
CAREER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

QUEEN ELIZABETH SECONDARY SCHOOL

RESUMES



COVER LETTERS



What is the purpose of a resume?

- ◆ To advertise your skills, abilities and interests
- ◆ To summarize your skills and qualifications in relation to the position you are applying for
- ◆ To convince an employer to interview you for a job opening
- ◆ For pre-screening large numbers of candidates.

Remember to accompany your resume with a cover letter to be more effective!

RESUME DO's AND DON'Ts



DO make your resume easy to read: On average, an employer will spend less than three minutes reviewing your resume. Keep it uncluttered with plenty of white space. Avoid wall to wall writing.

DO use **bold**/CAPS to make all section headings stand out and bullets to highlight your achievements. **DON'T** type your resume on brightly coloured paper

DO include as much contact information as possible -- any information that would enable an employer to reach you during business hours.

DON'T include on your resume your height, weight, age, date of birth, place of birth, marital status, sex, ethnicity/race, health, social insurance number, names of former supervisors, street addresses or phone numbers of former employers, picture of yourself, salary information, the title "Resume," or any information that could be perceived as controversial, such as religious or political affiliations.

DO keep your resume short. One page or two pages at most.

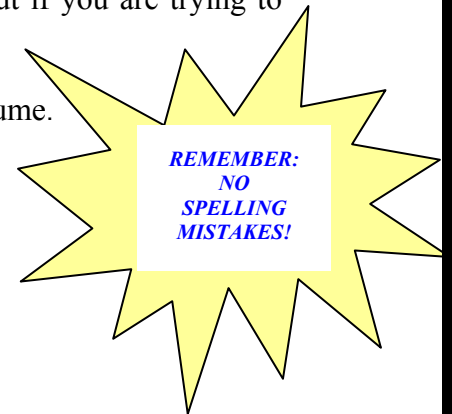
DO grab the employer's attention: Use action key words to bring your resume to life.

DON'T exaggerate. By all means, present your achievements in the best possible light, but be careful about stretching the truth. If you don't tell the truth, it will likely come back to haunt you.

DON'T discount the possibility of a functional format for your resume. This format can be strategic for students who lack experience and those with gaps in their employment. A functional resume is organized around functional skills clusters (eg: Customer Service and Sales Skills / Computer Skills / Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills). After listing three to four skills clusters and showing how you've demonstrated those skills, you provide a bare-bones work history at the bottom of your resume.

DON'T list references right on your resume. References belong in a later stage of the job search. Keep references on a separate sheet and provide them when they are specifically requested. **DO** realize that the phrase "References available upon request" is highly optional because it is a given that you will provide references upon request. The line can serve the purpose of signaling: "This is the end of my resume," but if you are trying to conserve space, leave it off.

DO proofread carefully. Misspellings and typos are deadly on a resume.



REFERENCES

- References should not be part of your resume. Rather, create a separate reference list on the same paper you used for your resume.
- Former bosses make the best references. School teachers are good too. If you're just starting out, get character or personal references from people who know your skills and attributes (eg: sports or volunteer associations, clubs and so on)
- Do not use friends or family members as references.
- Do not use someone as a reference unless you have their permission.
- Choose your references carefully – people who will say good things about you.
- When you apply for a job, make sure you inform your references that they should expect to receive a call
- Make sure you spell their names correctly and list the organizations they work for, position and current telephone number.
- Every time you change employment, make a point of asking for a letter of reference from your supervisor. Request that they be written on company letterhead paper, if possible. That way you can create a file of recommendations from people you may not be able to track down years later.
- A prospective employer should ask your permission before contacting your current employer. It is perfectly acceptable to say that you are not comfortable with your current employer being contacted at the present time. However, do have a list of alternative references available.
- When you obtain employment, send a thank you note to your references.

PUTTING YOUR RESUME TOGETHER

Gather information on the following before you start typing your resume

CAREER OBJECTIVE: The purpose of a career objective is to tell an employer what you want to do. **If you choose to use a career objective, make sure you adjust your objective for the type of job or industry you are applying to.** With today's word-processing programs, there's no reason why you can't have several versions of your resume with the *only* difference being your objective.

