

LAWMENTO

Free Resource Series

Internship Rejection Email What to Do Next — Step by Step

Turning a rejection into your next opportunity — with grace, strategy, and a plan.

8 Steps | 6 Email Templates | 30-Day Action Plan | CV Audit | Mindset Reset

© LawMento | All Rights Reserved

First: A Rejection Is Not a Verdict

You applied. You put yourself out there. You got a rejection. That stings — and it is okay to let it sting for a moment. But only a moment.

In the legal profession, rejection is not the exception — it is the landscape. The most accomplished lawyers you will ever meet have a file of rejections sitting somewhere. The difference between them and those who gave up is not talent. It is what they did the morning after.

WHAT THIS GUIDE DOES

This resource gives you a complete, step-by-step plan for what to do immediately after receiving an internship rejection — from the email you send back within 24 hours to the 30-day recovery and reapplication plan.

Every step is actionable. Follow them in order.

The 8-Step Plan — What to Do After a Rejection

01 Give Yourself 24 Hours — Then Move

WHY THIS MATTERS

The legal profession is small. How you handle rejection is visible. A composed, gracious response to a rejection has — more than once — directly led to an offer when a spot opened up. Your professionalism is always on display.

02 Send a Gracious Reply Within 48 Hours

Template A — Standard Gracious Reply

Subject: Re: Internship Application — [Your Name]

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name],

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my application and for the consideration extended to me. I fully understand, and I appreciate the courteous response.

I have great respect for the work at [Firm/Chamber Name] and hope to have the opportunity to be considered again in the future when a vacancy arises. In the meantime, if you would be willing to share any brief feedback on my application — even a sentence or two — I would be genuinely grateful for the guidance.

Thank you again for your time. I hope our paths cross in the future.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

Template B — If You Had a Prior Conversation or Call

Subject: Re: Internship Application — [Your Name]

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name],

Thank you for letting me know. I genuinely enjoyed our conversation on [date/occasion] and I understand completely.

The work at [Firm/Chamber Name] in [mention specific area — e.g., constitutional litigation / corporate advisory] remains something I deeply admire, and I hope to have another opportunity to be considered in the future.

If it would not be too much to ask, any feedback on what I might strengthen in my application would be invaluable. I am committed to improving and would put any advice to good use.

Thank you again. I look forward to crossing paths.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

WHY ASKING FOR FEEDBACK WORKS

Most people never ask. When you do — politely, without entitlement — it signals maturity and a growth orientation. Even if they do not respond, you have demonstrated something they will remember. When they do respond, the feedback is often more valuable than the internship itself.

03 Conduct an Honest Self-Audit of Your Application

What to Audit	Honest Questions to Ask Yourself
The email itself	Was it customised to this specific firm/chamber? Did I mention a specific case, practice area, or lawyer? Was it too long? Did I check for typos?
The subject line	Was it specific and professional? Did it include my name, law school, and year? Or was it generic like 'Internship Application'?
Timing	When did I send it? Was it a Friday evening, Monday morning, or during a major legal event? Could better timing improve open rates?
My CV	Is it clean, one page (ideally), and free of errors? Does it highlight relevant skills and experiences? Is it a PDF named professionally?
The targets I chose	Did I apply to places where first-year students are realistically considered? Or did I only target top-tier firms that expect senior students?
Customisation depth	Did I show I had researched the firm? Did I reference something specific — a case, an article by the lawyer, a practice they are known for?
Follow-up	Did I follow up once after 7–10 days if there was no response? Many rejections are really non-responses that needed a nudge.
My profile	Is my CGPA, moot experience, or other background genuinely competitive for the target I chose? If not, which targets better match my current profile?

THE MOST COMMON REASON FOR REJECTION

The single most common reason law students' internship applications are rejected — or ignored — is that the email was clearly generic. A four-line email with no mention of the specific firm, no indication the student has any idea what the firm does, and a CV attached with no further explanation is deleted in seconds.

Personalisation is not a bonus. It is the baseline.

04 Categorise Why You Were Rejected

Rejection Type	Signal	Action
No vacancies / timing	They liked you but had no slot	Ask to be kept on file. Re-apply next cycle. Keep the relationship warm with a follow-up in 3 months.

Rejection Type	Signal	Action
Profile mismatch	Your year, specialisation, or CV did not match what they needed	Widen your target list. Apply to places that match your current year and experience level.
Generic application	No personalisation — they could tell it was a mass email	Rebuild your email from scratch. Never send the same email to two places.
Competitive pool	Many strong applicants — you were good but others were stronger	Strengthen your profile. Publications, moot experience, and specific skill development matter here.
No response (silent rejection)	The email may not have been read at all	Send one polite follow-up after 7–10 days. If no response after that, move on.
CV / writing sample issue	Your supporting documents had gaps or errors	Get your CV reviewed by a senior. Proofread everything twice before applying.

