

RESUME AND COVER
LETTER GUIDE
FOR
SKIDMORE ALUMNI

Skidmore College
Career Development Center

August 15, 2013

Dear Fellow Alumni,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this *Resume and Cover Letter Guide for Skidmore Alumni*. One of the benefits of being a Skidmore alumna or alumnus is having lifetime access to the multiple services and support of the college's Career Development Center, whether you're a recent graduate or an alum who is sorting out a "what's next for me" transition. Through the Center, you may avail yourself of individualized career coaching, relevant webinars, helpful tools and materials, and connections with other alums, as well as opportunities to give back to current students and fellow alums.

Before you get started, I'd like to share a few thoughts on approaching resumes and cover letters:

- The purpose of this guide is to help you *get started* on the process of creating a resume and related job search correspondence. This is by no means a stand-alone document: I encourage you to accompany it with a conversation or series of conversations with a Skidmore career counselor.
- The samples shared in this guide give you a stylistic flavor of options for resumes and cover letters. Please bear in mind that there is no "one-size-fits-all" resume: Different industries and functions all have their preferences and "looks" so you will need to tailor your resume and correspondence accordingly.
- Writing a resume is an evolutionary process so try to give yourself ample time to write it vs. attempting to cram it into one prolonged session. Having materials such as former resumes, performance appraisals, award documentation, transcripts, and so on, close at hand will make this a lot easier.
- "Write warm, edit cold" is an approach I have found helpful. It's important to get all of your information on paper, since the first step is to create an inventory. You can edit and tighten-up the document later. Do not edit as you go or you will risk getting stuck. Also, resist the temptation to make initial value judgments of what to include or not include at this early stage.
- As you enter your job search / career exploration process, a great entrée to a networking conversation is requesting feedback on your resume, and your contacts will happily weigh-in with opinions and advice.

Many thanks are in order to Skidmore's Career Development Center staff for their collaboration on this guide.

Please let us hear from you! We would appreciate your feedback and suggestions so the guide can be improved to ensure you are getting the support and encouragement that you need and deserve.

Sincerely,

Louise

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Top TEN Things To Do To Get Started

1. Build time into your schedule to write your resume and cover letter. These documents *will* take time to put together; you *will* have multiple drafts.
2. Create a *Very Long List* of every professional experience you have ever had in resume format (including volunteer positions). This will make tailoring future resumes extremely easy - all you'll have to do is copy/paste.
3. Remember that there are many (many!) choices for how to format a resume. Do some preliminary research about resume standards for your industry. An artist's resume, for example, is going to look vastly different from a banker's.
4. Please remember that a resume will NOT get you a job – a resume is a tool to get you an interview.
5. 68% of employers *will* find you on Facebook. Make sure your online-self represents your professional-self in a positive way.
6. Identify your key strengths (your "brand") so employers know *why* they should hire you.
7. Go to your favorite office supply store and buy some good quality paper, matching envelopes and thank you cards.
8. Print the job description for the position you are writing a resume for. Highlight the skills/strengths they are looking for so you can make sure to include them in your resume/cover letter.
9. Make an appointment with a Career Counselor in the Career Development Center (518-580-5790) to discuss your goals and your resume strategy.
10. Take a deep breath and let's get started!

Putting Your Resume Together

Decide first which **KIND** of resume you would like to write.

- A **CHRONOLOGICAL** resume provides your relevant experience, with the most recent position listed first. **Employers typically prefer this type of resume** because it's easy to see what jobs you have held, dates of employment and what you accomplished while you were there.
- A **COMBINATION** resume lists your skills and experience first, followed by your employment history. With this type of resume you can highlight the skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for, and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer. This type of resume is most often used by people who are changing careers or who have significant gaps in their employment history.

When in doubt - use a CHRONOLOGICAL resume

Parts of a Resume

1. Identification

Regardless of the layout you choose, you will begin by listing your name, address, land line and/or cell phone number, and email near the top. If you can be reached at more than one location during your job search campaign, you may want to list both sets of contact information. Finally, if you've created a webpage that you would want a potential employer to see, include the URL (e.g., the link to your LinkedIn profile).



Example:

| | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| 123 Street Some Town, NY 12345 JoSmithArtist.com | Jo Smith | Jo.Smith@email.gov 123-456-7890 www.linkedin.com/JoSmith |
|---|-----------------|---|

Stating your objective on your resume is optional; having an objective for your resume is not-- you need to be **clear** about your goal(s).

2. Objective OR Summary of Qualifications OR Nothing at all

OBJECTIVE:

An objective is where you tell the reader your goals for employment. Stating an objective helps convince employers that you know what you want, and are familiar with the field.

On a resume, an objective may be as brief as a job title. Depending on the position, the objective may need supporting information in order to make the target clear. The most effective objective is the one that is specific about the position and the type of employer desired.

Example Objective:

Position as technical writer for a health maintenance organization, utilizing writing, research, and leadership skills.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS:

A Summary of Qualifications statement can be used in place of an Objective. Summary statements provide an applicant with a more effective promotional tool to ensure the employer sees the applicant's most impressive skills and experiences. The statement is typically 3-5 bullet points in length or a short paragraph highlighting the skills/experiences that are relevant to the position you are applying to and which are reflective of your professional "brand." We recommend writing the summary last to make it easier for you: having completed the resume, you will recognize key themes and vocabulary you can then use.

Example Summary Statements:

Example One

Experienced education professional with advanced knowledge of international teaching techniques.