EDUCATION is a very important section on your resume, particularly if you have limited work experience. Employers are not only interested in your level of education, but what else you were involved in at school. All of the following qualifications could be included:

- ◆ **DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE:** Did you graduate? What is the name of your certificate or diploma?
- ◆ **VOLUNTEERING:** Did you volunteer in the library, cafeteria, or computer lab? Were you a member of the Grad Committee? Get involved with student government? Work on the yearbook?
- ◆ **WORK PLACEMENTS:** Did you complete any coop or work experience placements?
- ◆ **SPORTS/ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:** Were you on the rugby team? In the chess club? How many years? Include these and point out that this demonstrates teamwork skills, a strong work ethic and self-discipline. Add any championships or medals won. Also mention any time you played a leadership role, such as team captain or coach.
- ◆ **AWARDS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Did you receive a Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Attendance? Or for leadership? Or for volunteering at school? Did you achieve academic standing? These accomplishments can offer "proof" to an employer of your character, dependability and work ethic.
- ◆ **SPECIFIC COURSES:** Did you take any courses that are relevant to the job you're applying for? Also think about courses that may not be relevant but may provide proof of your skills, such as Peer Tutoring or Entrepreneurship. Also mention any high grades or special projects completed.
- ◆ **WORKPLACE TRAINING:** Did you earn any workplace training certificates such as SuperHost, First Aid, Food Safe, WHMIS, Workplace Safety or Conflict Resolution?
- ◆ **COMPUTER TRAINING:** Did you take any computer courses? Include specific courses you completed, software & operating systems you know and keyboard typing speed if it's a selling feature.

WORK EXPERIENCE is also an underutilized section. Many resumes just list the job title and duties under each employer. While that is ok, sometimes it's already understood what the position involves. Instead of just citing your job duties, talk about how well you did and provide proof.

- ◆ **PROMOTIONS:** Did you get promoted? From what to what? After how long? Did you beat out other staff members for the promotion?
- ◆ **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS:** Did you get a written evaluation of your work? Did you achieve high scores or receive positive comments?
- ◆ **AWARDS & RECOGNITION:** Did you earn Employee of the Month? Were you publicly or privately recognized for doing a good job? Did you receive any thank you letters from customers or clients?
- ◆ **PRODUCTIVITY:** Did you achieve or surpass specific performance goals? Did you earn any rewards, bonuses, commissions for your outstanding productivity?
- ◆ **COMPANY INVOLVEMENT:** Did you belong to the Health and Safety or Social Committee? What was your role? What did you accomplish? Did you volunteer to help the company in some way?
- ◆ **ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Did you go above and beyond in your job? How so? Did you cover for your supervisor while they were away? Did you work overtime when asked or come in to work on short notice?

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ Proficient in (names of software programs): *Employers want to know what computer programs you know how to use*
- ◆ Travelled throughout Europe and South-East Asia: *Employers in hospitality and tourism may be interested in knowing you have extensive travel experience*
- ◆ Bilingual/fluent in another language: *Employers that interact with the public or deal with customers may benefit from your skill*
- ◆ Driver's license and access to a reliable vehicle: *Even if it's not required for the job, it may convince an employer that you won't have trouble getting to work*
- ◆ Physically fit: *If the job requires physical activity this is important to mention*
- ◆ Available to work any day or shift needed, including weekends and holidays: *Availability is important to businesses like restaurants, stores and call centres*

WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- ◆ Name of company
- ◆ Your position
- ◆ Month and years of when you worked/volunteered
- ◆ What duties you performed

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

- ◆ Sports
- ◆ Clubs at school and outside of school
- ◆ Sewing, cooking, building model planes, drawing, working on cars etc.

**NEED HELP WITH YOUR
RESUME?**

*Go to the Career Centre
for help preparing a
professional
resume*

Still at a loss about how to describe yourself? Perhaps some of the following words fit...

