

**Tuesday, February 14, 2023 ♥** (class 6 of 30!!)

**Today:**

- *Finishing* paralegal roles & skills!
- *Starting* career opportunities: Where paralegals work!
- Resume & cover letter assignment!

**Now:** Get a resume, read it, and write on it: (1) at least 1 compliment (what you like) & (2) 1 suggestion (what could be better).

**For next class** (Th. Feb. 16):

- Study for **QUIZ #1!!** Everything so far (chs. 1 & 2) at start of class.
- Email 1st draft resume as attached Word document (NOT a link) by 8am!
- Post "Law in Culture" source on OL by end of day!
- Reply to a classmate's "Who I Am" post!

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**Paralegal roles and skills *include . . .***

- interviewing clients and witnesses
- conducting legal research
- conducting factual research/investigation
- calendar and track important deadlines
- prepare initial drafts of documents (attorney reviews & signs final)
- file documents with courts
- communicate with courts, clients and opponents about logistics and procedures (not legal advice or strategy)
- serve documents on parties, witnesses, etc. (or oversee service)
- organize/maintain client files, documents, evidence, etc.
- attend legal proceedings: take notes, prepare summaries
- assist attorneys in preparing for trial and other legal proceedings (depositions, hearings, etc.)

**Where paralegals work!!** *Options include:*

- private law firms (large, small, "solo")
- legal aid offices (e.g., Legal Aid Society, NYLAG)
- nonprofit advocacy organizations (e.g., ACLU, NAACP, PETA)
- government (e.g., District Attorney's office)
- corporations ("in-house")
- freelance ("contract," "temp")

**Paralegals may *NOT*:**

- give legal advice to clients
- represent clients in most judicial proceedings
- file documents with a court if the attorney has not reviewed and signed them
- sign her/his own name to any documents filed in a court
- sign her/his own name to any document without indicating that she/he is a paralegal
- set legal fees

**. . . Only licensed attorneys may do these things!!**

**True or False?** An individual must hold a paralegal license to work as a paralegal.

**FALSE!!** There is no "paralegal license"!!

There is . . . **Paralegal certification:** recognition by a private, voluntary paralegal organization (not the government) that an individual satisfies that organization's competency standards.

**Two major national paralegal organizations certify paralegals:**

- National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA, [nala.org](http://nala.org))
- National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA, [paralegals.org](http://paralegals.org))

**Certification is:**

- *NOT* required to work as a paralegal – helpful, but optional!
- *NOT* just "earning a paralegal certificate"—it has **2** main requirements!
  - (1) paralegal education (college degree, certificate program, etc.) **PLUS**
  - (2) pass the organization's written exam. *You need both!!*

**True or False?** If you graduate from City Tech's Law & Paralegal Studies Program with a BS degree, you can truthfully state on your resume that you are a certified paralegal.

**FALSE!!** You also need to pass NALA's or NFPA's exam.

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**Resume & cover letter assignment!**

**Résumé** = clear and concise summary of your background, to submit to potential employers in application for a position (and other purposes).

**Generally include:**

- contact info
- education
- employment history

**Plus** other relevant experience & skills – *vary by person & job*

**Cover letter** = letter to potential employer submitting your resume to apply for a position, and highlighting your most relevant qualifications.