

Resumes & Cover Letters

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Resume

Before writing a resume, it's vital you know what you are interested in doing. There is nothing worse than going to an interview without having passion for the position.

What is it?

It is a selling tool that outlines your skills, qualifications and experiences so a potential employer can see how you will fit into their organization.

The resume needs to “sell” you and your accomplishments quickly. An employer may spend only 20 seconds on your resume.

Why write it?

To help move your resume from the “reject” pile to the “keep” pile. If you plan, prepare and educate yourself on the position for which you are applying, it will show.

What makes an effective resume?

Knowing your audience, in other words, knowing what the employer is looking for in the position. The more you know about the duties and skills required, the more you can tailor your resume around these needs.

Over the next few hours we will cover the various formats of resumes, sections needed and other tips in making your resume a success!

Formats

Functional

Summarizes professional “functions” or experience and avoids minimizing employment history because it focuses on what you have done rather than when and where. Reasons to use this format:

- Older worker – minimizes dates
- Career changer – minimizes number of jobs
- Recent graduate – minimizes lack of experience
- Returning employee – minimizes absence from workforce

Chronological

Traditional style resume lists professional experience chronologically, starting with the most recent and working backwards. Reasons to use this format:

- Professional experience in field of interest
- Recent college graduate
- Demonstrates measurable results
- Held impressive job titles
- Worked for big name employers

Sections

Each section should contain relevant information about you. Remember, you are “selling” your ability, skills and qualifications. Be clear and concise. Don’t get too fancy with the layout of your resume, it’s not important.

- Use 10-12 point font for all sections EXCEPT your name in the Contact Information, make that 14-16 point.
- Use a standard font: Helvetica, Times or Palatino.
- Use spacing, margins and emphasize points with uppercase, bold, italics and underlining.
- Choose a natural tone, white or off-white paper is the best.
- One page is strongly preferred.

Contact Information

This section is critical and always placed at top. Keep in mind, the goal is to quickly and effectively communicate your name and contact information. Some tips for this section:

- Include your addresses (both current and permanent)
- Include phone, cell and email address that is checked regularly

Objectives

Keep this section short and to the point. The objective gives an employer a general idea about what you are looking for in a position. Always state the type of position and anything specific about that position.

Qualifications Summary

This is your opportunity to highlight any special skills you bring to the position. Remember, this is at the top of the resume so make it short and to the point.

Education

If your education experience is more important than work experience, make this first, otherwise, switch it with your work experience. Remember; always put the school and year graduated for each entry and put the information in reverse chronological order.

Work Experience

When an employer is looking at your resume, keep in mind that they are seeing your past performance, which is the best indicator of future performance. Keep this in mind when writing this section. Tips for writing this section:

- Use the present tense for current work and past tense for all other work.
- Bold or capitalize either the organization or job title.
- Accomplishment statements should demonstrate your skills and the end-results.
- Quantify your results with numbers or percentages whenever possible.

Community Involvements/Activities

When showing activities of community involvement, this demonstrates a well-rounded person with more dimensions than just work. It's also a great conversation starter. Some tips when writing this section:

- List all activities in a consistent format.
- It might be beneficial to put these into chronological order as well.
- Do not assume that the reader will know the acronym for an organization, spell it.

Sample Resumes

Chronological Resumes

Christopher Bond
8001 Piedmont Avenue
Atlanta, GA 12345
123-555-1234
cbond@printmehappy.biz

This resume shows work experience before schooling. Remember, these two sections can be switched depending on the position and your skills.

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as a catalog production coordinator.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Seven years as a print production professional, working in corporate and independent settings. Degree in journalism with additional training at daily news publication. Noted for accelerating production through strong managerial skills.

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Thomas Govington (independent artist), Atlanta, GA *2000 -Present*
Brochure Production Specialist

- Design and coordination of production for a four-color brochure that portrays the artist's talent in three media: paint on canvas, ceramics, and bronze.

Johnson Paper, Incorporated, Atlanta, GA *1994 - 2000*
Catalog Production Coordinator

- Managed full production of a 400-page catalog distributed to more than 4000 retailers and 80 distributors.
- Coordinated deadlines among six departments from creative to shipping in less than two months per run.
- Supervised 35 artists and technicians
- Handled relations with more than 15 vendors.
- Represented the Production Department at management meetings.
- Instructed local college interns in print production techniques and systems.

Emory University Press, Atlanta, GA *1991 - 1993*
Print Production Intern

- Gained hands-on experience in every aspect of print production, working under the press's most senior printer.
- Frequently assisted in technically demanding assignments for major clients.

EDUCATION AND AFFILIATIONS

B.A., Journalism, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, *1985*
Studied abroad Junior year in Madrid for work-study program at prominent newspaper.

American Printers Association
International Paper and Print Production Institute

Amy Smith
123 Main Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
Home: (555) 555-1234
Cell: (555) 555-1235
asmith@myfavoritesite.com

Again, work experience before schooling, since the work experience is more important.

