

Writing Resumes and Cover Letters

Resume and cover letter writing are part of **STEP #5: Pre-Employment/Job-Hunting** of the Career Development process.

A. Resume

A brief written summary of one's professional or work experience, education, and qualifications, usually for the purpose of finding employment.

1. Sample resume styles

a. **Basic Resume Format** (see page #2 below)

b. **Chronological** (see page #3 below)

1. A Chronological resume is probably the one with which most people are familiar. Using this style, work experience is listed in reverse chronological order (most recent job first). The period of time during which you were employed is listed first, followed by the name of the employer and then the employer's location. A description for each is also included. Following work history is a section on education.

c. **Functional** (see page #4 below)

1. A Functional resume categorizes skills by function, emphasizing your abilities. This is useful if you are changing careers and want to show how you can transfer your skills. A functional resume shows prospective employers what you can offer them. The job objective is given first, followed by several paragraphs, each discussing a different job function.

d. **Combination** (see page #5 below)

1. A Combination resume combines a functional resume with a chronological one. An objective is listed at the top, after your name and address. Following that are bullet points describing job functions. This is a useful format if you are changing careers but have a solid employment history.

- [Basic Resume Templates](#)
- [Resume Writing](#)
- [Job Search Minute Videos](#)

B. Cover Letter

1. A cover letter is simply a letter that introduces you to a potential employer. It persuades the employer to read and examine your resume to determine if you are a good match for the position. A cover letter should always accompany your resume whenever the resume is not delivered in person, or handed directly to the employer.

2. **Sample cover letter** (see page #6 below)

- a. [Sample cover letter](#)

BASIC RESUME FORMAT

The resume format, whether **chronological, functional** or **combination**, has to be clear, well-organized and easy to read. The type of work history and education will determine the format that is best for you.

NAME

Street Address, apartment number, city, state, zip code, phone number, **professional** email address

CAREER OBJECTIVE, CAREER SUMMARY OR CAREER PROFILE

Be specific and avoid cliché statements that lack substance. Inform the employer of what industry, field or position you are interested in pursuing. Indicate what you can offer the employer (not what the employer can offer you) related to the position you are applying for: skills, experiences, or personal characteristics that support your objective. (Not more than 2-3 lines).

EDUCATION

- In reverse chronological order, list colleges, location, degrees, major certification, and dates
- Include GPA, if outstanding and relevant. Expected Graduation date: month/year
- High School Diploma (Only if you have not attended college; certification relevant to job, or training)
Associate of Science Degree, expected May 2013
City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago, IL

RELEVANT COURSEWORK OR ACADEMIC PROJECTS

- **Course Name:** Brief summary of skills gained, projects completed, research conducted results and outcomes of case study experiences, presentations delivered, health related – clinical practicum, and/or internships
- **Project Team:** Describe purpose of project, your role on the team, materials or methods used, outcomes, and/or presentations. Your teamwork and leadership skills can be highlighted as well.

EXPERIENCE

Position Title

Company, City, State

Month Year – Month Year

- Categorize in reverse chronological order
- Using action verbs, for example, *assisted, managed, presented, created, etc.*, describe the scope of your responsibility. Avoid using, “Responsibilities included ...”
- Use verb phrases rather than full sentences.
- Use skill-related keywords in the form of nouns within the body of your resume.
- Emphasize transferable skills, as they relate to the desired job.
- Utilize **S.T.A.R.** statements to enhance your resume.
S/T – Situation/Task: Identify what you did
A – Action: Followed by a purpose
R – Results: And the outcome of your action
S.T.A.R. example: *Completed a database program that allowed the health department to obtain reports on variables that they were previously unable to investigate.*

AFFILIATIONS (memberships, certifications)

- Include professional memberships in organizations (*student clubs or organizations for college students or recent college graduates*)

HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

- Academic Achievements, Awards, Volunteer Activities
- **Military:** Including branch of service, training, rank and dates. State any promotions, honors, or necessary descriptions. This can be written like a job experience.

CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME SAMPLE

Jane Smith

12345 Hall Road ▪ Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 000-1234 ▪ Professionalemail@comcast.net

CAREER GOAL

Project Coordinator requiring strong training, leadership and computer skills

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Strong organizational and planning skills
- Proven record for maintaining schedules; never missed a deadline
- Ability to communicate and motivate team members to enhance strategic goals
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel

EDUCATION

- City Colleges of Chicago** – Chicago, IL 2010-Present
- Associate of Arts Degree expected May, 20XX
 - Achieved Dean's List each semester
 - Grade Point Average: 3.6/4.0
 - Relevant coursework includes: *Business Mathematics, Management, Marketing, Accounting and Computer Information Processing*

