

Handout A - Resumes & Letters:
Must be emailed to the Facilitator by Friday 9AM / 1 PM / 5 PM.

What is the purpose of your cover letter and resume? What are you trying to accomplish?

Purpose:

Packages your assets into a convincing advertisement that sells you for a specific job

Goal:

To win an interview

It's all about the first impression!

Resume:

The resume should be showcasing your skills, accomplishments and experience and should be **CLEAR, CONCISE, CORRESPONDING**

We will be talking about the **COMBINATION** resume because you are changing careers and the resume will focus on your skills

Contact Information – name, address, phone numbers, email. Must have professional voicemail on the numbers listed.

- No Hotmail account email addresses
- Proper email structure / name to match to resume header
- Proper voice mail activated with messaging option also activated
- Header should be on both pages
- Page numbers at bottom right of page Ex. 1/2 and 2/2
- NO spelling mistakes
- Make sure everything is properly lined up, font and font size does not change

Profile or Objective: 1part or 3 part - only acceptable versions

Qualifications or Skills – approximately 8-10 points – start the one-liners with action verbs

Technical skills – what you learned at school – use the course outline/catalogue for help

One liners explaining transferable skills

Education – start with the most recent (example below assumes you are a GRADUATE!)

Medical Office Assistant Diploma

2011

Academy of Learning Career College - Bay and Bloor Campus, Toronto

Experience/Work History – start with the most recent – add your placement when completed

Customer Services Representative

2006-2010

Tim Horton's

- Two or three points describing your duties

Volunteer Experience and/or Awards & Accomplishments and/or Certifications & Licenses

Handout A – Resumes & Letters – page 2

Reference Sheet

- Same Header as your resume.
- References
- Three references from work or practicum – one could be your Instructor
- You must ask someone to be a reference and then call them every time you give out your reference sheet.

Ex.

Judy Smith

Judy was my Supervisor during my 80-hour practicum.

Gamma Dynacare

416-555-1212

jsmith@gamma.ca

Cover Letter – maximum 1 page ONLY!!!

Purpose:

It introduces you and your resume to the employer

It gives you the opportunity to draw your reader's attention to specific qualifications

It provides a sample of your written communication skills

Opening (Tell)

- Use the receiver's name when possible
- Identify your source
- Gain the reader's attention

Body (Sell)

- Describe how you are qualified for the position
- Highlight your strengths related to the job
- Refer to your resume

Closing (Ask)

- Thank them
- Indicate your interest for an interview
- Make it easy for the reader to respond by including your phone number

Thank you Letters/Cards/Emails

- Send one of these to the interviewer within 24 hours of the interview – remember to ask for their card.

A short note expressing your interest in the job and mentioning one part of it that you would be particularly looking forward to. Print your name and then sign it!

Your Name

Your Address = street #, Street Name (include apartment/unit number if applicable)

= City, Province Postal Code

Your contact number(s)

Your email

Current Date

Their Name

Their work title, work department

Company name

Company Division

Company Address

Re: (this line is optional)

Dear NAME:

Introductory paragraph (TELL)

Body of letter = paragraphs 2 to 4 approximately (SELL)

Closing Paragraph (ASK)

Sincerely,

Your name

(if digital then no space but if hand delivered then leave enough room for a signature between the "Sincerely" and "Your name")

Resumes: One size doesn't fit all

Janis Foord Kirk

Monday, June 08, 2009

When it comes to resumes, one size doesn't necessarily fit all.

"Ten years ago, it was a discussion, do you have one resume, or do you have more?" observes Mike Roman, Vice President, consulting with the career transition firm KWA Partners in Toronto. "It's not a discussion any more. I assume many people are going to have multiple resumes."

Multiple resumes: If you groan at the very thought, take comfort in knowing that your second, third or fourth resume is seldom a complete rewrite, but instead a fine tuning of your original document.

"You can change a word here, change the sequence there," explains Roman. "You always need to be making decisions about foreground information and background information."

In other words, while the information on each of resume is basically the same you can customize your approach and shift the emphasis here and there depending on the job you're going after.

Resumes with punch and authenticity can take upwards of 50 hours to create. The process begins with data gathering to bring together in one place all relevant personal and work related information.

