re: Summer Position 2006

As a second year student at Osgoode Hall Law School please accept my application for a summer 2006 position with Heenan Blaikie LLP. My interest in Heenan Blaikie stems not only from my desire to gain exposure to a broad range of areas in the corporate practice, but also from the fact that the firm offers students the opportunity to gain exposure to constitutional law, patent litigation and labour law. In addition, my conversations with several Osgoode students, who have commented at the firm regarding the high quality professional service the firm offers while providing an informal and collegial work environment has solidified my desire to join the summer program at Heenan Blaikie.

My undergraduate research in molecular biology and genetics has trained me to be both organized and decisive, and has also provided me with the ability to approach problems with creativity and flexibility. It has also taught me to think analytically and critically, as well as to write and present in a clear and concise manner. In addition, my experience as a legal research assistant has further refined my writing skills, and has allowed me to develop the legal research skills essential for a successful practice.

Further, through my experience providing product knowledge and research assistance, together with my volunteer work with physically and intellectually challenged youth, I have gained the skills essential to providing excellent customer service. Specifically, I have developed the ability to work proactively within varied work environments and communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural and educational backgrounds.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application. I look forward to meeting with the team from Heenan Blaikie LLP this fall.

Sincerely,
FIRSTNAME M. LASTNAME
LL.B. Candidate 2007

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Resume



- **Format**
 - Professional
 - Clean Layout (not cramped)
 - Use 11 point or 12 point font
 - Utilize bullets for job descriptions
 - Use italics/bolding for headings & titles
 - Print on regular white bond paper
 - Resume should be no more than 2 pages

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Resume - (continued)



• Content

- Create Logical Sections
 - ♦ Education
 - ♦ Employment / Volunteer Experience
 - ♦ Skills & Interests etc.
- Place items in reverse chronology
- Describe your duties accurately & honestly
- Describe your skills and interests accurately
 - ♦ languages, memberships / activities etc.
- Resume should reinforce statements made in the cover letter

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Resume - Sample



www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

References



- Firms generally do not ask for references when hiring students during summer process, however, some may (always remember to check hiring criteria)
- Have a list of 2 or 3 references with you in the event you are asked
 - Employment Related - (Supervisor)
 - Academic - (Professor - who knows you)
- Name, Organization, Title, Telephone Number (or provide a letter if you have one)
- Confirm your referees agreement to continue to act as a reference particularly if you have not spoken to them recently

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Interview Process



- Generally, conversational in nature
- Be prepared to discuss “anything”
 - Review your application package
 - Review the job description (if one exists)
 - Review the firm’s material / news releases
 - Be aware of what’s happening in the news
- Dress in business attire
- Show up at least 5 minutes early
 - Be familiar with how to get there / park etc.
- Use professional language
- Have insightful questions to ask

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Interview Process - (cont'd)



- **Government / Smaller Organizations**
 - Interviews tend to be more substantive in nature
 - Questions about the area of the law they practice
 - Hypothetical scenarios
 - They are trying to gauge your “genuine” interest
- **Be prepared to discuss “anything”**
 - Review your application package
 - Review the job description (if one exists)
 - Review the organization’s material / news releases
 - Be aware of what’s happening in the news
- **Dress in business attire**
- **Show up at least 5 minutes early**
- **Use professional language**
- **Have insightful questions to ask**

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Planning For Your Career



- **Take Advantage of Your Career Services Office**
 - Application Review / Coaching / Mock Interviews
- **Stay Informed**
 - Review advice provided by your schools / associations
 - Review any hiring guidelines / procedures (ie. LSUC)
- **Build Relevant Skills**
 - Course / Academic Work / Extra Curricular Activities
 - Get Involved in Clubs & Associations
 - Volunteer - Pro Bono Options / Other Opportunities
- **Be Aware of Your Strengths & Weaknesses**

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Hidden Opportunities



- Some Firms / Organizations may not advertise for a number of reasons, including cost or administrative concerns
- Uncover hidden opportunities
 - Networking (peers / attending events)
 - Conducting Outreach (info. meetings / telephone calls)
 - CLE events (attendee / volunteer)
 - Joining Trade Associations
 - Getting involved in Pro Bono activities
 - Talk to past employers
 - Create your own position
 - The list goes on.....

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

My Career



- **Private Practice**
 - **Associate - Securities Law In New York**
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
- **Non-Practicing Roles**
 - **Recruiting Manager**
Robert Half Legal
 - **Director, Career Services Office**
Osgoode Hall Law School
 - **Assistant Director of Professional Development**
Heenan Blaikie LLP

Peer - A friend mentioned it to me in a casual conversation at school

Outreach - I approached RHL about finding me another opportunity for my return to Canada

Peer - A colleague mentioned it to me in a casual lunch conversation

Networking At A Trade Association - I mentioned to colleagues at a meeting that my term at Osgoode was coming to an end, they spoke to others and...here I am

Always be **open & aware** of options as they present themselves

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie

Questions



www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie



Greg Cumble, Soltesz & Nagels, 1974
Watercolour, 75 cm X 75 cm



***“Plan For Your Legal Career:
Don’t Stress About It”***

André B. Bacchus
Assistant Director of Professional Development
Heenan Blaikie LLP

February 13, 2008

www.heenanblaikie.com



Heenan Blaikie