Able to work independently	Efficient	Patient
Accurate	Energetic	People-Oriented
Adaptable	Enjoy challenges	Persuasive
Analytical	Enterprising	Polite
Articulate	Enthusiastic	Punctual
Businesslike	Friendly	Quick learner
Cheerful	Helpful	Resourceful
Collaborative	High Energy	Responsible
Competent	Honest	Sincere
Competitive	Imaginative	Self-driven / motivated
Conscientious	Industrious	Tactful
Cooperative	Innovative	Talented
Cope well with pressure	Likeable	Team player
Creative	Mature	Trustworthy
Dependable	Methodical	Versatile
Detail-Oriented	Open to new ideas	Well-organized
Diplomatic	Optimistic	

ACTION VERBS IN YOUR RESUME

What are action verbs? Action verbs are verbs that are used to emphasize your skills and experiences. It is important that you advertise yourself in a way that your resume stands out. Action verbs emphasize and highlight your skills and accomplishments.

COMMUNICATION:

Arranged
Authored
Collaborated
Communicated
Consulted
Drafted
Explained
Interpreted
Mediated
Negotiated
Persuaded
Presented
Reported
Responded
Translated

TEACHING / HELPING:

Advised
Assisted
Clarified
Coached
Contributed
Demonstrated
Evaluated
Facilitated
Guided
Instructed
Motivated
Resolved
Simplified
Trained
Volunteered

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Administered
Analyzed
Catalogued
Compiled
Determined
Developed
Estimated
Forecasted
Maintained
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Reconciled
Recorded
Scheduled

Janice Applicant

1234 Johnson Road Surrey, B.C. V3S 0K5 Tel: 604-541-0022 Cell: 778-123-4567

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE:

To gain experience in the field of _____ which will enable me to utilize and further develop my skills. My career goal is to become a _____.

EDUCATION:

Queen Elizabeth Secondary School
Currently enrolled in Grade ____, Co-op Program (etc)
Honour Roll student (if currently on Honour Roll)
P.E. Leadership / Peer Tutoring etc.

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS:

- ◆ Honest and reliable
- ◆ Enjoy working with the public
- ◆ Excellent time management and organizational skills
- ◆ Computer skills include: MS Word, Excel, Desktop Publishing
- ◆ Physically fit to do demanding work
- ◆ Congenial

CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS:

- ◆ SuperHost Certificate
- ◆ St. John Ambulance First Aid Certificate
- ◆ Driver's License
- ◆ Student Council 2009
- ◆ Most Valuable Player, Surrey Baseball Association 2008

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Apr to May 2009 Surrey RCMP
Work Experience Placement
Assisted the general public, prepared paperwork, answered the telephone and assisted with filing reports.

Feb to Mar 2008 Sport Chek
Work Experience Placement
Priced new items, shipping and receiving, re-merchandised and stocked shelves.

Jan to Nov 2007 Animals and Birds Care Home
Caretaker of rescued birds and animals
Feeding, cleaning cages and assisting the Veterinary Technician.

CARLOS CANDIDATE

9484 – 136 Street
Surrey BC V3V 5W4
604-555-1234

E-mail: ccandidate_e@telus.com

CAREER GOAL

To provide part-time, quality customer service in a retail setting while attending school. My long term goal is to pursue a post-secondary education in Accounting.

