

⌘ EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING ⌘

Résumés serve only one purpose: **TO GET AN INTERVIEW** (not a job)

The average employer spends about **30 seconds** reviewing a résumé. To get an interview yours must stand out above the rest and sell your abilities to the employer.

Your résumé should:

- Be Factual
- List your Education, Employment History, Accomplishments / Achievements
- Be **ONE** page

Résumé Tips:

- **Use Past Tense Action Words:** Operated, supervised, managed, oversaw, trained, provided, produced...
- **Only send Documents that Are Asked For.** Save the rest for the interview (i.e. references).
- **Use Standard Fonts.** Such as Calibri, Arial, Courier or Times New Roman. Font size 12 is the norm, if needed go no lower than an 11 pt font size.
- **Resume divided into 4 sections:**
 - **Personal Information:** name, address, telephone number and e-mail address. If sending to internet job board replace address information with the words "Confidential Information" and add only e-mail address or cell phone number to avoid identity theft.
 - **Skills Summary:** Include both general abilities and those abilities specific to the job you are applying for
 - **Professional (Work) Experience:** Include last 10 years of employment history. List past full-time employers and dates you worked for them. Include part-time only if jobs related to position applying for.
 - **Education:** List highest level obtained. If graduated college, do not list high school. If obtained relevant training, courses, list them.

Résumé Pitfalls:

- **Misspelling, Typos and Bad Grammar Are a "NO NO".** Errors point to poor attention to detail and that you failed to proofread your most important piece of work. Watch out for homophones, Spellcheck will not pick these up (ex: for, four, fore or there, their, they're)
- **Not enough White Space.** Too much text is hard to read and almost impossible to scan.
- **Do Not Put References on your résumé.**

☞ EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING (Cont.) ☞

Main focus of résumé should be to communicate to employer “**HERE’S WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU!**” Think about what you want to do in the future and what you can say about yourself that will cause the employer to think that you can do the job.

Résumé should explain:

What you can do:

Examples: teaching, writing reports, operating machinery, repairing equipment, mentoring employees, establishing compliance, leading meetings, budgeting

What type of person (and employee) you are:

Examples: responsible, careful, enterprising, honest, trustworthy, resourceful, reliable, innovative, creative, talented, experienced, dependable, tactful.

What are some of your accomplishments / achievements:

Examples: speak Spanish fluently, certified in CPR, achieved a 59% reduction in department problem reports within one year, promoted after six months in position, exceeded sales quota by 25% in six of the past eight quarters, completed 10-week intensive training program in AMS Processing Standards

Main Types of Résumés

1. **Chronological** – lists your jobs, along with the skills involved, in the order in which you held them, starting with the most recent. Best choice if your job history shows a clear progression of more responsibility and/or job stability.
2. **Functional** – focuses on your skills without regard to the order in which you developed them. Good choice if you are interested in demonstrating your accomplishments and skills rather than a particular job title, if you want to deemphasize having a larger number of jobs within a short period of time. Also good for career changers.
3. **Electronic** – exists to make the employer’s life easier. Résumé will be put into a computer database that will scan for certain words and qualifications. Take care to include key words and phrases computer will be looking for, and should be specific to the position: ROI, MRI, HRD, MARSHA, etc. Style can be either a chronological or functional type, but résumé will be in Plain Text format... **NO BOLD**, no bullets, no underlining, and Left Justified.

❧ SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME ❧

Jane C. Smith

123 Main Street
Monroe, NC 28112
704-289-5555
janecsmith@gmail.com

Summary of Skills

Loan officer with real estate and auto industry experience in increasingly responsible positions. Expertise in revenue generating, sales, employee training, recruiting, customer services and relationship team building. Results oriented with keen eye for detail and perfect customer satisfaction ratings. Strong organizational skills with the ability to manage multiple tasks and priorities simultaneously.

Professional Experience

First Horizon Home Loans Marshville, NC 2012-2020

Loan Officer for home mortgage lending company with \$450 million in annual sales

- Generated average sales volume of \$1.5 million in loans per month
- Coordinated all details and phases of clients' loan process from application to closing
- Maximized clients' credit rating by working with 3 credit bureaus
- Trained Real Estate Agents on mortgage products and services
- Designed training course for new agents- specifically T.R. Lawing Realty
- Instituted highly successful mortgage application process

Hendrick Motors Charlotte, NC 2004-2012

Finance Director for auto dealer with 3,000 new and used car sales per year

- Oversaw average of 300 auto loans per month with 17 different lenders, including GMAC, and Wachovia
- Achieved most profitable GM dealer finance department in Southeast
- Reduced sales costs by collaborating with accountants
- Managed more than \$4 million of contract dues per month
- Supervised 4-6 Settlement Agents on a daily basis; hired, trained and motivated agents
- Assisted Sales Managers in selling cars and trained Car Sales Representatives

