

Creating an Effective Resume and Cover Letter

SWU Career Services

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Purpose of a Resume?

Your Resume is YOUR Marketing Tool!

- **Highlights skills, knowledge, and experience you have to sell to an employer.**
- **Provides a quick overview of your educational and employment experiences.**
- **Concise, easy-to-read document that clearly reflects your qualifications.**

Top Skills & Qualities of the Perfect Candidate

- **Communication Skills (verbal & written)**
- **Honesty/integrity**
- **Interpersonal skills**
- **Strong work ethic**
- **Teamwork skills**
- **Computer Skills**
- **Detail oriented**
- **Leadership Skills**
- **Analytical skills**
- **Motivation/initiative**
- **Flexibility/adaptability**

Source: Job Outlook 2015,

National Association of Colleges and Employers

What is Your Resume???

- Essential part of job search
- Calling Card
- Opens doors
- Generates interviews
- 1st thing to make impression on employer
- Last thing employer reviews after interview

Formats

- **Reverse Chronological**
 - normally used by recent graduates
- **Functional**
 - usually reserved for those in the workforce 5 or more years, or changing careers
- **Hybrid**
 - Combines Chronological & Functional and can be used by anyone

Sections

Chronological Format

- **Identification Info**
- **Objective**
- **Education**
- **Work Experience**
- **Activities**
- **Honors**
- **Skills**
- **References**

Functional Format

- **Identification Info**
- **Objective**
- **Profile/Summary**
- **Skills**
 - **Technical**
 - **Functional**
 - **Administrative**
- **Work Experience**
- **Education**
- **References**

Focus!

- **Highlight most attractive and applicable aspects of your background**
- **Forces the reader to conclude that you are an ideal candidate**

Standards

- Font (Arial, Times New Roman, Tahoma)
- Type Size (10-12 point)
- Type Enhancements (Bold, *Italics*, Underline)
- Page Length (1 for entry level)
- Paper Color and Type (white, ivory, light gray)
- Graphics (tasteful and conservative)
- White Space (plenty of it)
- First Person (Drop the "I")
- Accuracy and Perfection – Proofreading
- Resume and Cover Letter should visually harmonize and compliment

Types of Skills

- **Technical Skills**
 - Accounting, Writing, Languages
- **Functional Skills**
 - Managing, Selling, Training
- **Administrative Skills**
 - Analyzing, Planning, Motivating

Qualifications/Skills

Organizational

- Design and implement election process for group of 1,200
- Manage a large caseload while maintaining an efficient work flow
- Utilize and maintain reference materials

Analytical

- Interpret medical evidence in relation to Social Security regulations
- Investigate technical issues in Social Security disability claims
- Read blueprints and set up industrial manufacturing machinery
- Inspect machined parts using micrometers and gauges

Qualifications/Skills

Writing Skills

- **Compiled and published reports on the topics...**
- **Earned awards on the clever design and depth of contrast presented on the following publications...**
- **Wrote over 20 articles for the college newspaper, largely on the topics of...**
- **Edited 50 articles over the period of a year and recently compiled them into a new book titled...**

Managing Skills

- **Hired and Trained 12 research assistants**
- **Managed a staff of 30 people**
- **Responsible for a budget of \$58,000**

Combination of formats

- Hybrid Format
 - **A combination of the chronological and functional format**
 - **Lists your skills in a functional format, but also includes a chronological listing of your employment history**

Identifying Information

FULL NAME

Address

Telephone numbers

E-mail Address

LinkedIn profile (customized)

Objective

- **The objective should demonstrate:**
 - Knowledge of Field
 - Interest
 - Qualifications
 - Ambition
- **What you have to offer the employer, not what you want from the employer**

Objective Examples

- **Brief Job Title.** Seeking a position as a _____ in the _____ industry which would make use of my proven abilities in _____.
- “A full-time developer position in the computer industry, utilizing my ability to work as a team member.

Education

- **Required Information**
 - **Institution**
 - **Date of Graduation**
 - Actual or anticipated
 - **Degree**
 - Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
 - Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
 - Masters of Arts (M.A.)
 - **Academic Subject Areas**
 - Majors, minors and/or concentrations

Education

- **Optional Information**
 - **Performance (Grade Point Average)**
 - **Academic Achievements**
 - **Grade Trends**
 - **Honors**
 - **Percentage of costs personally financed**
 - **Breadth & Depth**
 - **Number of credit hours, types of classes, study abroad programs**

Education Examples

- EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Biology, December 2015

Southern Wesleyan University, Central, SC

GPA:3.7/4.00

Relevant Coursework

Immunology

Developmental Biology

Cellular and Molecular Biology

Microbiology

Biochemistry

Bioethics

Experience

Title, Dates

Name of Organization or Company, City, State

- bullet sentence description of work
- bullet sentence description of work

Formula

Action Verb→ **Results**→ **Products, Services, Goals**

Skill Statements-Examples

- **Mediocre**
 - Managed office
 - Taught chemistry to students
- **Better**
 - Managed office operation and staff of twelve
 - Taught the gas laws to a group of high school students
- **Best**
 - Managed sales office operations and staff to record productivity
 - Utilized cooperative learning in teaching the gas laws to 25 high school students

Experience

BEFORE

Admissions Office

Southern Wesleyan 2013-2016

filing, answer phones, ran errands

AFTER

Student Assistant, September 2013 - May 2016

Admissions Office, Southern Wesleyan University, Central, SC

- Performed general office duties
- Created filing system for photo archives
- Gained knowledge about public relations activities