RELEVANT SKILLS

- ◆ Hardworking, strong communication skills, good listener, enjoy working with people, dependable, articulate, friendly and eager to help others.
- ◆ Tutored disabled teens (grade 10 – 12) in personal management skills such as cooking, grocery shopping and recycling.
- ◆ Assisted teens with Aboriginal crafts and art work.
- ◆ Answered phones and obtained credit information as first step to loan approval
- ◆ Filed miscellaneous papers for accurate file retrieval.
- ◆ Cared for and provided meals for young family members over a three year period.
- ◆ Detailed new and used car interiors and exterior over the summer months
- ◆ Maintained a clean and safe work area

WORK EXPERIENCE

June 2006 - Sept 2007	Car Detailer's Assistant, summer months ABC Super Cars Supervisor: Telephone:	Surrey
May 2005 - June 2005	Filing Clerk, part-time Lawrence & Company Accountants Supervisor: Telephone:	Surrey
Jan 2005 - June 2007	Peer Tutor Queen Elizabeth Secondary School Supervisor: Telephone:	Surrey

PERSONAL INTERESTS

- ◆ Skateboarding, Snowboarding, Hiking, Swimming
- ◆ Playing Guitar

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR RESUME AS E-MAIL

- If you send your resume as an attachment, don't send a content-empty e-mail. Include a note in your e-mail telling why you're writing and that your resume is attached
- Don't use popular file names such as resume2010.doc – almost everyone uses these and your resume may get overlooked
- Use your name as the file name (ie: JohnSmithResume.doc). Even better: if you can do so, save your resume as a pdf file so it can't be edited
- Name the job you are applying for in the subject line of your email
- To convert your resume to plain text and paste your resume directly into the body of an email message, see <http://www.creatingprints.com/ElectronicResume.html> or <http://www.eresumeiq.com/ABC.html> for instructions
- Get an idea of how the plain text resume will look once delivered: send the file to both yourself and a friend who uses a different email program BEFORE submitting it to an employer



TIPS FOR POSTING YOUR RESUME ON JOB SITES

Stay cyber-safe: If you decide to go this route, post your resume only in the databases of one or two large, popular job sites or smaller sites aimed at a specific industry that you want to target. Be cautious and choosy!

- **Change the contact information on your resume.** Remove your personal contact information (name, address and phone numbers). Replace your home e-mail address with an e-mail address set up specifically for your job search. Services like Yahoo! Email can be useful for this. Make sure you use an appropriate e-mail name!
- **Limit access to your personal information.** You can block access to just the contact information or keep your resume completely out of the database searched by employers. If you go for FULL confidentiality, remember to delete contact information before you cut and paste your resume into the box. The database's protection of your contact info only refers to what you put in the form, not the information you paste in the box.
- **Limit where you post your resume and read the privacy policies:** Note what personal information they will collect, how it may be handled, and whether or not they reserve the right to sell it. Some sites sell your information to third parties.
- **Modify your work history.** Remove the names of employers and replace them with *generic descriptions*. For example, Creo or Glentel become "Information Technology Company" and PricewaterhouseCoopers becomes "Accounting Firm."
- **When your job search is over, delete all resumes from job sites.**

Cover Letters

COVER LETTERS

PURPOSE

- To introduce you and entice a potential employer to closely examine your resume (it precedes your resume and mentions that your resume is attached)
- To present your skills, experience and qualifications as they relate to the specific job posting.
- To match your skills to their needs. Read the qualifications outlined in the job advertisement and tailor the cover letter to match your skills to each point of the ad
- To compliment your resume, not repeat information verbatim
- To demonstrate to the prospective employer that you have made the effort to write a letter and have addressed your letter to the appropriate person

The secret of a great cover letter is to make it specific to the job and company to which you are applying. The typical cover letter is written to be everything to everyone and ends up being important to no one.

For starters, address your letter to a specific person at the company. Call the company and ask for the name of the person doing the hiring. Make sure you get the correct spelling of his or her name! Also ask for their job title and the name of the department. Address your cover letter to that person.

Sell yourself and get their attention. Point out how you can make a difference to their company. Position your past accomplishments in terms of how you can bring the same benefits to their company. Avoid exaggeration or boasting.

Keep the cover letter brief. Make a good visual impression by using good quality stationery and matching the style of your cover letter to your resume. Stick with one font and parcel the text into manageable pieces with lots of white space.

Make sure you request an interview and follow up. You'll increase your chances of getting an interview if you call the person after submitting your resume, rather than just waiting to get a call.