- Strong team builder and leader who enjoys working with diverse groups of children and families
- Hands-on, student-focused teacher with strong capabilities in forming and implementing innovative and creative after-school programs
- Dedicated to continuous improvement in teaching methodologies

Example Two

HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONAL, with demonstrated strengths that include assessing organizational needs, setting strategic direction, and implementing initiatives that enhance corporate performance, at an expanding company. Expertise includes: staffing, employee relations, succession planning, problem solving, management/employee development, team building, and instructing / workshop facilitation. Trained in EEO/ADA law and AAP writing.

Example Three

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Diverse video production experience and a drive to constantly improve technical skillset
- Track record of superior performance
- Able to find and secure new customers due to strong existing network
- Produce results in fast paced environments by adapting and implementing new strategies

NOTHING:

Because the information in an *objective* or *summary of qualifications* is often also written within a cover letter, some resume writers choose to leave these sections off their document completely. This option saves room for your experience section.

3. Experience (CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME)

The experience section of the resume is the heart of the resume. This section is where you can relate your past experiences to the position of interest, and should highlight your skills and accomplishments.

Job seekers often identify this section as "Work Experience." The problem with doing this is that unpaid/non-work experience (volunteer/professional organization roles/etc.) are not represented, but might be directly relevant to the job you are applying to. By labeling this section "Relevant Experience," you can be selective about which specific past positions you would like to highlight.

Whether the experience is paid or unpaid is not important – what's important is the experience itself.

All experiences matter!

Determine the relevance of any information by putting yourself in your potential employer's position: will this information help convince the employer that you are a worthwhile candidate to interview for the position they are trying to fill?

Other ways to label this section include:

- Professional Experience
- "Fill in the blank" Experience (e.g., "Teaching Experience" or "Human Service Experience")
- Related Experience

Try to be concise and specific when writing your descriptions. Effort should be made to create effective "verb statements" which emphasize the strengths and skills you possess. Highlight skills and achievements, providing only enough detail to support your premise. Edit out pronouns and articles. Begin phrases or sentences with verbs. You may find the **SKILLS LIST** at the end of this booklet helpful in making your descriptions clear, dynamic and engaging.

For resumes that will be submitted to organizations that will scan them into searchable computer databases, care should be taken to include as many industry- and job-specific "key words" as possible. When searching databases for potential candidates, employers seek resumes with the greatest number of "hits" on key words. Interestingly, key words are most often **nouns**.

Think about prioritizing the information you provide in each description. Present that which you think is of greatest interest to your potential employer first.

For instance, consider a candidate searching for a job in interior design. Note how this applicant took their retail experience and made sure the design of window and floor displays bullet is listed first ↓:

Example:

Sales Associate, Retail USA, New York, NY

5/20XX - 12/20YY

Managed visuals for department store...

- Designed all large monthly window displays using color as primary focus
- Created engaging point-of-purchase displays for slow moving small items; increased sales of these items by 30%
- Re-organized floor displays to maximize space and call attention to latest merchandise
- Utilized strong interpersonal and communication skills to serve customers; received employee of the month award twice

Some professionals will add a short summary of their work experience between their title and their accomplishment bullets

Your **dates** of employment can be listed many ways including (but not limited to):

- September, 1998 - December, 2000
(a good option for young professionals who have more space to fill)
- 9/1998-12/2000 (using numerals can save space)
- 1998-2000
(putting just the year is a great option for more experienced people or those with a gap)

The key is to *remain consistent* throughout the document.

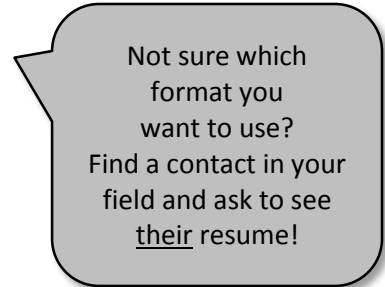
Lastly, **quantify** as much information as you can (numbers, dollar signs, percentages can help to make your case).

3*. Experience Highlights (COMBINATION RESUME)

The first step in writing a *combination resume* is to identify your key strengths. Use the **Transferable Skills Cluster** list at the end of this guide to assist you with this process.

Strengths can be a:

- Technical Skill (a specific learned skill, e.g., website design)
- Transferable Skill (a wide ranging learned skill, e.g., presentation skills)
- Natural Skill (a strength you were born with, e.g., high energy)



Next, correspond some of your past achievements and experience to these areas. Think about all of the jobs/experiences you have had and relate them under each of your strengths.

Example:

Planning/Organizing

- Built and implemented innovative program on workplace harassment for department; program is now mandatory training for new staff.
- Directed fundraising campaign for local women's health clinic. Campaign surpassed financial goal by \$2000.
- Planned, developed and established regional marketing plan for company's healthy eating initiative.
- Redesigned 60 page employee handbook; wrote new sections on social media responsibility and workplace bullying.

3**. Work History (COMBINATION RESUME)

Use this section to showcase your work history in reverse chronological order by listing the names of the companies/organizations and the dates you worked there to illustrate a continuous work history. Also, be sure to include a job title.

Example:

Consultant

Smith and Associates, Boston, MA

20XX - 20YY

Assistant Director for Training Development & Project Management

ABC Group, Worcester, MA

20XX - 20YY

Human Resources Coordinator

The Center, Burlington, MA

20XX - 20YY

4. Education

For students and recent graduates, the Education section will be the first major category to follow the Identification and Objective or Summary Statement sections. As an *experienced professional* this section can go closer to the bottom (unless, your education is more directly relevant to the position you are seeking OR you know the resume reader is also Skidmore graduate).

If you wonder about whether you should include certain information or not, ask yourself whether it

will help you in getting an interview. If you believe it will, it probably has a place on your resume. If you are not sure, discuss your question with a career counselor.

