

Writing samples – Big picture

- Employers frequently use writing samples to eliminate candidates that they initially thought were qualified.
- Employers read writing samples quickly and make snap decisions.
- Do not send a sample unless asked.

Writing samples - Purpose

- Employers use samples to get a reliable measure of your abilities as a legal writer.
- Use the discussion section of a legal memo or the argument section of a brief.
- When selecting a sample from several choices:
 - ◆ Choose a brief before a memo before anything else
 - ◆ Less facts is better than more facts
 - ◆ A simple issue is better than a complex issue
 - ◆ A clear resolution in your client's favor is best

Writing samples – Keys to success

- **Employers look for well-articulated facts, distinctly drawn issues, and thorough analysis to support a conclusion.**
- **Your sample should require only one reading.**
- **Your sample must be free of typos, grammatical errors, and citation errors.**

Writing samples - Format

- **Limit the sample to five pages.**
- **Double space for readability.**
- **Make your product look impeccable, especially the first page.**
- **Add a cover sheet that identifies you and summarizes the facts.**

Writing samples – Special Concerns

- Describe outside editing or review in the cover sheet.
- Edit group work to make it your own.
- Ask permission to use client work product.