EXPERIENCE

- Administrative Assistant** - City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago, IL 2010-2011
- Trained eight new employees in equipment use, department procedures and database management
 - Compiled and prepared monthly department reports utilizing Microsoft Access, Excel and Word
 - Designed and produced promotional brochure increasing student service by 15%
 - Coordinated wide range of special events to include guest speakers presentations, in-service training and outreach activities
 - Processed and expedited purchase requisitions for supplies, equipment and services
 - Organized and scheduled meetings, planned agendas and took accurate minutes
- Loan Officer** – J P Morgan Chase, Chicago, IL 2005-2010
- Balanced and posted all nine branch offices' loan transactions
 - Prepared secured and unsecured loan documents; ordered and evaluated credit reports
 - Reviewed credit files for proper documentation; composed and prepared month-end general ledger reports

AFFILIATIONS

- Active Member of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society 2010-Present
- Entrepreneurship Club Member 2010-Present
- Served as Secretary of Psi Beta, the National Honor Society in Psychology 2010

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Helped create and write the AmeriCorps National Service Program – City Colleges of Chicago Chapter Newsletter
- Raised over \$3,000 for the American Cancer Society Walk & Roll Chicago over the last three (3) years

Jane Doe

10001 S. Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, IL 60628
Home: (773)123-4567
Email: Professionalemail@yahoo.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE

An administrative assistant position requiring strong office, management and customer service skills

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Strong organizational and planning skills
- Conscientious, ambitious and willing to learn
- Honest, reliable and productive team player
- Training in computers and business management

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Office Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Answered a six-line phone system and scheduled appointments
- Handled cash, recorded payments, balanced accounts and wrote receipts
- Wrote correspondence to clients and completed attendance, accident and performance

Management Skills

- Managed staff of ten and delegated work assignments twice weekly
- Co-developed weekly goals, presented information to staff and monitored goal attainment
- Interviewed and evaluated staff for performance reviews

Customer Service Skills

- Produced and published a weekly newsletter to inform customers of upcoming events
- Promoted services to customers through effective communication skills
- Handled frequent customer product and services inquires

EDUCATION

2009-Present **City Colleges of Chicago** – Chicago, IL
Associate of Arts Degree anticipated December 20XX
Significant course work in Small Business Management, Business Communications and Computer Information Processing

WORK HISTORY

2006 – Present	Production Operator	G. D. Race & Co – Chicago, IL
2002 – 2006	Assistant Director	Roseland Day Care Center – Chicago, IL
2001	Machine Operator	ECHO Corporation – Chicago, IL
2000	Customer Service	Target – Cicero, IL

COMBINATION RESUME SAMPLE

John Smith

1234 Any Street, Chicago, IL 60653

(773) 987-0043

johnsmith@comcast.net

OBJECTIVE: Seeking a technology position, utilizing my skills and education in software installation, systems diagnostics, configuration and repair

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Three years of experience as help desk technician and web developer
- Proficiency in various programs, operating systems and applications
- Effectively communicate in resolving malfunctions

RELEVANT TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Programming languages: C#, Visual C++, C++, CSS, ASP, JavaScript, Java Servlet, HTML, Java Server pages, JBuilder, XML, PHP, Apache
- Software Applications: Microsoft Suite (Excel, Word, Access, PowerPoint), Macromedia Homesuite, Adobe Photoshop, FrontPage/Dreamweaver, Adobe Flash
- Database Management: Database SQL Command, MySQL
- Operating Systems: Mac OSX, Windows XP Professional, UNIX

RELATED PROJECT

- Collaborated with four students designing and developing a banking system allowing basic transactions, debit, and account information for customers.

WORK EXPERIENCE

CIS Company, 1111 Green Street, Chicago, IL

2010-Present

Web Developer

- Communicate with network personnel or web site hosting agencies to address hardware or software issues affecting web sites.
- Monitor regulatory activity to maintain compliance with records and document management system laws.
- Propose recommendations for improving content management system capabilities.
- Analyze, interpret, and disseminate system performance data.

CCC College, 5678 Wilson Avenue, Chicago, IL

2008-2010

Help Desk Technician

- Answered user inquiries regarding computer software or hardware operation to resolve problems.
- Updated and maintained all installed software and maintained all hardware for over 20 staff employees.

EDUCATION

City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Associate of Applied Science in Computer Information Systems

May 2011

COVER LETTER SAMPLE - Basic

Date

(Mr., Ms., Mrs.) Contact Person, Job Title

Name of Company

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear <Contact Person>:

Please accept my letter of application and resume as an expression of my interest in the position of <position title>. I have learned that an opening is available on your team through (announcement, referring person). I am especially interested in this position because <reason(s) of interest>.

With ___ years of experience in <industry, occupation, background, etc.>, I believe that I am uniquely qualified for this position. Upon reading my letter of application and resume, you will see that I have the professional and personal qualifications essential to provide the <major duty or job duties, *for example leadership and organizational skills*> that are required to help achieve the vision and mission of the company. The following are a few assets I will bring to your organization:

- <Special occupational skills>
- <Best personal characteristics>
- <Credentials or training>
- <Significant past accomplishments>

The enclosed resume provides further information about my skills, abilities, and experiences. I look forward to the opportunity of an interview to discuss more specifically how I can apply my background to benefit <Company Name>. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(4 spaces)

(Sign your name)

<Your Name>

<Your Phone Number>

<Your Professional Email Address>