Example

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY May, 2010
Bachelor of Science - Majors: Studio Art and Government

- GPA of 3.3 / 4.0
- Activities: Writer, Skidmore News; President, Skidmore Student Club

You may choose to include as much or as little of the autobiographical data from your college experience as you see fit.

5. Activities/Organizations/Skills/Miscellaneous

If there is something else you want to include on your resume and it doesn't fit with your other headings it can go at the bottom. This section is called a multitude of things including (but not limited to):

- Professional Associations
- Volunteer Experience
- Additional Skills
- Certifications* (unless you are applying for a teaching/social work/other position where your certifications are key to your hire - in these cases your certifications should go on TOP of the resume)
- Language Skills
- Honors and Awards

*KEEP IN MIND THAT OUR STAFF IS READY, WILLING AND ABLE TO ASSIST YOU
WITH THE PROCESS!*

*YOU ARE WELCOME TO WORK WITH US THROUGH EVERY STAGE OF YOUR RESUME
DEVELOPMENT AND WRITING.*

Fine Tuning Your Resume

The following tips may be used to polish your resume and be sure it is a professional looking document.

- **Leave off irrelevant information** such as age, sex, marital status, religious or political affiliation and health. This type of information is not likely to attest to your potential as an employee, and may be illegal for U.S. employers to consider in the hiring process.
- **Proofread/check spelling.** Like any writing we do, it is often difficult to catch our own mistakes. Take advantage of the opportunity to have others review your resumes and cover letters. One suggestion for checking for spelling errors is to read your resume backwards (starting at the end) so you are only looking at the individual words.
- **Maintain consistency** in layout. For example, if you begin one entry with a job title, begin all entries with a job title. This makes the resume easier to skim.
- **Make ample use of “blank space.”** Do not clutter your resume. Design a layout that is easy to skim; one that facilitates quick comprehension of the message you are trying to present. Try looking at your resume upside-down to see if the page looks balanced!
- **Know your *industry standard* for your resume length.** One page resumes, for example, are often more appealing to employers in the *finance* sector. If your experience warrants it, it's best to use two full pages rather than one page that is difficult to skim. If your resume goes to 2 pages, be sure to include your name and page 2 at the top of the second page.
- Use **graphics techniques** (e.g., capital letters, boldface) to emphasize headings and important facts on your print resume. Avoid using several fonts.
- **Use quality paper** for your printed resumes and cover letters (something that will hold up to a good deal of handling but can easily run through a laser printer); no need for old-fashioned, very heavy stock. You may choose to use matching #10 envelopes or the larger 9" X 12" envelopes to allow your documents to be mailed without folding.
- **Create a .txt and a .pdf version.** Oftentimes online applications have a small window for you to copy/paste your resume into. Having a .txt version ready makes this process significantly easier. Saving your resume as a .pdf will ensure that employers will get a copy of your resume (and cover letter) in their original format.

Cover Letter Writing

There are three general types of cover letters (letters that “cover” resumes):

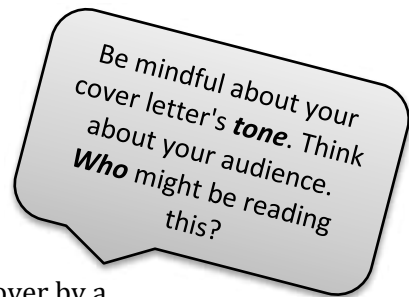
1. The **application** letter, which responds to an actual job listing
2. The **prospecting** letter, which inquires about possible positions
3. The **networking** letter, which requests information and assistance in your job search

Your cover letter should be designed specifically for each purpose outlined above as well as for each position you seek. Do not try to design a form letter to send to every potential employer (you know what you do with bulk mail!).

Effective cover letters explain the reasons for your interest in the specific organization, and identify your most relevant skills or experiences (note, relevance is determined by the employer’s self-interest, which is spelled out for you in a job description). They express a high level of interest and knowledge about the position.

Your cover letter should address three general issues:

1. First Paragraph - Why you are writing
2. Middle Paragraphs - What you have to offer
3. Concluding Paragraph - How you will follow up



PARAGRAPH 1, WHY YOU ARE WRITING

In some cases, you may have been referred to a potential employer by a fellow Skidmore alum, a former supervisor or a friend. Be sure to mention this mutual contact by name, up front, since it is likely to encourage your reader to keep reading!

- *Jane Smith suggested that I write you concerning a position as a teller at your bank.*

If you are **writing in response to a job posting**, indicate where you learned of the position, and the title of the position. More importantly, express your enthusiasm and the match between your credentials and the position’s qualifications.

- *Please accept my application for the Legal Assistant position you posted at www.NewYorkTimes.com. I am confident that my background and skills will prove to be an effective match for your needs. I am excited to speak with you about the position and our respective goals.*

If you are writing a **prospecting letter**—a letter in which you inquire about possible job openings—state your specific job objective. Since this type of letter is unsolicited, it is even more important to capture the reader’s attention.

- *I recently read in XYZ Trade Publication that your organization was awarded the 123 Federal Grant for environmental field studies. Since I will be completing my MS degree in June, I am anxious to continue my own geological field research full-time. I would like to discuss the work*

I have done and how it complements your projects, and to learn if you anticipate any hiring needs I might fill.

If you are writing a **networking letter** to approach an individual for information, make your request clear.

