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 experiences, skills, and achievements. 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 *professional* 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.
Example: percentage increase in sales or membership |

Optional Components of a Resume:

	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. *Example*: "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 *potential* 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 *relevant* 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 *relevant* 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

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:

Abstracted	Complied	Established	Instituted	Participated	Scheduled
Achieved	Composed	Estimated	Integrated	Perceived	Schemed
Acquired	Computed	Evaluated	Interpreted	Perfected	Screened
Acted	Conceived	Examined	Interviewed	Performed	Set Goals
Adapted	Conducted	Exceeded	Introduced	Persuaded	Shaped
Addressed	Conserved	Excelled	Invented	Planned	Skilled
Advertised	Consulted	Expanded	Inventoried	Practiced	Solicited
Advised	Contributed	Expedited	Investigated	Predicted	Solved
Advocated	Contracted	Experimented	Judged	Prepared	Specialized
Aided	Converted	Explained	Kept	Presented	Spoke
Answered	Coordinated	Explored	Launched	Prioritized	Stimulated
Anticipated	Copied	Expressed	Learned	Produced	Strategized
Applied	Correlated	Extracted	Lectured	Programmed	Streamlined
Approved	Counseled	Facilitated	Led	Projected	Strengthened
Arranged	Created	Fashioned	Lifted	Promoted	Stressed
Ascertained	Critiqued	Financed	Listened	Proposed	Studied
Assembled	Cultivated	Fixed	Located	Protected	Substantiated
Assessed	Dealt	Followed	Logged	Proved	Succeeded
Assisted	Debated	Formulated	Made	Provided	Summarized
Attained	Defined	Fostered	Maintained	Publicized	Synthesized
Audited	Delivered	Founded	Managed	Published	Supervised
Augmented	Designed	Gained	Manipulated	Purchased	Supported
Authored	Detected	Gathered	Mapped	Queried	Surveyed
Bolstered	Determined	Gave	Mastered	Questioned	Sustained
Briefed	Developed	Generated	Maximized	Raised	Symbolized
Brought	Devised	Governed	Mediated	Ran	Tabulated
Budgeted	Diagnosed	Guided	Memorized	Ranked	Talked
Built	Directed	Handled	Mentored	Rationalized	Taught
Calculated	Discovered	Headed	Met	Read	Theorized
Cared	Dispatched	Helped	Minimized	Reasoned	Trained
Charged	Displayed	Identified	Modeled	Recorded	Translated
Chartered	Dissected	Illustrated	Modified	Received	Upgraded
Checked	Documented	Imagined	Monitored	Reduced	Utilized
Clarified	Drafted	Implemented	Narrated	Referred	Validated
Classified	Drove	Improved	Observed	Related	Verified
Coached	Edited	Improvised	Obtained	Relied	Visualized
Collaborated	Eliminated	Inaugurated	Offered	Reported	Won
Collected	Empathized	Increased	Operated	Researched	Wrote
Comforted	Enable	Indexed	Ordered	Responded	
Communicat-ed	Enforced	Indicated	Organized	Restored	
	Enlightened	Influenced	Originated	Revamped	
Compared	Enlisted	Initiated	Overcame	Reviewed	
Completed	Ensured	Inspected	Oversaw	Scanned	

Campus Academic Resource Program:
Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Types of Resumes
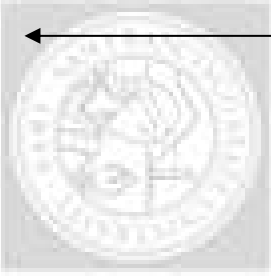
	Functional Resume	Chronological Resume	Hybrid Resume
Purpose	• Resume is based on your skills and abilities.	• Resume is based on work history.	• Resume is based on skills, but you also include where you gained them.
Usefulness	• Detracts attention from job gaps. • Less emphasis on job experience (or 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).

Tips and Common Pitfalls of Resumes

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

Basic Template of a **FUNCTIONAL** *Resume*

YOUR NAME
Address
City, State Zip
Phone | E-mail Address

Contact information with updated address and a professional email address.

Objective:

Relevant Skills/Experiences:

Resume is organized by major headers and sub-headers.

Skill 1

- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill

Skill 2

- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill

This resume focuses on your skills and abilities, not your work history.

Skill 3

- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill
- Action statement that shows skill

Both Work History and Education are listed in reverse chronological order. While this resume focuses on skills, you still need to list your work history and education.

