Resume and Cover Letter Writing

This handout will cover the process of preparing a resume and a cover letter for a specific job listing. Effective resumes and cover letters meet the expectations of potential employers by relating relevant skills and experiences to the specific job listing, marketing you as the best candidate for that job.

Brainstorming

Before you write a resume, it is important to understand what the employer wants out of the applicants. The best resumes address the specific duties and expectations that are listed in the job post. In order to brainstorm what to include in your resume, consider the following:

- Read the job listing carefully.
 - What kinds of descriptive adjectives and/or skills does the listing specify?
 - What will your job responsibilities include?
- Do your own research.
 - Did you visit the company/organization/employer's website?
 - What kinds of goals/missions does the company have at large?
 - What kinds of personal traits or experiences does the employer appear to desire?

After you have a sense of what the employer desires of its applicants, think about your own <u>experiences</u>, <u>skills</u>, and <u>achievements</u>. All of these are considered valid experiences:

- Any type of paid and unpaid work
- Internships
- Volunteering
- Relevant courses and/or projects done for a course
- Study abroad
- Extra-curricular activities

General Parts of the Resume

(See Templates for more information)

Fundamental Components of a Resume:

	What does it include?	Quick Tips/Reminders
Identifying Information	 Name Address Phone Number Professional Email 	• Use a <i>professional</i> email that you check regularly.
Education	 Major(s) and minor(s) Degrees earned Schools attended Dates of attendance Study abroad 	 List your education in reverse chronological order. Include your GPA and honors if it reflects achievement. Including relevant coursework is optional.

Work History & Other Relevant Experience	 Course projects Volunteer activities Internships Extra-curricular activities Paid or unpaid jobs 	 List your experiences in reverse chronological order. Emphasize skills and achievements through action statements. (Refer to "Action Word Bank" for guidance.) Quantify substantial achievements when possible. <i>Example</i>: percentage increase in sales or membership
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Optional Components of a Resume:

Print,

	What does it include?	Quick Tips/Reminders
Objective	A short sentence that expresses your desire to work for the employer and what skills/experiences you can offer. <i>Example:</i> "To use my experiences as a software technician for a Tech Support position at Big Company."	 Use 3rd person and begin with an infinitive verb. <u>Do not include</u> if you are prospecting for <i>potential</i> jobs as it will restrict your opportunities within the company. <u>Include</u> if you are switching careers and your experiences do not directly match the job listing.
Skills	 Computer Programs: Microsoft Office (eg. Excel), Photoshop, QuickBooks, etc. Programming Skills: Java, C++, HTML, etc. Languages and fluency level 	 Skills included should be <i>relevant</i> to the job listing. Do not regurgitate skills already mentioned in another part of the resume.
Honors & Awards	 Scholastic awards (eg. Dean's List) Honors Society membership Fellowships, etc. 	• This section can be merged with the "Education" section, but emphasis should be placed on experience.
Volunteer & Activities	 Campus organizations Volunteer activities Community projects 	 Needs to be <i>relevant</i> to job position Can be included under "Work Experience" if there is substantial involvement (eg. leadership positions).
Research & Publications	 Conferences Panels Scholarly articles (eg. Thesis) 	• Often more useful for research and academic positions

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Action Word Bank

Action statements need strong, illustrative verbs to *show* your duties and skills. They show what actions you took and any results obtained from that action (if possible). Here is a list of potential verbs to use when creating action statements:

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	Functional Resume	Chronological Resume	Hybrid Resume
Purpose	• Resume is based on your skills and abilities.	Resume is based on work history.	• Resume is based on skills, but you also include where you gained them.
Usefulness	 Detracts attention from job gaps. Less emphasis on job experience (or a lack of it) 	• Works best if your job experience relates directly to the job post.	• Used to showcase both skills and work experience at the same time.
Who should use it?	 Recent graduates Career shifters Those whose work history does not directly relate to the job listing 	 Job seekers with the relevant experience <u>Note</u>: This is the most popular and preferred format. 	• Job seekers whose prior experiences fit a theme (eg. public relations, teaching).