- *I located your contact information in the Skidmore College Career Advisor Network and I was hoping we might be able to speak by telephone for 15 or 20 minutes at your convenience. It would be great to learn more about your background including your career in publishing and to connect with another Skidmore alum.*

**Be thoughtful
about your
interviewee's
time!**

PARAGRAPH 2 (AND SOMETIMES 3). WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

In **responding to a job posting**, refer specifically to the *qualifications* listed, and illustrate how your particular abilities and experiences relate to the position for which you are applying. In a **prospecting letter**, express your potential to fulfill the employer's needs rather than focusing on what the employer can offer you. You can do this by giving evidence that you have researched the organization thoroughly, and that you possess skills used within that organization.

- *I am especially interested in working at your school because my most recent position included designing and executing a career awareness program, which fits very appropriately into the pilot career program you instituted last year.*

Communicate interest, motivation, strengths and intelligence. Refer the reader back to your resume, but do not repeat verbatim from the resume. Instead, provide additional details that space did not permit on your resume, and/or put your resume into a certain perspective by labeling your experiences.

- *Evidence of my leadership and organizational skills can be seen in my experiences as Secretary for the XYZ Professional Organization of which you are also a member.*

Emphasize your achievements and problem-solving skills.

- *As an editor for 123 News, I introduced a more attractive and readable format, developed several new columns to broaden our scope, and improved the quality of writing increasing readership by 10%.*

Show how your skills are transferable, and thus relevant, to the position for which you are applying.

- *Your posting indicates that you seek candidates with business degrees and sales experience. My educational background in business and psychology, combined with my fund-raising experience with XYZ Non-Profit Organization, are excellent preparation for your Marketing Representative position.*

When writing to **request an informational meeting**, write about your interests, skills or experiences as they relate to the person organization or field.

PARAGRAPH 3, HOW YOU WILL FOLLOW UP

Bid directly for the job interview or informational interview, and indicate that you will follow-up with a telephone call to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Be sure to make the call within the time frame indicated (within two days if your letter was emailed; within the week if post mailed).

There is a difference between thorough follow-up and "stalking." Start with 1 contact 1 week later.

In some instances, an employer may explicitly prohibit phone calls or you may be responding to a "blind want-ad," which precludes you from this follow up. Unless this is the case, make your best effort to reach the organization. *At the very least, you should call and ask what the "next steps" in the application process will be.* Additionally, include in the concluding paragraph your contact information - make it easy for the employer to reach you.

If you are applying from outside the employer's geographic area, you may want to indicate if you'll be in town during a certain time frame (this makes it easier for the employer to agree to meet with you). If you have definite plans to move to the employer's geographic area, mention it to assuage their concerns about relocation difficulties.

Last, you should mention any enclosed or attached materials (e.g., resume), and may indicate that your references are available on request. Also, if you have a portfolio or writing samples to support your qualifications, state their availability.

CATCHING THE READER'S EYE

The visual appeal of a cover letter is as critical as that of your resume. While you can't go wrong with a traditional cover letter, utilizing standard business letter format and paragraphs, an eye-catching graphic approach might also be effective.

The following example uses columns to match the potential needs to the candidate's skills and experiences:

| YOUR REQUIREMENTS: | MY QUALIFICATIONS: |
|-----------------------------|---|
| College graduate | • B.A. in English, Skidmore College |
| Strong communication skills | • Writer, XYZ Professional Organization Newsletter • Certified Mediator |
| Computer Skills | • Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access |
| Team player | • Currently work with a team of 6 people • Captain, Skidmore College Golf Team |

Another approach is to use bullets to highlight accomplishments, and present your key qualifiers:

Example:

I offer the following facts about my education and work experiences, in support of my candidacy:

- Problem-solving and teamwork skills successfully applied while working for N.Y.S. Department of Finance
- Facility with Lexis/Nexis as Research Assistant for Investment Age
- Quantitative and analytical skills developed through completion of Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics

Or you might extract skills from your resume using the following style, “as you will note on my resume, my chief strengths are: a) **ability to work independently**, b) **ability to identify and solve problems**, c) **familiarity with numerous computer software programs.**”

Try to keep paragraphs relatively short so they are easy to skim.

Cover letters should be printed neatly on standard size (8 1/2" x 11") quality paper. Make sure there are no spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors and that you have ample margins (1"). Keep your letter to one page, and balance the paragraphs on the page.

Always try to address your cover letter to a specific person, and include their title. To determine the name of the appropriate party to address, ask a mutual contact, check the company's webpage, call the organization to request the name and title or consult trade publications, industry specific reports, guides and/or directories found on the web.

Cover Letter Sentence Starters

The purpose of the cover letter is to get the reader excited about your candidacy and make them want to read your resume. As such, you want to communicate your relevant qualifications as they fit the needs of the position while also expressing your enthusiasm towards a particular company and/or career field.

Use these starters as examples when drafting the three parts of your cover letter.

INTRODUCTION

- It is with great interest that I am applying for the position of_____.
- (Name of contact) provided me with your name and suggested I contact you in reference to the _____position.
- As a recent graduate of Skidmore College with a degree in _____and an avid (reader, writer, sports enthusiast, etc.), I believe I am a strong applicant for the position of_____.
- As a (marketing, research, congressional, etc.) professional with (name of organization) I have gained valuable experience in_____ that makes me an ideal candidate for the position of_____.
- Thank you for speaking with me on (date) and discussing the ____ position. I am very interested in_____.
- The ____ position, recently advertised in the (Skidmore My CDC Account, paper, etc.), is a wonderful match for my talents and _____.
- Your organization impresses me because of (the performance of your product, the integrity of your support staff, its customer satisfaction, etc.).