In your computer (or in a binder) set up a resume information bank, opening specific documents or files for:

- **Personal Information** (Who are you and how can you be reached?)
- **Objective** (What are your goals?) And yes, can have more than one objective depending on what you want your resume to accomplish.
- **Qualifications** (Why are you qualified to do it?) This is a synopsis of your experience, education, training and credentials – as they relate to your objective(s).
- **Skills** (What skills/abilities do you possess?) Be sure to add so-called "soft skills" such as communication and interpersonal skills, attitude and resourcefulness to this list.

- **Education** (What training have you had?) Use reverse chronological order to note credentials and skill development, including seminars, workshops and professional development - anything that portrays a commitment to continuous learning.
- **Work History** (What work have you done in the past?) Again, work backwards, noting all experience including volunteer and extracurricular work. Include the name and address of each employer dates of employment, positions held, duties and responsibilities.
- **Accomplishments** (What gave you a sense of achievement?) Come up with as many of these as possible using "accomplishment wording" which goes something like this: Increased market share by 15 percent; negotiated new arrangement with supplier to reduce yearly stationery costs. Indicate results whenever possible.
- **Keywords** (What words, acronyms, titles, affiliations describe your background?)
- **References** (Who will vouch for you?) Names of people who would be willing to discuss you and your abilities with prospective employers. Don't note any of these on the resume itself; instead at the end of the document write: References available on request. It's prudent, however, to have your references organized and ready to offer, as needed.

Build these files and keep them up to date. Once collected and saved, information of this kind can be used time and again to customize and target your resumes and cover letters.

*Janis Foord Kirk, one of Canada's first newspaper careers columnists, has been writing about career and workplace issues for major Canadian newspapers, notably the Toronto Star, since 1980. Her columns emphasize, career self-management, job search, work/life balance, and the need for truly "healthy workplaces". Janis is the author of **Survivability, Career Strategies for the New World of Work** which examines the myriad changes reshaping the Canadian workplace and ways in which individuals have to adapt. www.survivability.net*

Avoid These 10 Resume Mistakes

By Peter Vogt
Monster Senior Contributing Writer

It's deceptively easy to make mistakes on your resume and exceptionally difficult to repair the damage once an employer gets it. So prevention is critical, especially if you've never written one before. Here are the most common pitfalls and how you can avoid them.

1. Typos and Grammatical Errors

Your resume needs to be grammatically perfect. If it isn't, employers will read between the lines and draw not-so-flattering conclusions about you, like: "This person can't write," or "This person obviously doesn't care."

2. Lack of Specifics

Employers need to understand what you've done and accomplished. For example:

- A. Worked with employees in a restaurant setting.
- B. Recruited, hired, trained and supervised more than 20 employees in a restaurant with \$2 million in annual sales.

Both of these phrases could describe the same person, but the details and specifics in example B will more likely grab an employer's attention.

3. Attempting One Size Fits All

Whenever you try to develop a one-size-fits-all resume to send to all employers, you almost always end up with something employers will toss in the recycle bin. Employers want you to write a resume specifically for them. They expect you to clearly show how and why you fit the position in a specific organization.

4. Highlighting Duties Instead of Accomplishments

It's easy to slip into a mode where you simply start listing job duties on your resume. For example:

- Attended group meetings and recorded minutes.
- Worked with children in a day-care setting.
- Updated departmental files.

Employers, however, don't care so much about what you've done as what you've accomplished in your various activities. They're looking for statements more like these:

- Used laptop computer to record weekly meeting minutes and compiled them in a Microsoft Word-based file for future organizational reference.
- Developed three daily activities for preschool-age children and prepared them for a 10-minute holiday program performance.
- Reorganized 10 years worth of unwieldy files, making them easily accessible to department members.

5. Going on Too Long or Cutting Things Too Short

Despite what you may read or hear, there are no real rules governing the length of your resume. Why? Because human beings, who have different preferences and expectations where resumes are concerned, will be reading it.

That doesn't mean you should start sending out five-page resumes, of course. Generally speaking, you usually need to limit yourself to a maximum of two pages. But don't feel you have to use two pages if one will do. Conversely, don't cut the meat out of your resume simply to make it conform to an arbitrary one-page standard.

6. A Bad Objective

Employers do read your resume's objective statement, but too often they plow through vague pufferies like, "Seeking a challenging position that offers professional growth." Give employers something specific and, more importantly, something that focuses on their needs as well as your own. Example: "A challenging entry-level marketing position that allows me to contribute my skills and experience in fund-raising for nonprofits."

7. No Action Verbs

Avoid using phrases like "responsible for." Instead, use action verbs: "Resolved user questions as part of an IT help desk serving 4,000 students and staff."