Work History

Dates of employment	*Job Title*	**Organization**
Dates of employment	*Job Title*	**Organization**
Dates of employment	*Job Title*	**Organization**

Education
Degree
School, Graduation Date

You can also include relevant coursework if they connect to your desired job. This can be placed under education or its own heading.

The Education section can also go at the top of the resume.
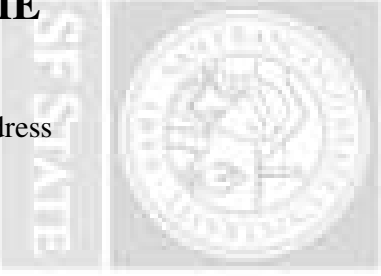
Basic Template of a CHRONOLOGICAL Resume

YOUR NAME
Address
City, State Zip
Phone | E-mail Address

Objective:

Education
Degree
School, Graduation Date
GPA

The Education sub-heading tends to be towards the top of the resume. Include GPA and other awards if they show achievement.

Work Experience

Headers organize the major sections of this resume.

Organization
Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year)

Write out the month or abbreviate it. Never use numbers to denote the month.

- Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved.
- 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.

Organization
Job Title, City, Dates of employment (month and year)

The experiences you list under this header go in reverse chronological order (your most recent job is at the top).

This format highlights your work history, growth, and development of skills.

- Action statement that describes responsibilities, skills developed, and results achieved.
- Remember that action statements need to apply to your desired job.

Awards/Honors
Award   Organization   *Date conferred*

Volunteer
Position   Organization   *Dates of work*

Basic Template of a **HYBRID** *Resume*

YOUR NAME
Address
City, State Zip
Phone | E-mail Address

Objective:

Education
Degree
School, Graduation Date
GPA

Experience

Skill or Experience 1

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.

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   Organization   *Dates of work*

Hybrid Resumes combine the Functional Resume's focus on skills and the Chronological Resume's focus on work history (in relation to those skills).

This resume shows growth and skills in specific types of work/experiences.

The main heading displays a relevant skill/certain work history (e.g. teaching, leadership, etc.)

Under each major skills/experience heading, list relevant work/professional history in reverse chronological order (just like a chronological resume).

<u>Cover Letters</u>

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. • Address the hiring manager by name. • Focus on what you can do for the company and not what the company can do for you. • Use action verbs. • 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.	• Don't merely regurgitate your resume. • Never have one generic cover letter for multiple job applications. • Avoid general and overused phrases such as "go-to person," "think outside the box," etc. • Don't focus on your lack of experience. Instead, link your *transferable* skills to the job.

Basic Template of a **COVER LETTER**

Your Name
Your Address
Your Phone Number
Your PROFESSIONAL Email

Month Date, Year

First and Last Name of Hiring Person
Position or Title
Employer Organization's Name
Employer Street Address/P.O. Box
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name of Hiring Person:

(Opening Paragraph): What position are you applying for? How did you find out about it? Why are you applying for it?

(Body Paragraph(s)): Elaborate on the most impressive and relevant aspects of your experience. This elaboration should further prove that you are the best choice for the job.

(Conclusion Paragraph): Briefly restate what position you are applying for and why. Thank him/her for considering your application, and state that you will be following up in a certain amount of time.

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)

Your Name (in print)

Header should be your contact information (reliable phone number, current address, and professional email).

Date **sent**.

PLEASE do your best to find the hiring person's name, and include in both the employer's header AND your salutation.

Do not forget to use a colon instead of a comma in the salutation.

For your second paragraph, you can expand on one of the action statements in your resume that best fits the job description.

Include a phone number in the closing.

The closing reasserts your interests and qualifications for the job. The closing is also the place to request or confirm an interview appointment.
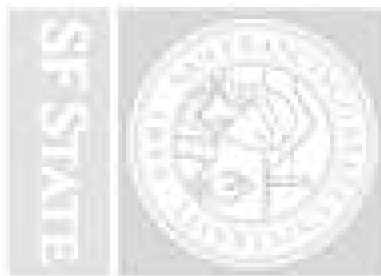
Basic Format for Your REFERENCES

Your Name

Your Address

Your Phone Number

Your Professional Email

References

Reference First and Last Name

Position or Title

Employer Organization's Name

Employer Street Address/P.O. Box

City, State Zip Code

Phone Number

Email

Reference First and Last Name

Position or Title

Employer Organization's Name

Employer Street Address/P.O. Box

City, State Zip Code

Phone Number

Email

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