BODY

- My experience as a _____ will help me to contribute _____.
- Throughout my four years at (name of organization) I have demonstrated skills and abilities that are exactly what the position of _____demands.
- I can contribute to your organization's effectiveness by_____.
- My previous success in_____ has proven my ability to _____.
- To highlight some of my accomplishments I have _____.
- Working with _____ has strengthened and improved my already strong (analytical, research, interpersonal organizational, etc.) and (analytical, research, interpersonal organizational, etc.) skills.
- I am confident that I can be a valuable asset to your organization because_____.

CLOSING

- I am eager to learn more about_____ and would like to discuss my qualifications and interests with you and will call within the week.
- I am interested in the position and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my background and your requirements in greater detail.
- I feel that my _____ and _____ make me a strong candidate for this position and therefore look forward to the possibility of an interview with (name of organization).
- I would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications with you. I can be reached at (phone number) or at (email).

SENTENCES THAT CAN BE USED IN MULTIPLE PARAGRAPHS

- I would like the opportunity to put my skills, drive and enthusiasm to work as a ____for_____.
- Being (a team player, results driven, a quick learner, etc.) who loves challenges, I will _____.
- My career goal is to _____; therefore I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to (organization name here).
- The_____ position described in _____ sounds exactly like the opportunity I'm looking for because_____.

Transferable Skills Cluster (ACTION verbs!)

Management

Developed
Planned
Organized
Executed
Supervised
Assigned
Directed
Coordinated
Analyzed
Prioritized
Delegated
Hired
Fired
Recommended
Evaluated
Administered
Contracted
Produced
Controlled

Research

Clarified
Surveyed
Interviewed
Investigated
Inspected
Gathered
Synthesized
Examined
Diagnosed
Reviewed
Organized
Evaluated
Critiqued
Perceived
Collected
Wrote
Interpreted
Extrapolated
Decided
Recognized Problems

Communication

Influenced
Persuaded
Helped
Directed
Motivated
Reasoned
Developed
Recruited
Created
Negotiated
Arbitrated
Arranged
Mediated
Reconciled
Merged
Obtained
Wrote
Interpreted
Enlisted

Creative

Innovated
Developed
Created
Imagined
Designed
Planned
Conceptualized
Synthesized
Integrated
Abstracted
Generated
Perceived
Memorized
Discriminated
Intuited
Visualized
Sensitivity
Humored
Fashioned
Shaped

Financial

Calculated
Computed
Planned
Managed
Budgeted
Solved
Accounted
Audited
Appraised
Researched
Analyzed
Prepared
Detailed
Accuracy
Speed
Allocated
Administered
Quantified
Developed

Teaching

Influencing
Persuaded
Briefed
Informed
Encouraged
Communicated
Advised
Guided
Coached
Instructed
Explained
Enlightened
Stimulated
Invented
Enthusiasm
Adapted
Adopted
Facilitated
Coordinated
Developed

Helping

Related
Guided
Led
Adjusted
Served
Referred
Rendered
Attended
Cared
Sensitivity
Listened
Spoke
Directed
Perceived
Intuited
Understood
Maturity
Team Work
Mentored

Detail

Approved
Validated
Retained
Executed
Dispatched
Responded
Followed-Through
Implemented
Enforced
Responsible
Tolerated
Met deadlines
Arranged
Time Management
Varied
Routine
Memorized
Judged
Collected
Compile

You can expand you skill list by using some of the following headings:

- Artistic Skills ▪ Writing Skills ▪ Leadership Skills
- Investigative Skills ▪ Performing Skills
- Reading Skills ▪ Interpersonal Skills ▪

Skills List

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Accommodated | Conducted | Entertained | Invented | Prepared | Setup |
| Accomplished | Confronted | Established | Investigated | Presented | Saved |
| Accounted | Constructed | Estimated | Itemized | Presided | Shaped |
| Acquired | Contacted | Evaluated | | Printed | Simplified |
| Acted | Contracted | Examined | Judged | Prioritized | Sketched |
| Adapted | Contributed | Excelled | Justified | Processed | Sold |
| Addressed | Controlled | Exercised | | Programmed | Solved |
| Adjusted | Cooperated | Exhibited | Led | Promoted | Sorted |
| Administered | Coordinated | Expanded | Learned | Proposed | Spoke |
| Advertised | Corresponded | Expedited | Lectured | Proofread | Staged |
| Advised | Counseled | Experimented | Listened | Provided | Stimulated |
| Advocated | Created | Explained | | Publicized | Straightened |
| Allocated | Critiqued | Explored | Made policy | Purchased | Studied |
| Analyzed | | Expressed | Maintained | | Strategized |
| Anticipated | Dealt | | Managed | Questioned | Summarized |
| Appraised | Debated | Fashioned | Manipulated | | Structured |
| Approved | Decorated | Fixed | Mapped | Raised | Supervised |
| Arranged | Defined | Followed | Measured | Reacted | Supported |
| Assembled | Delivered | through | Mediated | Read | Symbolized |
| Assessed | Delegated | Forecasted | Met | Reasoned | Synthesized |
| Assigned | Demonstrated | Formulated | Memorized | Recommended | Systematized |
| Assisted | Designed | Found | Merchandised | Reconciled | |
| Audited | Detailed | Fundraised | Moderated | Recorded | Targeted |
| | Detect | | Modified | Recruited | Tabulated |
| Balanced | Determined | Gathered | Monitored | Rectified | Taught |
| Bargained | Developed | Governed | Motivated | Reduced costs | Team-built |
| Built | Devised | Graphed | | Reflected | Tended |
| Brainstormed | Diagnosed | Grouped | Navigated | Rehabilitated | Terminated |
| Budgeted | Directed | Guided | Negotiated | Related | Tested |
| | Discovered | | Nursed | Reorganized | Trained |
| Calculated | Discussed | Handled | | Repaired | Translated |
| Catalogued | Disciplined | Helped | Observed | Represented | Transmitted |
| Catered | Dispense | Hosted | Obtained | Reproduced | Traveled |
| Changed | Displayed | | Operated | Researched | Trouble-shot |
| Classified | Dissected | Identified | Ordered | Reshaped | |
| Coached | Distributed | Imagined | Organized | Resolved | Understood |
| Collaborated | Drafted | Implemented | Outfitted | Responded | Utilized |
| Collected | Dramatized | Improved | Oversaw | Restored | Updated |
| Combined | Drew | Indexed | | Revised | |
| Communicated | | Influenced | Participated | Reviewed | Validated |
| Compared | Edited | Informed | Perceived | Risked | Verbalized |
| Competed | Educated | Initiated | Performed | | Visualized |
| Compiled | Empathized | Innovated | Persevered | Scanned | Worked |
| Completed | Encouraged | Inspected | Persuaded | Scheduled | Wrote |
| Composed | Enforced | Inspired | Planned | Screened | |
| Computed | Enlarged | Instructed | Plotted | Self-motivated | |
| Conceived | Enlisted | Interpreted | Populated | Served | |
| Conceptualized | Ensured | Interviewed | Predicted | Serviced | |

