

Unit Three - Shakers and Movers

Resume Writing & Cover Letters - Lecture Notes

Resumes

- A brief representation of your credentials, experience, and education.
- Allows the prospective employer to learn about your qualifications in the shortest time possible.
- Convince the employer that you have the necessary qualifications for the job and that you should be interviewed.
- Your resume should reflect your own words, personal touch, and unique personality.
- It creates the employer's first impression of you.
- The resume is designed to get you an interview, not the job! It cannot and should not be a substitute for the job interview.
- Always keep your resume up to date!
- Keep your resume concise.
- Your resume is NOT an autobiography.
- Put the best things first.
- Proofread, proofread, and have someone else proofread!
- Research shows that your resume will only receive 15-60 seconds of reading the first time it is seen by any person.
- A resume must:
 - Keep the reader's interest.
 - Contain action verbs, not state-of-being verbs.
 - Be exciting.
 - Contain phrases, not sentences.
 - Be consistent in content and indentation.
 - Be given to each of your references so they have accurate, up-to-date information about you.

Resume Sections

- Personal Information

In no particular order – best first . . .

- Education
- Work Experience
- References
- Objective Statement (optional)

- Others

Personal Information Section

- Your complete contact information:
 - Name
 - Mailing address
 - Phone number(s)
 - Email address
- Be sure to check your email and phone messages regularly.
- You don't have to explain your age, gender, race, marital status, family size, or handicap to anyone - - it's the law!

Objective Statement

- Optional
- One or two short sentences to tell the kind of work you are seeking.
- Don't be afraid to use "entry-level" position if you are new to the work force.

Education Section

- Show that you are capable of learning.
- Start with your most recent school/program and work back.
- Include graduation date for each education experience as well as the degree or certificate awarded.
- Include related course work (example: Health Science courses, AP courses, etc).
- Ok to include GPA, if good.
- Honors and Awards.
- Extracurricular activities, if appropriate.

Work Experience Section

- If you have never worked a day in your life, skip this section.
- If you do have some work experience – full-time, part-time, casual, civic, volunteer, or charitable – put it on your resume.
- Begin with the most recent employer.
- In one line, give the dates you worked the job, your job title, name of the company, and the company's city/state address.
- Bullet the dates for each work experience.
- List your regular job duties and responsibilities.
 - Use action verbs (see handout).

References Section

- Find people you know well and who are willing to be a positive reference for you.
- Obtain permission from each person before listing them.
- Do not use relatives, personal friends, or other students.
- Do use – former teachers/professors, work supervisors, professional colleagues, contacts from volunteer work.
- Include contact information – name, title, phone #, and/or email address.

Other Sections

- Skills/Training
 - Do not highlight skills that you no longer want to use.
- Awards and achievements
- Leadership experience
- Include volunteer experiences if they relate to the type of position you are seeking.

Resume “DO’s”

- Emphasize your assets.
- Be truthful – don’t exaggerate.
- Keep it brief – not too wordy.
- Use action verbs.
- Make it clear.
- Write and re-write.
- Have it critiqued by others.
- Keep old resumes for reference.

Most Common Resume Mistakes

- Too long or too short
 - One page is preferred but two pages are ok if warranted.
 - It should be long enough to tell the main points
- Disorganized
- Poorly typed or reproduced
 - Appearance is important!
- Poor description of experience
 - List your duties.
- Irrelevant personal information
- Incomplete references
- Misdirected
- Spelling and/or grammar errors
- Not uniform – bullets, capitals, italics, boldface, underlines, etc.

Resumes

- There is not one single right way to write a resume!
- Make it attractive to the eye
 - Avoid difficult-to-read fonts.
 - Keep 1” margins on all four sides of the page.
 - Double space between sections. Single space within sections.
 - Bold, underline, or CAPITALIZE section headings to make them stand out.
 - Don't crowd the information – leave enough white space on the page so that the resume is easily read.
 - Use bullet points.
- Your resume is a tool with one specific purpose: to win an interview.
- A resume is an advertisement, nothing more, nothing less.
- It is so pleasing to the eye that the reader is enticed to pick it up and read it. It "whets the appetite," stimulates interest in meeting you and learning more about you. It inspires the prospective employer to pick up the phone and ask you to come in for an interview.

Cover Letters

- A cover letter gives you another chance to emphasize what you have to contribute to the company or organization.
- Grab the prospective employer right away with the first line of the letter.
- Keep the ball in your court – let the employer know that you will initiate some type of action to get an interview.

Cover Letter Guidelines

- No spelling or grammatical errors – not even one!
- Whenever possible, address your letter to a specific person.
- Write it in your own words.
- Show that you know something about the company and the industry.
- Use terms and phrases that are meaningful to the employer.
- Make it quick and easy to read.

Sample Cover Letter

Your Name
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip
Contact Phone #
Email

Today's Date

Addressee's Name
Professional Title
Organization Name
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Mr. (or Ms.) Last Name,

Start your letter with a grabber – a statement that establishes a connection with the reader, a probing question, or a quotable quote. Briefly say what job you are applying for.

The mid-section of your letter should be one or two short paragraphs that make relevant points about your qualifications. You should not summarize your resume! You may incorporate a bullet-point format here.

Your last paragraph should initiate action by explaining what you will do next (ie, call the employer) or should instigate the reader to contact you to set up an interview. Close by saying "Thank you".

Sincerely,

Your hand-written signature

Your name (typed)

Enclosure: resume

Sample Cover Letter

Director of Human Resources:

Dear Director,

A teaching position at your school has long been a career objective of mine. Now that I've earned my Utah Childcare Credential, I am eager to apply for a position on your childcare team.

After reading my enclosed resume, please consider me for any appropriate position in your system. My desire to work with children is strong and I believe that once I join your staff, we will together discover my niche.

I will call you on Friday to learn what positions are open for the fall. Thank you!

Sample Cover Letter

Dear Mr. Morris,

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

As the former manger of a small business, I appreciate the important 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,

Resume Writing Assignment

- Develop a personal resume.
- Include all required sections.
- No grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors.
- Use an appropriate and attractive format.

- Develop a cover letter for a job you might be interested in.