Types of Resumes

Tips and Common Pitfalls of Resumes

DO	DON'T
C	
Keep it 1 page maximum.	Never have one generic resume for all your jo applications.
• Keep it clear and concise.	
(A)	• Don't use complete sentences.
• Use bullet points.	
• Use a legible font (eg. Times New Roman).	 Avoid generalized and cliché phrases (eg. "responsibilities included," "go-to person," "thinking outside the box")
• Proofread for grammar and spelling errors.	tilliking outside the box)
• Use action statements.	• Don't include the phrase "References availab upon request." It is a given that you will
• Use a professional email address.	provide them when asked.
• Emphasize skills and achievements/results. Quantify when possible.	• Don't include high school experiences unless you are still a freshman.
• Tailor your resume to specific jobs.	Note: There is no set rule on how far back your job history should go. Generally, you co go as far as 10 years if you have the relevant
• Have someone look over your resume.	experience.

Basic Template of a FUNCTIONAL Resume

YOUR NAME Address City, State Zip Phone E-mail Address Objective: Relevant Skills/Experiences: Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill
City, State Zip Phone E-mail Address Objective: Relevant Skills/Experiences: Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill
Phone E-mail Address Objective: Relevant Skills/Experiences: Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill
Objective: Relevant Skills/Experiences: Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill
Relevant Skills/Experiences: Resume is organized by major headers and sub-headers. Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • This resume focuses on your skills and abilities, not your work history. • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill
Relevant Skills/Experiences: Resume is organized by major headers and sub-headers. Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • This resume focuses on your skills and abilities, not your work history. • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill
Relevant Skills/Experiences: by major headers and sub-headers. Skill 1 • Action statement that shows skill • Action statement that shows skill • This resume focuses on your skills and abilities, not your work history. • Action statement that shows skill • Output
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Skill 3 and Education are
insted in reverse
Action statement that shows skill Chronological order. While this resume
• Action statement that shows skill focuses on skills, you
• Action statement that shows skill still need to list your
work history and
Work History
Dates of employment Job Title Organization You can also include
Dates of employment Job Title Organization Dates of employment Job Title Organization
Detection of superimeters and the second sec
Dates of employment Job Title Organization your desired job.
This can be placed under education or its
Education own heading.
Degree
School, Graduation Date The Education section can also go at
the top of the resume.

Basic Template of a CHRONOLOGICAL Resume

YOUR NAME Address City, State Zip Phone E-mail Address	
Objective:	The Education sub-
Education	heading tends to be towards the top of the resume. Include
Degree	GPA and other
School, Graduation Date	awards if they show achievement.
GPA	
	Headers organize the
Work Experience	major sections of this
Organization	resume.
Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year) <	Write out the month or
 Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved. Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job. 	abbreviate it. Never use numbers to denote the month.
• Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job.	
Organization	
Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year)	
 Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved. 	
 Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job. 	The experiences
	you list under this header go in
Organization	reverse
Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year)	chronological
 Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved. Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job. 	order (your most recent job is at the top).
610	This format
Awards/Honors Award Organization Date conferred	highlights your
Award Organization Dure conjerred	work history,
Volunteer	growth, and development of
Position Organization Dates of work	skills.

YOUR NAME Address City, State Zip Phone JE-mail Address Hybrid Resumes combine the Functional Resume's focus on skills and the Chronological Resume's focus on work history (in relation to those skills). Objective: Education Degree School, Graduation Date GPA The main heading displays arelevant skill/certain work history (e.g. teaching, leadership, etc.) Skill or Experience The main heading displays a relevant skill/certain work history (e.g. teaching, leadership, etc.) Organization Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year) Under each major skill/sexperience heading, list relevant wort/professional history in reverse chronological dref (gist like a elronological resume). Organization Job Title, City Dates of employment (month and year) Under each major skill/sexperience heading, list relevant wort/professional history in reverse chronological dref (gist like a elronological resume). Skill or Experience 2 Organization Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year) Skill or Experience 2 Organization Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year) Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved. Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job. Skill or Experience 2 Organization Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year) Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved. Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job. Volunteer Position	Basic Template of a HYBRID Resume	
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	Position Organization Dates of work	