SAMPLE RESUMES

CHRIS SMITH

123 House Street
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

518-580-1234

Chris.Smith@email.org
www.linkedin.com/ChrisSmith

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

Enthusiastic Educator seeks Grade 4 teaching position at 123 Elementary School. Strengths include:
Creative Writing Instruction Universal Design Technology Integration

CERTIFICATIONS

Initial New York State Certification: February 2011
Childhood Education, Grades 1-6
Students with Disabilities, Grades 1-6

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Little Wonders Elementary School

Small Town, NY
9/2011 - present

Grade 3 Teacher

- Built interdisciplinary units with reading, language arts and social studies
- Applied New York State educational standards to daily lesson plans
- Created weekly after-school book club for students who struggled with reading
- Doubled use of technology in the classroom by utilizing programs like Skype and creating a classroom website
- Improved children's self-esteem through strengths-based teaching approach
- Adapted instruction for students with autism, learning disabilities and other special needs

Saratoga Elementary School

Saratoga Springs, NY
9/2010 - 12/2010

Student Teacher

- Planned and coordinated lessons in all subject areas
- Facilitated guided math study groups
- Modified lessons to effectively teach students with varied learning needs
- Collaborated with lead teacher to successfully maintain classroom control
- Developed unit about dinner time across the world

JFK Junior High School

Home Town, NY
Summers: 2009, 2010

Summer Reading Teacher

- Reviewed and encouraged the use of educational resources to better student's reading abilities
- Provided strategies to support students struggling with reading comprehension
- Taught critical thinking through reading
- Coordinated with other summer reading teachers to ensure a positive learning environment
- Put together a reading program with the local animal shelter where students would read out loud to animals

EDUCATION

Skidmore College

Bachelor of Science Double Major: Education and American Studies
GPA: 3.3/4.0

Saratoga Springs, NY
May, 2011

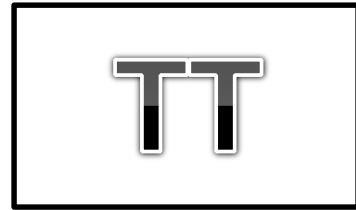
PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Member: Association for Educational Communications and Technology

10/2011 - present

TYRONE THOMAS

123 ST.
ABC Town, 12345
(c) 123-456-7890
TTHOMAS@GMAIL.COM



RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Super Gallery

Assistant Curator

6/10-present
Burlington, VT

- Install monthly shows of regional and nationally known artists. Artists include: Big Name Artist 1, Big Name Artist 2, Big Name Artist 3.
- Collaborate with colleagues to keep community informed about new gallery shows. Efforts increased gallery patronage by 20%.
- Initiated art outreach program in which local children visit gallery.

Lots of Art, Gallery

Gallery Assistant

9/08-6/10
Brattleboro, VT

- Maintained records of all sales and became familiar with QuickBooks - small business accounting software. Daily sales of up to \$3,000.
- Worked with senior staff on effective methods for displaying artworks.
- Managed gallery shop; stocked inventory and managed cash.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- Lots of Art Gallery, "TT - Portraits"
Brattleboro, VT **4/2010**
- Gallery, "Here's the Paint!"
Putney, VT **10/2009**
- Case Center Student Art Gallery, "Senior Show"
Saratoga Springs, NY **5/2008**

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Private Home

Childcare Provider

9/06-5/08
Troy, NY

- Looked after 3 children between ages of 5-12 twice weekly.
- Created developmentally appropriate games and activities including "Math Olympics" and "Dance time!"
- Maintained safe environment and managed emergencies.
- Coordinated with 2 other neighborhood childcare providers to create "Homework Club."

EDUCATION

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY
Bachelor of Science in Art

5/2006

SUMMARY

Dependable **Social Worker** with more than 10 years of transferable experience. Proven customer service and communication skills in a variety of settings. Upbeat, positive attitude with a history of producing quality results and satisfied customers. Strengths in desktop publishing and social media management.