05**Rebuild and Strengthen Your Application Materials****CV Audit Checklist**

- One page for years 1–3; max two pages for final year students
- PDF format, named: FirstName_LastName_CV.pdf
- No photographs, no date of birth, no 'Objective' section
- Education section first: law school, year, CGPA — only include CGPA if 7.0/10 or above
- Internships listed with firm/chamber name, city, duration, and 1-line description of work done
- Moots listed with competition name, round reached, and role (Speaker/Researcher)
- Publications listed with journal name and title — hyperlink if available
- Skills: legal research tools (SCC Online, Manupatra), languages, relevant software
- No spelling errors, no inconsistent formatting, no unexplained gaps

Email Rebuild Checklist

- Research the specific firm/chamber before writing — know at least 2 things about them
- Address a specific person by name — not 'To Whom It May Concern'
- Mention one specific thing about their work: a case, a practice area, a recent matter
- State your availability clearly: 'I am available to intern from [Date] to [Date]'
- Keep the email to 3–4 short paragraphs — lawyers are busy people
- Proofread. Then proofread again. Then ask someone else to read it.

06**Expand and Diversify Your Target List**

Target Tier	Examples (First/Second Year)	Strategy
Stretch (20% of applications)	Top-tier firms, senior advocates, National Law School clinical programmes	Send these early, customise deeply, and do not count on them. A yes is a bonus.
Realistic (50% of applications)	Mid-size litigation/corporate firms, High Court advocates with 10–15 years experience, reputed NGOs	These should form the core of your effort. Research each one specifically.
Accessible (30% of applications)	District Court advocates, local law firms, legal aid clinics, DLSA, community legal services	High acceptance rate. Excellent for real learning. Do not skip these because they seem 'small'.

THE DISTRICT COURT IS NOT A CONSOLATION PRIZE

Many students dismiss district court and lower court internships as not impressive enough. This is a serious mistake.

District courts are where the overwhelming majority of Indian law is practised. Advocates who handle district courts often give interns far more responsibility than senior SC chambers — you will draft plaints, attend hearings, and handle files from day one.

The experience gap between a district court intern and a top-firm intern who filed papers and made tea is often in the district court intern's favour.

07 Use Referrals and Warm Introductions for the Next Round

How to Ask for a Referral — Correctly

- Identify 3–5 professors, alumni, or seniors who have connections at your target organisations
- Approach them with a specific ask: 'I am hoping to intern at [X] this summer. Do you happen to know anyone there who might be open to a brief introduction?'
- Never ask someone to 'do something' for you — ask for an introduction, and then follow through yourself
- Always provide your CV and a draft email when asking — make it easy for the person to help you
- Thank them regardless of outcome, and update them on what happened

Template C — Asking a Professor or Senior for a Referral

Subject: Seeking Guidance — Internship at [Firm/Chamber Name]

Dear [Professor/Sir/Ma'am/Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I am [Your Name], a [Year] student at [Law School]. I am currently exploring internship opportunities for [Month/Season] and have been particularly interested in [Firm/Chamber Name] given their work in [specific area].

I understand you may have a connection there, and I was hoping — if it is not too much to ask — whether you might be willing to make a brief introduction on my behalf. I have attached my CV and a draft outreach email for your reference, so you can see what I would send.

I am happy to proceed entirely on my own if a direct introduction is not possible — I would genuinely value any guidance you might offer on approaching them.

Thank you for your time. I deeply appreciate any support you can offer.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

08

Reapply — With a Stronger Application and a Longer Memory

Template D — Re-Applying to the Same Firm (Next Semester / Cycle)

Subject: Internship Application — [Your Name] | [New Period] | [Law School], [Year]

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name],

I had applied to intern with [Firm/Chamber Name] earlier this year and received your kind response explaining that there were no vacancies at the time. I understood completely, and I have continued to follow your firm's work with great interest.

I am writing again to enquire whether there might be an opening for an internship during [new period — e.g., May–June 2025]. Since my last application, I have [mention 1–2 specific things you have done — e.g., 'completed an internship at [X]', 'participated in [Moot Court]', 'published an article on [Topic]'], and I believe I am now better prepared to contribute meaningfully to your team.

I have attached my updated CV for your reference. I would be grateful for any opportunity, even a short one, and remain fully flexible regarding dates and timings.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

WHY THIS TEMPLATE WORKS

It acknowledges the previous interaction (showing you remember and are serious), demonstrates growth since the last application (making the re-application feel new rather than repetitive), and makes a concrete, time-limited ask. This is the structure of a re-application that gets read.

If They Give You Feedback — How to Respond

Receiving feedback on a rejected application is rare and valuable. When it happens, most students either do not respond or send a perfunctory 'thanks'. Here is how to use it properly.

Template E — Responding to Feedback After a Rejection

Subject: Re: Internship Application — [Your Name] | Thank You for the Feedback

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name],

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to share your feedback — it is genuinely appreciated and not something I take for granted.

Your observation regarding [specific feedback point — e.g., 'the need to develop more targeted legal research experience' / 'the importance of a stronger writing sample'] is something I intend to act on directly. I have already [or: I plan to] [describe your action — e.g., 'enrolled in a legal research course' / 'begun work on an article for my college journal'].

I hope to have the opportunity to apply again in a future cycle with a stronger profile. Thank you again — this kind of guidance makes a real difference.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

THE RULE ON FEEDBACK

Always respond to feedback within 48 hours. Always acknowledge the specific point raised — not just a generic 'thank you for your feedback'. And if you have already acted on it, say so. This level of professionalism is noticed — and remembered.

