



### **Resume Writing Tips**

1. Your resume should include the following items at the top of the page:
  - First and last name
  - A professional email address
  - Phone number
  - Education (Your college or university, degree and graduation date)
2. Also include a Profile or Objective at the top of your resume. It's not the recruiter's job to try to figure out what you want to do. Your profile should be 1-2 sentences or bullet points that sum you up as a candidate. It should describe you; what you want to do; and the kind of company you want to work for.
3. As you consider the layout of your resume, organize your information in applicable sections (e.g., Experience, Activities, Organizations, Awards & Recognitions, Social, Projects, etc.) to make it easier for recruiters to read it at a glance. Also be creative with color and fonts to highlight sections of your resume.
4. The Social section should include links, where applicable, to your LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram pages as well as your personal website. Ensure that the content is professional and showcases your work.
5. Before you start writing your resume, make a list of your experiences. These may include achievements from academics, internships, jobs, school activities, community service and athletics.
6. From that list, determine the most relevant skills and experiences for the job(s) you are applying for. The most effective resumes are those aimed toward the requirements for a specific job.
7. Look for key words for requirements in descriptions for the type of job you are seeking and be sure to include those key words in your resume. You might also need to create a few different versions of your resume, depending upon the job you are applying for.

8. Use action and skill verbs (e.g., trained, produced, wrote, researched, analyzed, etc.) to describe your skills and to present yourself as a dynamic person. Be mindful of the use of past and present verb tenses. If an experience occurred in the past, be sure to utilize verbs in their past tense. If you are currently in a role, your action verbs should be in the present tense (i.e., train, produce, write, research, analyze, learning, etc.).
9. Include information about the successes you achieved in each role. Employers are only looking for candidates who can deliver positive results for their companies.
10. Be sure to also include any successes you have achieved while learning, i.e., a high GPA, serious academic projects, research projects and/or writing projects. List only significant academic or work projects that are relevant to the job you are seeking. Recruiters are especially interested in projects that have been completed by students who are seeking engineering or computer science roles.
11. Showcase any leadership skills you have acquired through internships, volunteer or extra-curricular activities. Highlight instances where you have trained, organized, motivated or led people and/or projects.
12. Highlight your community service experience. Potential employers appreciate the fact that you are willing to pay it forward and, as with extracurricular activities, they like to see that you are a multi-faceted individual.
13. To showcase your work, include links to a portfolio sight, LinkedIn page, or personal webpage if you have them. If your resume is effective, it will motivate potential employers to seek more information about you and your work.
14. Review your resume obsessively for typos and grammatical errors. These are totally unacceptable and convey a lack of attention to detail. Ask others to review it to further ensure that you did not overlook any errors and to also provide constructive criticism.
15. Always provide your resume to potential employers in a PDF format to ensure that it is not altered.
16. Whenever possible, include a cover letter with your resume. The cover letter affords you the opportunity to convey information that is not on your resume and to specifically sell the employer on why you are the best candidate for the job.



## **Cover Letter Writing Tips**

Writing a compelling cover letter is a critical part of your job search. In addition to serving as your sales pitch, a well-thought out cover letter demonstrates that you are serious about the job and motivated by the opportunity.

Your cover letter also serves as a writing sample and demonstrates to employers that you can communicate logically and effectively. In a limited amount of space, you need to catch the hiring manager's attention; convince them why you are the best candidate for the job; and inspire them to contact you for more information.

### **Recommended Letter Structure**

- Your contact info in a sharp header (Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone & Email Address). Also include your LinkedIn profile URL, if you have one. If you are writing an email cover letter (vs. attaching or mailing a cover letter), this information should be included in your signature.
- Date
- The company's contact info, if available (Recipient's Name, Title, Company, Address, City, State, Zip)
- For email cover letters: Include the Job Title and Your Name in the Subject Line so that the employer knows which job you are interested in. If an employer requires that the subject line delineate specific information, follow those directions exactly or your email might be automatically discarded.
- Salutation: Dear (hiring manager's name). It is critical that you do your research and determine the specific contact name. Failure to do so signals that you did not put in any effort. If you absolutely cannot find that person's name, address the letter to Dear Hiring Manager.
- Paragraph #1: State why you are writing. Mention the specific position; introduce yourself; and include an achievement that's tailored to the job.
- Paragraph #2: Describe what you have to offer the employer. Cite examples of your work and results achieved. Make strong connections between your abilities and their needs. Draw on key competencies from your resume, but don't repeat them verbatim.

- Paragraph #3: Detail your knowledge of the company. Demonstrate that you did your homework and understand something about the company and how you can contribute to its mission.
- Paragraph #4: Conclude by summarizing what you would bring to the position and suggest next steps by requesting an interview or suggesting a call. Thank the employer for considering you for the position.

## **Important Tips**

### **1. Research the Job and the Company**

Before writing your cover letter, research the skills, knowledge, education, experience and personal qualities required for success in the job you are applying for. In addition to reviewing the job description, seek information about the job and the company from people who work in the field or from your college career center.

### **2. Assess Your Background and Fit for the Job**

List the assets in your background that correspond most closely with the job requirements and create a list of reasons why an employer should hire you for that particular job. Your assets may include skills, coursework, knowledge, experiences, personal qualities, honors, awards and/or motivations.

### **3. Explain How Your Assets Have Contributed to Your Success**

For each asset, explain how that attribute has contributed to your success in a role, project, job or activity. If possible, quantify your results. For example:

“My strong writing, editing, digital media and interviewing skills have contributed to my success as a reporter.”

“As captain of the basketball team, I learned the importance of discipline and teamwork--especially in high pressure situations.”

“During my internship at XYZ company, I created a digital marketing campaign for (product or brand) resulting in a 25% increase in website traffic.”

These phrases will help to construct the core of your letter.

#### **4. Reference the Specific Position in the First Paragraph**

An enthusiastic tone and strong statement of interest in the position should be reflected in the first paragraph. Mention the specific position and how you learned about the role. If you were recommended for the position by someone who is known within the company (e.g., an Emma Bowen or college alum), also mention that person in the first paragraph. You may close the first paragraph with a brief summation of your interest and fit for the job.

#### **5. Use Short Paragraphs**

The employer should be able to scan your letter quickly. Try to limit paragraphs to no more than five lines of text.

#### **6. Use Action Verbs**

As previously mentioned in the Resume Tips, use action and skill verbs to present your experience in a dynamic way.

#### **7. Showcase Your Leadership Skills**

Employers are looking for future organizational leaders. Be sure to highlight any successes you have had as a leader of a student organization, team or academic group. Being a Resident Assistant also counts. Also include relevant leadership experience acquired via internships, jobs or community service.

#### **8. Showcase Your Recognitions**

Highlight academic recognitions and/or those received by student organizations, coaches, faculty and former employers. Also emphasize your high GPA (3.5 or higher) or any prestigious Fellowships or Scholarships.

#### **9. Reaffirm Your Interest in the Position**

Use a strong closing statement to reaffirm your interest and why you are a good match for the position. Also indicate that you will contact them to follow up on your letter and to explore the possibility of scheduling an interview.

#### **10. Check for Spelling and Grammatical Errors!**

If you are submitting your cover letter as an attachment, save it to PDF format so that it does not get altered and appear to have typos.