SELECTED SKILLS

Communication

- Utilized Internet social media as an effective communication and marketing tool
- Answered phones in a courteous and professional manner
- Established rapport with diverse individuals and groups
- Demonstrated ability to express ideas in a team environment and influence action

Planning/Organizing

- Built and implemented innovative program on workplace harassment for the Salvation Army; program is now mandatory training for new staff
- Directed fundraising campaign for Neighborhood Involvement Program, campaign surpassed financial goal by \$2000
- Planned, developed and established regional marketing plan for company's healthy eating initiative
- Redesigned 60 page employee handbook; wrote new sections on social media responsibility and workplace bullying.

General Office

- Organized and implemented group activities in an efficient manner
- Scheduled appointments and assured timely arrival
- Maintained accurate financial records and paid all invoices on time
- Answered phones and took accurate messages
- Prepared reports and created documents using MS Word and WordPerfect
- Located desired information using the Internet

Customer Service

- Welcomed customers and visitors in a friendly and courteous manner
- Provided customers/clients with timely desired information
- Listened, calmed and assisted customers with concerns
- Established friendly and lasting relationships

RELATED EXPERIENCE

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------|
| Program Manager | Salvation Army – Schenectady, NY | 2006-present |
| Event Coordinator | Neighborhood Involvement Program – Albany, NY | 2003-2006 |
| Family Manager | Department of Child & Family Services – Albany, NY | 2001-2003 |

EDUCATION

| | |
|---|------|
| BSW: Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY | 2001 |
| Study Abroad: Madrid, Spain | 1999 |

Kelly Jones

456 Dead End Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
Email: KJones@PRFirm.org
Phone: 123-456-7890
Website: KJones.mywebsite.com

QUALIFICATIONS

Skilled Human Resources Professional with demonstrated strengths in professional development program delivery, helping company leaders work toward positive change, HR data management and consulting. Expertise includes: change management, performance coaching, problem-solving and workplace harassment prevention. Trained in EEO/ADA law.

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Planning/Organizing

- Built and implemented an innovative program on workplace harassment for the department; program is now mandatory trainings for new staff.
- Directed fundraising campaign for local women's health clinic. Campaign surpassed financial goal by \$2000.
- Planned, developed and established regional marketing plan for company's healthy eating initiative.
- Redesigned 60 page employee handbook; wrote new sections on social media responsibility and workplace bullying.

Instruction

- Created and performed approximately 2 workshops per week. Topics included:
 - Harassment Prevention & Management
 - Workplace safety
 - Performance reviews
 - Time management
 - Effective work/life balance
 - Retirement planning
 - MBTI and the workplace
 - Teamwork

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consultant

Smith and Associates, Boston, MA 2010 - present

Assistant Director for Training Development & Project Management

ABC Group, Worcester, MA 2010 - present

Human Resources Coordinator

The Center, Burlington, MA 2008 - 2010

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts: Sociology

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY - GPA: 3.3/4.0 May, 2008

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Society for Human Resource Management and Northeast Human Resources Association

| | |
|---|---|
| CAMERON CARLIN | |
| | <p>SUMMARY</p> <p>Dynamic senior sales and marketing executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a <i>Global Discovery</i> team to market and sell in Asian countries • Led negotiations and signed contracts with three dominant national medical device plants to provide raw materials • Grew start-up sales distribution company from \$s to \$x in # years • Initiated and leveraged worldwide partnerships to expand markets in Asia and the US <p>SPECIAL SKILLS</p> <p>Working within the private and public sectors at the local, national and international levels has honed these skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sales</i> - track record of leading teams to successful outcomes • <i>Conceptualization</i> - preparing and presenting new deals • <i>Experimentation</i> - persistent searching for new revenue approaches • <i>Budget Maximization</i> - for effective use of finite resources • <i>Management</i> - optimizing people and finances to meet objectives • <i>Project Management</i> - evaluate programs, initiate projects, execute strategies • <i>Creative</i> - sales strategy including: value proposition, positioning, collateral <p>EMPLOYMENT HISTORY</p> <p>US: <i>Project Manager</i>, ABC, Inc. Boston, MA, 12/10-present <i>Brand Manager</i>, XYZ Corp., Boston, MA 5/08-7/09</p> <p>ASIA: 123 Company, Wuxi China 7/09-9/10 <i>Project Manager</i> 7/10-9/10 <i>Marketing Advisor</i> 7/09-7/10</p> <p>EDUCATION</p> <p>Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY <i>Bachelor of Arts - English</i>, 5/08 President, SkidMarket Business Club, 9/07-9/08</p> |
| C.Carlin@gmail.com 123-456-7890 50 Road Street Apartment 4 Big City, IA 12345 | <p>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</p> <p>Language Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluent in English and Mandarin <p>Professional Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Business Person Association • Global Business Travel Association |

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

ERIC HENDERSON

11317 Bubbling Brook Court ■ Cockeysville, MD 21030 ■ Phone: 703-555-1456
Cell Phone: 571-555-1153 ■ Email: ehender@aol.com

May 4, 20XX

Mr. Dallas Dalrymple
General Dynamics
2941 Fairview Park Drive
Suite 100
Falls Church, Virginia 22042-4513

Dear Mr. Dalrymple:

My solid sales background, experience in DoD and other federal sales, as well as my success with management and client service, make me an ideal candidate for the VP of sales position that you are currently advertising. Throughout my extensive career, I have proven my motivation, sales expertise, management and operational skills.

For example, during my time as Director of XYZ Programs at FuturaFind, I have:

- Increased unit sales from \$4 million annually to more than \$30 million yearly.
- Boosted backlog from \$3 million in 2001 to \$40+ million in 2004.
- Overseen achievement of more than 50 percent of total company revenue out of three company business units.
- Led growth of the Army team from \$50K in backlog to \$31+ million in backlog in three years, and recently closed a \$15 million contract negotiation that accounted for 45 percent of total company orders in 2006.