Education and Training

First Horizon University Greensboro, NC 2012

Certificate in Real Estate Sales

Honda Training Center Raleigh, NC 2011

Certificate in Professional Selling

NC Agricultural and Technical College Greensboro, NC BS Degree

Business Administration

☞ SAMPLE ELECTRONIC RESUME ☞

JANE C. SMITH
123 Main Street
Monroe, NC 28112
704-289-5555
janecsmith@gmail.com

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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2012 – 2020

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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2012
Certificate in Real Estate Sales

Honda Training Center, Raleigh, NC
2011
Certificate in Professional Selling

NC Agricultural and Technical College, Greensboro, NC
BS Degree, Business Administration

❧ SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL RESUME ❧

Douglas R. Jones

425 Murphy Road
Monroe, NC 28112
704-289-5555
douglasrjones@hotmail.com

Summary of Skills

Strong Administrative Professional with experience in retail and service industries. Expertise in Microsoft Office Suite including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook. Personable and dependable with strong customer service as well as accounting skills.

Professional Skills

Customer Service

- Handled retail customers for retail home goods company with over \$500,000 in annual sales for five years with speed and accuracy
- Awarded employee of the month for outstanding service over 9 times within a 3 year period

Accounting

- Maintained financial records of company
- Managed accounts receivable, payable, employee payroll and customer invoicing
- Produced quarterly and annual financial reports
- Operated computerized bookkeeping system

Office Technology

- Demonstrated skills and competency in clerical procedures through work and training including: Word Processing, Billing, Data Entry, Record Keeping, Filing and Shipping Materials
- Handled variety of office duties, including receptionist, data entry, and multi-lined telephone
- Commended by supervisors for professional manner

Education and Training

Monroe High School	Monroe, NC	Diploma
New Horizons Training Center	Charlotte, NC	2016
Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel and PowerPoint)		Certificate

Professional Experience

R& B Retailers	Marshville, NC	2014-2021
Customer Service Representative		
Union County Public Library	Monroe, NC	2011-2014
Library Aide		
Goodson's Rental Properties	Waxhaw, NC	2006-2011
Clerk		

❧ **SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE** ❧

Jane C. Smith
123 Main Street
Monroe, NC 28112
704-289-5555
janecsmith@gmail.com

References

Mr. Jim Stover
Broker, First Horizon Home Loans
2435 Roosevelt Blvd
Monroe, NC 28110
704-283-6598
jstover@fhhl.com
Relationship: Supervisor

Mr. Dale Hendrick
Owner, Hendrick Motors
5601 East Independence Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28212
704-565-9875
dhendrick@hendrickmotors.com
Relationship: Previous Supervisor

Ms. Rhonda Bellinger
Sales Manager, Hendrick Motors
5601 East Independence Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28212
704-565-9875
rbellinger@hendrickmotors.com
Relationship: Previous co-worker

Note: Refrain from using family or friends

∞ THE COVER LETTER ∞

A cover letter is used to accompany any résumé mailed to a prospective employer. Since employers will get their first impression of you in a cover letter, don't underestimate its importance. The cover letter and the résumé have the same goal – to get the interview – but they should contain different information. The purpose of the cover letter is to develop a rapport with the hiring manager and give him or her an idea of your personality type.

Some guidelines to remember

- Keep your cover letter short. Do not restate your entire résumé in your cover letter.
- Keep it clear, concise, and simple. Tell them:
 - ❖ Where you learned about the job.
 - ❖ Why you're the right candidate for the job.
 - ❖ How they can contact you and when you will follow up.
- Experts say that your cover letter should be no more than three paragraphs and fewer than 150 words.
- Use critical buzzwords that focus on your industry knowledge and skill set.
- Format in business-letter style using a font size of 10 or 12. Choose an easy-to-read font style, such as Arial or Times New Roman.
- Start with your name, your address, and the date.
- Do include a reference line indicating the position for which you're applying as well as the job reference number, if it's listed.
- Include a salutation. The letter has greater impact if addressed to the actual person that will be responsible for hiring.

Opening – Gain Their Attention:

The best approach in the leading sentence is to stick with the facts and simply state why you're writing the letter. The second sentence should then act as your attention-getter.

Body – Sell Yourself:

Here's where you spell out why they should hire you. If you have particular education or experience - point it out. You need to relate your skills to their job requirements.

Closing – Once Again:

State why they should hire you, ask for the interview and indicate any follow-up. Finally, add a complimentary closing, such as "Sincerely yours," your name, contact information, and a list of any enclosures. Do not forget to sign the letter before mailing.

∞ THE COVER LETTER ∞

Mr. Samuel Smith
12345 Any Street
Roseville, CA 98765
302-623-1234

February 11, 2021

Mr. John Lewis
The Factory Store
2819 4th Avenue
Roseville, CA 98765

Re: Assistant Store Manager, Position #1672

Dear Mr. Lewis:

Enclosed is my résumé for the Assistant Store Manager position advertised in the March 20-26 *Employment Guide*. Being experienced in retail management and a frequent shopper at The Factory Store, I feel that I would be a great addition to your Roseville retail outlet.