8. Leaving Off Important Information

You may be tempted, for example, to eliminate mention of the jobs you've taken to earn extra money for school. Typically, however, the soft skills you've gained from these experiences (e.g., work ethic, time management) are more important to employers than you might think.

9. Visually Too Busy

If your resume is wall-to-wall text featuring five different fonts, it will most likely give the employer a headache. So show your resume to several other people before sending it out. Do they find it visually attractive? If what you have is hard on the eyes, revise.

10. Incorrect Contact Information

I once worked with a student whose resume seemed incredibly strong, but he wasn't getting any bites from employers. So one day, I jokingly asked him if the phone number he'd listed on his resume was correct. It wasn't. Once he changed it, he started getting the calls he'd been expecting. Moral of the story: Double-check even the most minute, taken-for-granted details -- sooner rather than later.

Source:

<http://career-advice.monster.ca/resumes-cover-letters/resume-writing-tips/ten-resume-mistakes-canada/article.aspx>

How to Build A Cross Functional Resume

Create a header that shows off who you are and how to contact you. Ensure that your name and contact information stand out from the address and that the email address is professional.

JANE DOE
123 Main Street W
Brampton, ON L6X 1N7
905-555-5555 ♦ **jdoe@gmail.com**

Career Profile / Objective:

Allows you to tell the employer what position you are applying for and what you can offer the employer.

Example: A Medical Office Administrator who offers a combination of relevant training and experience in the professional office environments.

Highlights of Qualifications

4 to 8 bullet points that highlight accomplishments that best apply to the position you are seeking. Think of yourself as a product and these are your best value features. Special awards, certifications, training that you received that will help you stand out from the competition.

Example: OSMT Certification compliments an honours diploma as a Medical Laboratory Assistant

Relevant Skills and Experience

Laboratory (160 hours practicum volunteer experience)

MCI The Doctor's Office, Brampton

- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...

Client Care and Relationship Building

- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...

- This section is an expansion of your Highlights of Qualifications
- A minimum of 4 to a maximum of 8 bullet points per heading
- A representation of accomplishments achieved through practicum, volunteer, or in the hands-on classroom learning environment
- Use adjectives and verbs; be sure to write in a way that sells the accomplishment

Example:

Demonstrated proficiency in vital signs as well as performing venipuncture, various diagnostic procedures and ECG

Action Verbs

The underlined words are especially good for pointing out accomplishments.

Management Skills administered analyzed assigned <u>attained</u> chaired consolidated contracted coordinated delegated developed directed evaluated executed <u>improved</u> <u>increased</u> organized oversaw planned prioritized produced recommended reviewed scheduled <u>strengthened</u> supervised	Communication Skills addressed arbitrated arranged authored collaborated <u>convinced</u> corresponded developed directed drafted edited enlisted formulated influenced interpreted lectured mediated moderated negotiated persuaded promoted publicized reconciled recruited spoke translated wrote	Teaching Skills adapted advised clarified coached communicated coordinated demystified developed enabled encouraged evaluated explained facilitated guided informed instructed persuaded set goals stimulated trained	Helping Skills Assessed assisted clarified coached counseled demonstrated diagnosed educated <u>expedited</u> facilitated guided motivated referred rehabilitated represented	Creative Skills acted conceptualized created customized designed developed directed established fashioned <u>founded</u> illustrated <u>initiated</u> instituted integrated <u>introduced</u> <u>invented</u> <u>originated</u> performed planned <u>revitalized</u> shaped
Research Skills clarified collected critiqued diagnosed evaluated examined extracted identified inspected interpreted interviewed investigated organized reviewed summarized surveyed systematized	Financial Skills administered allocated analyzed appraised audited balanced budgeted calculated computed developed forecast	Clerical or Detail Skills approved arranged catalogued classified collected compiled executed generated implemented inspected monitored operated organized prepared processed purchased recorded retrieved screened specified systematized tabulated validated	Technical Skills assembled built calculated computed configured designed devised engineered fabricated installed maintained operated <u>overhauled</u> performed troubleshooting programmed remodeled repaired retrieved solved <u>upgraded</u>	More Verbs for Accomplishments <u>achieved</u> <u>expanded</u> <u>improved</u> <u>pioneered</u> <u>reduced</u> (losses) <u>resolved</u> (problems) <u>restored</u> <u>spearheaded</u> <u>transformed</u>

Source: Parker, Yana. (1996). *The Damn Good Resumé Guide*.