Most of my professional experience has been in organizations in which I've successfully led teams to achieve a common purpose. The tools and techniques I have developed from this background apply directly to the skills that a VP of sales needs in your organization: proven leadership skills, strong organizational skills, critical team-building attributes, the ability to guide and direct the appropriate resources to maximize business capture and provide superior customer service, an outstanding track record of building business in the DoD sector, and intimate familiarity with federal government rules and regulations.

My master's degree and military background bolster my qualifications. I am recognized for my energy, agility, and quick thinking/action, as well as for focusing on maintaining an outstanding team emphasizing customer service.

I know I can be a key player on your team, and I would like the chance to prove that to you in an interview. Within a short time of your receiving this letter, I'll contact you to arrange a meeting in which we can discuss how I can guide your company in attaining DoD contracts, but please feel free to call me sooner at the number listed above or e-mail me. I look forward to meeting with you and bringing my talents to your firm. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Eric Henderson

http://www.quintcareers.com/sample_sales_management_cover_letter.pdf

FirstName LastName
123 Street
Apartment 1
Any Town, NY 11233
cell: 518-555-5555

October 14, 20XX

Ms. Jane Parke
A.T. Kearney
222 West Adams Street
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Ms. Parke:

My proven track record of successfully performing complex analyses on various corporations makes me an ideal candidate for the Business Analyst opportunity that you listed through the Skidmore College Career Development Center.

You specify that you are looking for someone with analytical, leadership, quantitative and communication skills. Over the last two years I have been employed at PaineWebber Incorporated. I work within the Real Estate Finance Group, and help my colleagues with problems ranging from the misinterpretation of leases to miscalculation of rent schedules. As a result, I play an active role within the group and help them to solve these dilemmas. This process involves using the quantitative skills that I acquired through actively participating in coursework for my Business-Math major at Skidmore College.

Consequently, I know that I can apply the same skills within my current role to a position within your company. I look forward to discussing the position with you in more detail. I will call next week to see if you agree that my qualifications seem to be a match for the position. If so, I hope to schedule an interview at a mutually convenient time. I look forward to speaking with you and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

FirstName LastName

Enclosure

Email Cover Letter Format

To: your contact's email address

From: your professional sounding email address

Subject: Title of Job You're Applying to (perhaps a reference number from the job lead)

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name: (you can skip the salutation if you don't have a name)

First paragraph: *Why you are writing.* Be clear, concise, and direct. Mention what job title you are applying for, and how you know about the position. Remember to include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. Avoid opening your email by giving your name.

Middle Paragraphs: *What You Have to Offer.* Provide your evidence that you have the required skills in these paragraphs. Show the parallels between your abilities and their needs. Follow their listed skill set as best you can. Use language from their job description as you share your experiences. Support each of your statements with a piece of evidence. Use several shorter paragraphs rather than one large block of text.

Final Paragraph: *How You Will Follow Up.* Remember, it is your responsibility to follow-up, unless the job listing specifically indicates that you should not. State that you will do so to learn what your next steps should be. Follow up to email is typically done in 24-48 hours. Mention that you have attached your resume. Consider also pasting a plain text version below (in the event that they cannot or will not open attachments).

Sincerely,

Your Firstname Lastname

Your Address

Your City, State, Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books:

- Po Bronson: What Should I Do With My Life?
- Skip Freeman: 'Headhunter' Hiring Secrets
- Joyce Lain Kennedy: Resumes for Dummies
- Jay Conrad Levinson & David E. Perry: Guerrilla Marketing for Job Hunters 3.0
- Dr. Phil McGraw: Unbeatable Resumes
- Katy Piotrowski: The Career Coward's Guide to Changing Careers
- Tom Rath: Strengths Finder 2.0
- Alexandra Robbins & Abby Wilner:
Quarterlife Crisis: The Unique Challenges of Life in your Twenties
- Dr. Quentin J. Schultze: Resume 101

Online:

- About.com Resume Writing Guide:
<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/resumes/a/resumeguide.htm>
- Purdue Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/564/01/>
- The Riley Guide to Preparing Your Resume for Emailing or Posting Online:
www.rileyguide.com/eresume.html
- Skidmore College Career Development Center: <http://skidmore.edu/career/>
- Skidmore College Career Development Center Online Resource Map:
<http://www.skidmore.edu/career/docs/CDCMap.pdf>
- Skidmore College MyCDC Account:
<https://skidmorecollege-csm.symplicity.com/students/index.php/pid222204?>

Career Counseling Appointments

Appointments are available for Skidmore alumni to meet with career counselors in-person or via phone/Skype. **Please call us (518-580-5790)** to set up an appointment.

Mission Statement

Skidmore's Career Development Center is committed to supporting all students and alumni through the creative process of integrating their liberal arts education and experiences into a satisfying career. In keeping with the College's founding principle of linking theoretical with applied learning, we help students and alumni develop self-knowledge, cultivate partnerships on and off-campus, prepare for experiential opportunities—such as internships, collaborative research, and community involvement—and manage their careers proactively. We encourage students to build skills and participate in engaged liberal learning practices early in their Skidmore experience, and we offer guidance to both students and alumni in forging meaningful careers for a world of rapid change.

Our Staff:



Megan Jackson
Associate Director /
IT Manager



Penny Loretto
Associate Director



Donna Marino
Associate Director



Shannon Rodriguez
Associate Director for
Pre-Professional
and Graduate Study



Cori Houry-Kling
Recruiting Coordinator /
Staff Assistant