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a challenging, full-time position as a senior machine operator utilizing my experience in Quality Control procedures and supervisory skills.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Over 10 years of experience as a machinist with supervisory skills and responsibility for teams of up to twelve machinists. Fully conversant with Quality Control procedures working in both the private, public and local government sectors.

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

JLG Industries, Chambersburg, PA *1998 - Present*
Lead Machinist
Supervising a team of twelve machinists in installation, demolition, and restructuring of building materials for mobile home manufacturer.

Helman Contractors, Baltimore, MD *1994 - 1998*
General Contractor
Supervised a team of eight machinists in the construction of large industrial and factory buildings. Responsible for the quality and output of a number of sub-contractors.

Marine Industrials, Baltimore, MD *1990 - 1994*
Welder
Worked with various welding techniques including oxyacetylene and arc welding,

EDUCATION

Cumberland Valley Technology Center, Hagerstown, MD *1990*
Certificate of Completion, Welding Curriculum

Chambersburg High School, Chambersburg PA *1988*
Graduated

Functional Resumes

JOSEPHINE TELLER

325 Hillegass Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 123-4567
jteller@msn.com

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as a supermarket checker or head clerk.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

15 years experience in the grocery industry as head clerk, checker, and cashier. Excellent reputation with customers as a competent, knowledgeable and helpful professional.

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Customer Service

- Developed a reputation for **excellent customer service** by:
 - greeting customers in a friendly manner and giving full attention;
 - taking the time to answer questions or to find someone who could.
- Served as **product expert** on sophisticated items and directed customers to exotic spices and ingredients, ethnic foods and unusual gourmet items.
- **Increased sales and customer satisfaction** in the higher-profit Natural Foods Department by **advising customers** on bulk alternatives to name-brand items.

Supervision

- As Head Clerk, **managed "front end"** of the store:
 - **Prepared daily schedules** for 18 clerks, to assure maximum check stand coverage;
 - **Assigned staff** to cover peak hours and continuous stocking;
 - **Trained** new clerks.

Administration

- **Balanced checker's cash drawer** with consistently high level of accuracy.
- As **office cashier** for the store:
 - accurately balanced books and balanced deposits;
 - answered phones, prepared daily sales report and made deposits;
 - processed returned checks and prepared monthly sales report for headquarters.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

<i>Retail Clerk</i> Co-op Supermarket Berkeley, CA	<i>1984 - present</i>
<i>Buyer's Assistant</i> LILLY Department Store Oakland, CA	<i>1983 - 1984</i>
<i>Manager's Assistant</i> Wallace Clothing Store Spokane, WA	<i>1979 - 1983</i>

EDUCATION

<i>Spokane Community College</i> Business Classes	<i>1979</i>
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Excellent example of resume where individual has a gap in their employment history. The resume outlines skills before work history. Also, the layout is a bit different. Notice some text is bold to make it stand out.

Amanda Kim
3232 44th Street NE
Chicago, IL 60678
Home: (555) 555-1212
akim@simpsons.com

Notice the font size is a bit smaller on this resume to fit onto one page. Remember, don't make the font size smaller than 10 point!

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position working with adults focusing on education and counseling.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Committed, creative and versatile professional with diverse social service and education experience working with adults, specifically on counseling in health care issues.

SKILLS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Developing adult education strategies and teaching adults basic education and health knowledge
 - Team-developed multimedia instructional programs for first year college students
 - Conducted counseling, vocational planning, skills remediation, and course tutoring for diverse first and second year college students
 - Taught basic reading and study skills to adult learners in a variety of settings
- Developing novel delivery methods for health promotion messages
 - Produced a wide variety of creative and successful materials, brochures, surveys, packaging, and public service announcements using print, audio, and video
 - Designed and implemented a successful hospital-based smoking cessation program emphasizing health education and group support
 - Designed and implemented an innovative and successful AIDS outreach program targeting a diverse populations at high risk of HIV-transmission through sexual contact or IV drug use
- Building communities through service
 - Presently researching and writing a history of the gay male community in Minneapolis
 - Served on the Board of Directors and Pastoral staff of religious
 - Produced effective fundraising newsletters and appeals which resulted in steady growth of donations and interest in international health
- Performing at expert level in a variety of computer software and office operations
 - High level of competencies in Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, Access).
 - Wrote a call-tracking program with HyperTalk which analyzed the ratio of Anglo-Saxon and Latinate words in a text, as an aid to improving readability.
 - Wrote a text analysis program with HyperTalk for a telephone hotline which eliminated paper record keeping and paper tabulation.