What If the Rejection Was a Non-Response?

Many 'rejections' are actually non-responses — the email was never read, was buried, or the person was too busy to reply. These require a different approach.

Template F — First Polite Follow-Up After Silence (7–10 Days)

Subject: Follow-Up: Internship Application — [Your Name] | [Original Date]

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to follow up on my internship application sent on [Date]. I appreciate how demanding your schedule must be and do not wish to intrude — I simply wanted to ensure my application had been received.

I remain very keen on the opportunity to intern with [Firm/Chamber Name] and would be happy to provide any additional information if that would be helpful.

Thank you for your time.

Warm regards,

[Your Full Name]

[Law School] | [Year & Programme]

[Mobile] | [Email]

FOLLOW-UP RULE

Follow up once, 7–10 days after the original email. If there is still no response after a second follow-up 5–7 days later, accept the silence and move on. Do not send a third follow-up. A graceful exit preserves the relationship for a future attempt.

30-Day Post-Rejection Action Plan

This plan gives you a concrete day-by-day structure for turning a rejection into a stronger next application. Follow it and you will end the month with more options, a better profile, and renewed momentum.

Timeline	Action	Outcome
Day 1	Give yourself space. Do not reply, do not spiral. Process the rejection without acting on it.	<i>Emotional reset — approach next steps from a clear head.</i>
Day 2	Send your gracious reply email (Template A or B). Ask politely for feedback.	<i>Door left open, professionalism demonstrated.</i>
Days 3–5	Conduct your application self-audit using the reflection table in Step 3. Be brutally honest.	<i>Identified 2–3 specific weaknesses to address before re-applying.</i>
Days 5–7	Rebuild your CV. Get it reviewed by a senior, professor, or the college placement cell. Fix every error.	<i>Updated, stronger CV ready for next round.</i>
Days 7–10	Research and build a new diversified target list of 15–20 organisations across all three tiers.	<i>A wider, more realistic set of targets replaces a narrow wishlist.</i>
Days 10–14	Draft 3 fully customised application emails — one per type of target. No copy-paste. Each one references something specific about that firm/chamber.	<i>Three personalised, ready-to-send applications.</i>
Days 14–17	Reach out to 2–3 professors or seniors for referrals or warm introductions (Template C). Be specific in your ask.	<i>Warm outreach activated — potential referral pipeline established.</i>
Days 17–21	Send your first wave of applications. Track every application in a spreadsheet: organisation, date sent, contact, response, follow-up date.	<i>First wave of improved applications deployed and tracked.</i>
Days 21–25	Follow up on applications sent in the first wave (if no response after 7–10 days). Use Template F.	<i>Follow-ups sent, pipeline refreshed.</i>
Days 25–28	Begin profile-building work: submit an article to your college journal, register for a legal research course, or sign up for an intra-college moot.	<i>Active profile improvement underway — something new for the next CV.</i>
Day 30	Review the month. Count applications sent, responses received, lessons learned. Plan the next 30 days.	<i>Clear picture of what is working. Momentum restored.</i>

Mindset Reset — What Rejection Actually Teaches You

Before you close this guide and move on, read this section. Not because it is motivational filler — but because the mental model with which you approach rejection will determine whether you extract value from it or simply survive it.

What Most Students Think After Rejection	What Successful Lawyers Learn Instead
This firm does not want me.	This application did not land. Those are different things.


What Most Students Think After Rejection	What Successful Lawyers Learn Instead
I am not good enough.	My current profile did not match this target. Build the profile.
Everyone else is getting accepted.	You are seeing their acceptances, not their rejections. Both exist.
There is no point applying again.	One rejected application is data. Ten applications with no changes is a problem.
The system is unfair.	Some of it is. Navigate it anyway — the alternatives are worse.
I should have applied to easier places.	Broaden the target list. Stretch targets stay stretch targets — they are not the whole strategy.

Every lawyer you admire has a longer list of rejections than you know about. They are not successful despite the rejections — they are successful in part because of how they responded to them.


Reject the rejection's power to define you. Use it to sharpen you.

Continue Your Legal Journey with LawMento


Scan any QR code below to explore courses, free resources and our community




Explore Our Courses
Practical expert-led legal courses designed for students and professionals.




Explore Our Bundles
Curated course bundles—more learning, better value for your career.




Explore Masterclasses
Deep-dive sessions by industry experts on high-demand legal topics.




Explore E-books
In-depth e-books on career paths, law practice areas and more.




Free Resources
Templates, guides and PDFs — completely free for our community.




Free Checklists
Ready-to-use legal checklists covering key practice areas.



Career Guide
Step-by-step career roadmaps for law students and young lawyers.



Follow on Instagram
Daily legal updates, tips, and career content — follow @lawmento.official



Connect on LinkedIn
Legal insights and professional updates — follow LawMento.



Join WhatsApp Community
Get daily legal insights for FREE.

[LawMento.com](https://www.lawmento.com) | Practical Legal Education for Students & Professionals