Experience Examples

- EXPERIENCE

Customer Service Intern, May 2012 – Present
Keowee Yacht Club Lodge, Seneca, SC

- Assist in planning dining room, bar, and banquet functions for over 500 members
- Answer patrons' inquiries and resolve problems
- Inspect guest rooms, public access areas, and outside grounds for cleanliness and ambiance
- Process room reservations
- Balance cash drawers at front desk daily and handled more than \$200,000 each year

Experience Examples

- **Sales Consultant**, Summers 2011-Present
The Limited, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
 - Advised customers on quality of merchandise
 - Created clothing displays
 - Handled customer complaints and concerns
 - Trained 10 new employees each year
 - Executed sales transactions through computerized system
 - Earned bonus compensation for three quarters based on outstanding sales activity

Work History of a Functional resume

Case Manager IV, April 2012 - Present
Hillcrest Hospital, Anderson, SC

Social Worker III, May 2009 - April 2012
Bryce Hospital, Greenville, SC

Social Work Intern, January 2009 - May 2009
Partlow State School Hospital, Greenville, SC

Social Worker I, May 2006 - April 2009
Bryce Hospital, Greenville, SC

Activities/ Honors

- Honors
 - **Scholarship**
 - **Honoraries**
 - **Dean's List**
 - **Awards**
- Activities
 - **Organization, Office Held**
 - **Student/ Professional/ Community Group/ Volunteer**

Activities

- Should reveal your values, interests, and personal qualities
- Describe any *leadership* roles that you held
- Include sports, teams, clubs, volunteering, committees, groups, societies, organizations, boards, etc...
- Are listed chronologically or by importance
- **USE EXAMPLES THAT ARE RELATED TO THE JOB!!!**

Activities/Honors Examples

- **HONORS**
 - Dean's List (5 semesters)**
 - Palmetto Scholarship**
 - Mortarboard National Honorary**
- **ACTIVITIES**
 - Student Government Association, President**
 - **Coordinated meetings for 30 members**
 - **Managed a \$5,000 budget**
 - Intramural Basketball, Team Captain**

References

- **Two Options:**
 - **Include References' names and contact information on an attached page**
 - **Do not include at all**
 - **Employers understand that "References available on request"**

DO WHAT IS REQUESTED IN ORDER TO APPLY!

Reference Sheet

Jane H. Sanborne

Professor, College of Communication
The University of Alabama, Box 870000
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0000
(205)-555-0000

Jonathan D. Jones

Director of Publications, Jones & Jones, Inc.
6543 29th Avenue
Birmingham, AL35887
(205)555-7654

Maureen K. Perrotta

Manager, Arby's Inc.
9090 Willow Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL
(205) 555-0001

Quality References

- **Pick someone who...**
 - You have asked
 - You have provided a resume
 - Can speak highly of you
 - Has good written and spoken grammar
 - Can be a professional reference (versus personal)
 - Can easily be reached during business hours
 - Is not a friend or relative
 - Is responsible, with a good job title

Common Resume Problems

- **Not visually attractive**
- **Cannot find key points in 15 seconds**
- **Too many or inconsistent and/or inconsequential formatting techniques**
- **Too passive (no action verbs)**
- **Extraneous information or words**

Cover Letters: Basic Format

Introduction

State position for which you are applying.

Narrative

Match your qualifications to the job requirements.

Conclusion/Thank You

Thank the reader and reiterate your interest.

Your Name

Your Address

Today's Date

Name of the Administrator or Personnel Director

Name of School District

Street Address or PO Box

City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,

State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised).

Tell them what your status is now, and why you feel you are especially well qualified for this position. (A chance to tell them about one of your strengths.)

This paragraph should include one or two brief sentences that emphasize your passion for teaching and your love for kids.

If possible, it is always nice to personalize your letter by saying something positive about the community or school district and why you would like to work there. (When you call to ask for the name of the person to whom the letter should be sent, ask if the district or city has a web address. If so, this will tell you what the city and district have to offer.)

Let them know that you have arranged to have a copy of your transcript and letters of reference forwarded to them. Thank them for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

- Name, address, phone number(s), email

- Today's date

- Include name, title, and address of person you are writing

- Personalized salutations best – “Dear Dr., Ms. If unknown, “Good Afternoon,”

Section One – The Opening

Your Name
Your Address

Today's Date

Name of the Administrator or Personnel Director
Name of School District
Street Address or PO Box
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,

State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised).

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Sincerely,

Your Name

- State Position of interest
- How you heard of opening
- Briefly, something you know about the organization that explains your interest

Section Two – The Meat

Your Name
Your Address

Today's Date

Name of the Administrator or Personnel Director
Name of School District
Street Address or PO Box
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,

State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised).

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Sincerely,

Your Name

- Highlight relevant experience and qualifications, outstanding accomplishments, and unique capabilities
- Paragraph form or bulleted
- Refer to resume for more in-depth information

Section Three – The Closing

Your Name
Your Address

Today's Date

Name of the Administrator or Personnel Director
Name of School District
Street Address or PO Box
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,

State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised).

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Sincerely,

Your Name

•Conclusion – “I hope you agree that I have the necessary qualifications to make me a strong candidate...”

•Interview Request – “I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications further...”

•Contact Information – “I may be reached at...at these times....”

• Appropriate Appreciation – “Thank you for your time and consideration.”

•Closing

Q & A

**Want to Schedule a meeting to
Start on you Resume?**

Go to <http://calendly.com/ellenpate>