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Cover Letters

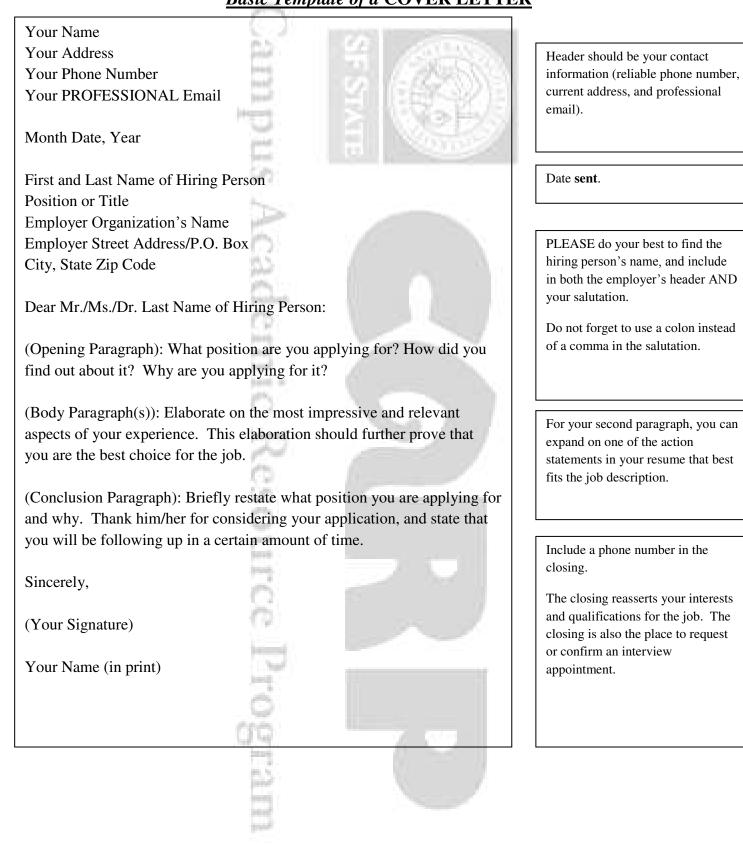
A cover letter serves as an introduction to a potential employer. It **complements** your resume by expressing your interest in the company and expanding on how your experiences make you an asset. Therefore, the cover letter is your opportunity to address relevant skills and experiences that you did not mention in your resume.

Tips and Common Pitfalls of Cover Letters			
DO	DON'T		
• Keep it to a 1 page maximum.	• Don't merely regurgitate your resume.		
• Address the hiring manager by name.	• Never have one generic cover letter for multiple job applications.		
• Focus on what you can do for the company and not what the company can do for you.	• Avoid general and overused phrases such as "go-to person," "think outside the box," etc.		
• Use action verbs.	• Don't focus on your lack of experience. Instead, link your <i>transferable</i> skills to the job.		
• Focus on skills and achievements/results.			
• Be professional, clear, and concise.			
• Keep in mind the employer's background and expectations.			
Check for spelling and grammar errors.			
• Thank the hiring manager for his/her time and consideration of your application.			
• Be proactive. Mention that you will follow up in a certain amount of time.			
00 12 12			

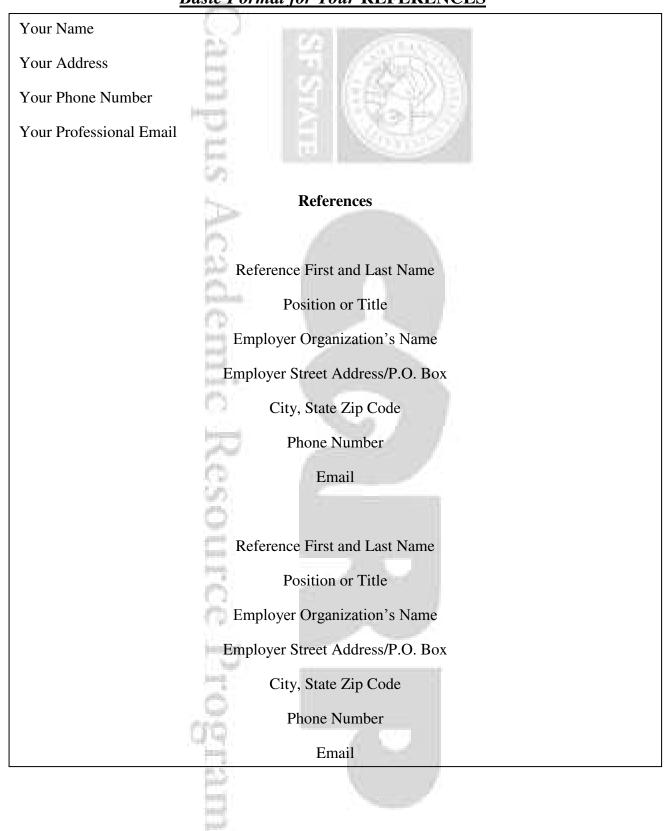
Tips and Common Pitfalls of Cover Letters

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Basic Template of a COVER LETTER



Resume and Cover Letter Writing



Basic Format for Your REFERENCES

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

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