FORMAT OF A COVER LETTER

FIRST PARAGRAPH:

The opening paragraph of your letter should include information about why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for. If you have the name of a mutual contact, include it. Convince the reader they should grant you an interview.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS:

The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer the employer. **Make strong connections between your abilities and their needs. Mention specifically how your skills and experience match the job you are applying for.** Remember, you are interpreting your resume, not repeating it.

CONCLUSION:

If you have attached your resume, mention it in this paragraph. Then conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position.

OPENING SAMPLE PARAGRAPHS:

Please accept this letter and enclosed resume as my application for a position with your company. I am a young and ambitious person with a long-term goal of working in the _____ industry. Currently I am looking for part-time employment while I complete high school.

I would like to express my interest in an entry-level position with your company. From my research, I have come to admire the professionalism that characterizes your firm and its employees. I am confident that your company's values and objectives would highly complement my own strengths and enthusiasm. I would like to be considered for _____, or a similar position that requires _____ and good communication skills.

I am interested in applying for the position of _____ with your company. I believe that my training and related work experience make me an ideal candidate for this position.

I was delighted to learn from _____ * that your company is in need of a _____. _____ * speaks very highly of your company and I am very interested in joining a progressive organization such as yours.

* if you name someone in your letter, you need their permission to do so AND you want to be confident that the person is well regarded by the company !

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am a recent high school graduate and am interested in entering the field of _____ .

MIDDLE SAMPLE PARAGRAPHS:

Although I have limited work experience, I am reliable, enthusiastic and work well with other people. I am quick to learn new skills, concepts and enjoy new responsibilities. I would appreciate an opportunity to demonstrate my skills in a position with your company.

My background in _____ leads me to feel confident that I would be capable of succeeding in the position of _____. My experience includes _____ .

I was impressed to learn of your company's recent acquisition of _____, an indication of your company's commitment to achieving growth and success in the future. Innovative and exciting approaches such as this have convinced me that your company is the ideal environment to begin my business career.

I have approximately one year of experience working in a team environment for _____. You will find me to be adaptable, dedicated and capable. My work patterns have shown that I work well within a team or independently and that I am reliable and have a good work ethic.

CLOSING SAMPLE PARAGRAPHS:

Please review the enclosed resume and consider my application for _____. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and explore the company environment, as well as possible job opportunities. I will call your office next week to discuss these possibilities. I look forward to exchanging ideas with you concerning a career at your company and the positive contributions I would offer as a member of your organization.

Thank you for taking the time to read my cover letter and resume. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you at a time that is convenient for you to discuss my qualifications.

You will find that I will be a valuable asset to your organization. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you regarding employment. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the success of your company.

I appreciate your consideration of my application and I look forward to discussing my qualifications and this position in more detail.



ON-LINE RESOURCES:

About.com : Job Search
The Damn Good Resume
The Riley Guide

<http://jobsearch.about.com/>
<http://www.damngood.com/>
<http://www.rileyguide.com/>

MIKE APPLICANT

1234 Beechwood Drive Surrey, B.C. V3S 0K5
Tel: 604-541-3456 Cell: 778-123-4567 mikeapplicant@email.com

September 16, 2010

Terasen Gas
14th Floor, 333 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver BC
V6B 5R3

Dear Mr. Smith:

Re: Customer Service Account Representative : Competition No. T-0790-06

Please accept my application for the position of _____ with your company. My outgoing personality and good customer service skills make me a strong candidate for the position of Customer Service Account Representative.

My qualifications include over two years of Call Centre experience including positions as a Customer Service Representative and Customer Accounting Representative. I have excellent customer service skills, a professional telephone voice and sound working knowledge of office practices and procedures. My experience includes collection of accounts and effectively handling billing inquiries. I have also worked on many different PC and MAC based information systems.

I have the maturity, skills and abilities to make me successful in the position of Customer Service Account Representative. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to explore how I might bring my effective customer service skills to your team.

Thank you for your consideration of my application. I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Mike Applicant

Encl: resume