EXPERIENCE

Principal Secretary	Carlson School of Management	2000-present
Office Coordinator	Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs	1998-2000
Office Coordinator	Minnesota Int'l Health Volunteers	1994-1998
AIDS Health Educator	Minnesota AIDS Project	1987-1993
Quit Smoking Instructor	St. Joseph Hospital	1982-1986
Office Coordinator	University of Minnesota Dance Dept.	1983-1985
Secretary	University of Minnesota Eng. Dept.	1981-1982
Religious Volunteer Work	Community Churches	1971-1982
V.I.S.T.A.	Boston State Mental Hospital	1968-1970

EDUCATION

<i>University of Minnesota</i>	<i>1981</i>
Master of Science, Educational Psychology	
 <i>Winona State University</i>	 <i>1968</i>
Bachelor of Science, English and Social Science	

Other Resume Tips

- If you have only worked at one job for 20 or 30 years, list separately each different position you held at the organization so job progression is obvious.
- Customize the resume to fit the position. Don't send the same resume to everyone. Make it fit the position.
- If you're worried about age discrimination, don't list all your positions in the work history section.
- If you don't have any work experience, consider finding a volunteer position to get some experience.
- Focus on accomplishments and not past job duties. Also, focus on skills you enjoy using, not skills you had to use.
- Proof, PROOF and **PROOF** for spelling and grammar errors. Nothing is more annoying to a resume reader than misspelled words!

Cover Letters

This is a necessary business letter which should accompany every resume, whether you mail, email or fax your resume.

What is a cover letter?

To introduce your resume, express your personality and enthusiasm for the position and provide support for your candidacy that is not covered in the resume. Writing a cover letter is time consuming and challenging, since each is customized to the position.

What makes a good cover letter?

- Use the same font type, font size, margin, style and paper as the resume.
- Be brief and concise. Nothing more than one page is needed for a cover letter.
- Expand on your resume rather than repeating the résumé's contents.
- Always sign the cover letter.
- Address the cover letter to the person who does the hiring, not to "whom it may concern". This may take some research, but it's worth it!
- Always place contact information on the top of the cover letter, same as the resume contact information.

Sample Cover Letters

Kimberly Lee
444 Beach Street, #7
West Lakeland Park, AZ 12345
123-555-1234
klee@bamboo.com

May 13, 2004

Mr. Frank Randall, Partner
Randall, Jerneys and Calpert Inc.
101 Stratford Drive
Tempe, AZ 12345

Dear Mr. Randall,

There's a reason why:

- Friends hand me the dinner bill to divvy up
- My checkbook always balances at the end of each month
- My three kids are never late for events
- Community groups look to me to organize events

I'm a "detail person" — the kind of person you need as your administrative assistant.

For the last five years, I've handled all the scheduling, finances, and logistics for my family of five. It's time for me to get back into the corporate work force and put my organizational talents to use there.

I'll contact you in the next few days to see if you or one of your associates needs an assistant.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Lee

Enclosure: resume

Eric Stadler
123 Tucker Road
Paterson, WI 12345
123-555-1234

March 27, 2001

Mr. Robert Morris
Morris Construction
123 Harbor Road
Paterson, WI 12345

Dear Mr. Morris,

John Lovell advised me of a foreman position that's available at your company. From my enclosed resume, you will find that my experience meets the requirements you've outlined for the position.

As the former manager of a small business, I appreciate the importance of a following that comes from the recommendations of satisfied clients. I am considered a diplomatic manager, which enables me to get along well with clients, supervisors, and crew. My ability to maintain high morale among workers increases retention and contributes to safety, a crucial factor in the success of construction work.

On Monday, I'll call you to see when we can meet for an interview.

Sincerely,

Eric Stadler

Enclosure: resume

Andrew Perroni
123 Stardust Way
Boise, ID 12345
123-555-1212
aperroni@bamboo.com

August 12, 2004

Mr. Ted Mitchell
President
Inline Skates Deluxe
123 23rd St.
Boise, ID 12345

Dear Mr. Mitchell,

As an avid skater on both blades and wheels, I can't imagine a better job then sharing my enthusiasm with your customers. When I saw your ad in the *Boise News* for a junior sales associate, I immediately put together the attached resume to send you. Please consider me for the position.

I am available for interviews any day during spring break next week. I'll give you a call to see when you can meet with me.

Sincerely,

Andrew Perroni

Enclosure: resume

Word Templates

Microsoft offers many templates to help with the process of creating your resume or cover letter. The layout and sample text is also available.

By visiting <http://office.microsoft.com/templates/> and scrolling to the section called “Your Career”, you will find many templates for both resumes and cover letters. These templates can be downloaded directly to your computer and into Word so that you may edit and use the layout for yourself.

On-Line Resources

Web Site Address	Description
http://www.mel.org	Michigan eLibrary offering a variety of on-line resources as well as magazines, newspapers and more for Michigan residents for FREE .
http://jobstar.org/	Project from California with tons of free resources available. Great place to get ideas for writing your resume and/or cover letter.
http://www.hopeworksmich.org/	Division of Hope Network to link people with jobs. Mission to expand the access of faith and community based organizations to Michigan Works! system. Great free resources.
http://resume.monster.com/	Monster.com’s resume center offering lots of sample resumes, cover letters and much more for various positions.