

Resumes and Cover Letters

A resume is a brief, informative summary of your abilities, education, and experience.

It should highlight your strongest assets and skills and differentiate you from other candidates seeking similar positions. Although it alone will not get you a job or internship, a good resume is an important element toward obtaining an interview.

Tailor your resume to the type of position you are seeking. This does not mean that all of your work history must relate directly, but your resume should reflect the kind of skills the employer would value.

RESUME LANGUAGE SHOULD BE:

- Specific rather than general
- Active rather than passive
- Written to express not impress
- Articulate rather than “flowery”
- Fact-based
- Written for people who scan quickly

TOP 5 RESUME MISTAKES:

1. Spelling and grammar errors
2. Missing email and phone information
3. Using passive language instead of “action” words
4. Not well organized, concise, or easy to skim
5. Too long

DON'T:

- Use personal pronouns (such as I)
- Abbreviate
- Use a narrative style
- Number or letter categories
- Use slang or colloquialisms
- Include a picture
- Include age or sex
- List references on resume

DO:

- Be consistent in format and content
- Make it easy to read and follow
- Use spacing, underlining, italics, bold, and capitalization for emphasis
- List headings (such as Experience) in order of importance
- Within headings, list information in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Be sure that your formatting translated properly if converted to a .pdf

Action Verbs for your Resume

Accelerated	Documented	Maintained	Reported
Accomplished	Earned	Managed	Represented
Achieved	Edited	Marketed	Researched
Acted	Enabled	Mastered	Resolved
Adapted	Energized	Maximized	Reviewed
Added	Enhanced	Mediated	Revised
Administered	Established	Minimized	Revitalized
Advised	Evaluated	Modeled	Rewrote
Analyzed	Examined	Monitored	Scheduled
Arranged	Executed	Motivated	Screened
Assembled	Expanded	Negotiated	Selected
Assessed	Expedited	Operated	Served
Broadened	Fabricated	Optimized	Shaped
Budgeted	Facilitated	Orchestrated	Simplified
Built	Followed	Organized	Sold
Calculated	Formed	Originated	Solved
Centralized	Formulated	Participated	Spearheaded
Changed	Founded	Performed	Standardized
Clarified	Gained	Persuaded	Steered
Classified	Gathered	Planned	Streamlined
Collaborated	Generated	Predicted	Strengthened
Collected	Governed	Prepared	Structured
Compiled	Guided	Presented	Studied
Completed	Handled	Prioritized	Suggested
Composed	Headed	Processed	Summarized
Conducted	Identified	Produced	Supervised
Conceived	Impacted	Programmed	Supported
Concluded	Implemented	Promoted	Surpassed
Constructed	Improved	Proposed	Surveyed
Controlled	Increased	Proved	Synthesized
Coordinated	Initiated	Provided	Taught
Counseled	Inspected	Publicized	Tested
Created	Installed	Published	Trained
Defined	Instituted	Purchased	Translated
Delegated	Instructed	Recommended	Unified
Delivered	Interviewed	Recorded	Updated
Derived	Interpreted	Recruited	Upgraded
Demonstrated	Introduced	Redesigned	Utilized
Designed	Invented	Reduced	Verbalized
Determined	Launched	Regulated	Verified
Developed	Lectured	Reinforced	Visualized
Devised	Led	Renegotiated	Worked
Directed	Liaised	Reorganized	Wrote
Discovered			

Write an Effective Cover Letter

Your cover letter is a writing sample and a part of the screening process. By putting your best foot forward, you can increase your chances of being interviewed. A good way to create a response-producing cover letter is to highlight your skills or experiences that are most applicable to the job or industry and to tailor the letter to the specific organization you are applying to.

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date of Letter

Use complete
title and address.

Contact Name
Contact Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Address to a
particular person
if possible.

Dear _____:

Opening paragraph: Clearly state why you are writing, name the position or type of work you're exploring and, where applicable, how you heard about the person or organization.

Make the ad-
dressee want to
read your resume.

Middle paragraph(s): Explain why you are interested in this employer and your reasons for desiring this type of work. If you've had relevant school or work experience, be sure to point it out with one or two key examples; but do not reiterate your entire resume. Emphasize skills or abilities that relate to the job. Be sure to do this in a confident manner and remember that the reader will view your letter as an example of your writing skills.

Ask for a meeting
and remember to
follow up.

Closing paragraph: Reiterate your interest in the position, and your enthusiasm for using your skills to contribute to the work of the organization. Thank the reader for his/her consideration of your application, and end by stating that you look forward to the opportunity to further discuss the position.

Always sign letters.

Sincerely,

Your name typed

Some general rules about letters:

- Address your letters to a specific person if you can.
- Tailor your letters to specific situations or organizations by doing research before writing your letters.
- Keep letters concise and factual, **no more than a single page**. Avoid flowery language.
- Give examples that support your skills and qualifications.
- Put yourself in the reader's shoes. What can you write that will convince the reader that you are ready and able to do the job?
- Remember that this is a marketing tool. Use a lot of action words.
- Have someone proofread your letter.
- If converting to a .pdf, check that your formatting translated correctly.
- Reference skills or experiences from the job description and draw connections to your credentials.

Sample Cover Letter

September 20, 2013

Ms. Ellie Wells
Senior Manager
Wallaby Yogurt Company
110 Mezzetta Court
American Canyon, CA 94503

Dear Ms. Wells:

I am a senior at the University of Missouri and would like to be considered for the Manager in Training opportunity at the Wallaby Yogurt Company. I am very interested in the field of marketing and would welcome the opportunity to contribute my research skills, writing ability, and experience to your growing business.

I am excited about Wallaby's commitment to organic, all-natural ingredients in its products. As a varsity volleyball player, I am very aware of the importance of healthy food as the foundation for a healthy life. Your emphasis on "learning by doing and leading by serving" is also consistent with the training I received as an athlete. Whether on the court learning new drills in the worst conditions or patiently working with a new team member, I am most fulfilled when contributing to the team effort.

At Mizzou, my concentration is in history while also exploring coursework in economics. My academic work has strengthened my research and writing skills as well as my understanding of the economics of business growth and development. Working with Mizzou Undergraduate Women in Business (WIB) over the last two years gave me the experience and confidence to work in a dynamic, fast-paced organization where learning quickly and pitching in are instrumental to success. As a member of the executive committee, for example, I managed campus advertising campaigns that increased overall membership and attracted more than 500 students from 12 different schools to our annual Intercollegiate Fall Conference.

Thank you for your consideration. I very much look forward to the opportunity to speak with you in person about my interest in this position.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Maddox