

## Resume Tips

Your resume is a reflection of you - it's usually your first introduction to a prospective employer. That's why it is vital to your job search that you plan and produce a resume that makes the best possible impression. A well-made resume can arouse an employer's interest in meeting you for a formal interview. One way to catch the eye of a prospective employer is to produce a resume that uses an attractive visual style. For example, you could use headings, tables and bullets. Another way to make sure your resume gets read is to use an easy-to-read format by clearly listing your skills and education.

### Preparing Your Resume

There are several traditional elements you should include in your resume.

These elements tell:

- Who you are?
- What you have done and for how long?

The following elements are common in most resumes.

Consider a chrono-functional resume if:

- You have very diverse experiences that don't add up to a clear-cut path.
- You are a college student with minimal experience and/or experience unrelated to your chosen career field.
- Some of your experience is not traditional paid employment, but internships, volunteer work, class positions - and/or the actual experience may be secondary to the skills attained.
- You want to transition to a new field that is very different from your previous experience.
- You have gaps in your work history. Example: Homemakers who took time to raise a family and now wish to return to the workplace. For those with gaps, a chronological format can draw undue attention to the gaps, while a functional resume enables you to portray transferable skills attained through such activities as domestic management and volunteer work.
- You seek a job in a field that is not extremely conservative.

Consider a chronological resume if:

- Most/all of your experience has been in one field.
- You are an established job seeker with steady experience in your chosen field.
- Your experience is primarily traditional paid employment.
- You plan to stay in the same field when you pursue your next job.
- You have minimal or no gaps in your work history.
- Your field is very conservative (banking, law) and functional resumes are not the norm.

## Tips to Writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter is a necessary business letter that accompanies your resume whether you mail, email or fax your resume. Its purpose is to introduce your resume, express your personality and enthusiasm for the position, and provide support for your candidacy that is not covered by your resume. Writing a cover letter can be a challenging and time-consuming task, especially when you must customize it towards each organization. The following suggestions are offered when writing a cover letter:

- Make sure that you type each letter using the same font and high quality paper as the resume.
- Use 1" margins all the way around, and print on high quality resume paper (8" x 11") using a laser printer.
- Please be sure to proof your letter for grammar and spelling errors! It is a reflection of you! Have someone else proof it too!
- Be brief and concise; the cover letter should be approximately 1 page in length.
- Expand on your resume, rather than repeat the resume's content.
- Individualize and target each cover letter to the position you seek; recruiters can spot a mass produced or generic letter and will consider it unprofessional.
- Be sure to market yourself. Explain what you can offer the company; not what the company can do for you.
- Make sure to include a cover letter with your resume, whether it is mailed, emailed or faxed!
- Remember to sign the cover letter.
- Three standard ways to close your cover letter:
  - Active Approach - Indicate to the employer that you will be calling within a certain period of time (usually 7 days) to arrange a convenient time for an interview. Use tact, otherwise this approach may appear presumptuous.
  - Reserved Approach - Express your desire for the employer to contact you. Feel free to contact the employer after a week to express your continued interest in the organization, and to see where they are in the review process.
  - Out-of-Town Approach - Mention the fact that you will be in the area during a certain time period and will call to arrange an interview before/after you arrive. You may request a specific time and date for an interview or indicate your availability at any time during a given period.