In my three years at the Quick Shop Center, I was promoted from Head Cashier to Store Supervisor and recognized for my ability to direct employees, hold them accountable, and get bottom-line results. Additionally, I was responsible for increasing sales in the store's gift shop by 20% through improving and increasing inventory.

As I paid my way through community college by working in retail, I know the value of hard work and am ready to bring that work ethic to The Factory Store. I would appreciate an opportunity to interview for the position and will contact your office next Wednesday.

Sincerely,

Samuel Smith

Enclosure: Resume

✧ THE COVER LETTER ✧

WHY SOME COVER LETTERS FAIL

Often job applicants make the mistake of assuming that employers never really read the cover letter, so they don't spend much time putting one together. These are generally the same applicants questioning why they were not called in for an interview.

Let's put an end to the myth right now – hiring managers do indeed read cover letters! Your cover letter is the first impression an employer has about you, so make sure it stands out.

Red Flags

- Overall appearance is sloppy.
- Cover letter paper does not match the résumé paper.
- Contact information is not provided and the candidate appears unavailable.
- Spelling and/or grammatical errors are easily spotted.
- Letter is not addressed to the name that appears in the ad.
- Letter does not include an opening, body, and close.
- There is no interesting, attention-grabbing opening statement.
- There is no reference to a specific position sought.
- Applicants use weak language and do not try to sell themselves.
- Information is duplicated word-for-word from the résumé.
- Job seeker tries to use big words to impress the reader rather than keeping language simple and concise.
- Letter reads generically-it is obvious that no time was taken to customize to a particular job title, industry, etc.
- It is obvious to the reader that the applicant is bragging or exaggerating about his/her past experiences and accomplishments.
- Salary history is not included when requested.
- There is no indication of follow-up action by candidate.

✂ FOLLOW UP LETTER ✂

Often your chances of employment can be increased by making another contact with the employer. This can be done by a telephone call or a thank-you letter. The thank-you letter is often the most common follow up method

FOLLOW UP LETTER: A way to avoid “Out of Sight – Out of Mind”

A thank-you letter may be typed **OR** neatly handwritten on personal stationary.

The letter should be written soon after the company or job fair interview, the next day is best!

The letter should state your continued interest in the job and your appreciation of their time spent with you during the interview.

Directions: Write a thank-you note to an employer similar to the sample below.

AFTER COMPANY INTERVIEW

6200 Waverly Street
Burlington, NC 27215

February 26, 2021

Mr. Mark J. Raynard
General Manager
Johnson Electronics, Inc.
230 Washington Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27408

Dear Mr. Raynard,

Thank you for considering me for the position of electronics technician with your company. I am very impressed with your company and the enthusiasm that your employees have about their jobs.

If you need additional information, please contact me. Thank you again for your time and interest in me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mark Anderson

Resume Tips

Today's job seeker is confronted with a variety of on-line templates and well-meaning individuals that will write your résumé for you. The purpose of the résumé is to get an interview and when you make it to the interview, you are the one that has to defend what is in it.

Below are some tips to help you create a résumé that will help you get the interview that you are looking for.

Do:

1. Target your résumé to the job posting that you are applying for
2. Keep it to one page. (Your resume is scanned, not read)
3. Use a simple font that takes little space; Arial, Calibri, Courier or Times New Roman
4. Use 12 point font
5. Use single line spacing
6. Use good grammar, spelling and standard capitalization
7. Watch for homophones (ex; for, four fore) Spell check will not differentiate
8. Include a contact section, centered at the top with your name, mail address, phone number and e-mail address. Include a Linked In address if you have a profile listed
9. Next, include a professional summary, describing skills you have that are in the job posting
10. List your last ten years of employment history
11. Write 3-4 good accomplishment statements that demonstrate positive, quantifiable results for each employer in fragmented sentences, listed with simple round bullets
12. Use past tense action verbs
13. Write using the same verbiage that the employer used in the job posting
14. The last section should be your education/Training/Certifications
 - a. List the highest level of education and concentration
 - b. Training listed should be relevant to the job posting
 - c. Certifications should be current and applicable to the job posting

Don't:

1. Use abbreviations
2. Include pictures or graphics
3. Copy and paste from the job posting
4. Add a line that says "References available Upon Request" or include them on the résumé
5. Lie or deceive, use facts

Remember, the employer is looking for an asset, not a liability. When you have finished, read it over and ask yourself, "Would I hire me?"

Interview Tips

Preparation

- Research the employer before completing the application, you want to be sure you would like to work there and you can use the information in the interview
- Eat something light and avoid onions, garlic or spices that have lingering odors
- Avoid alcoholic beverages. If the interview is during lunch and the interviewer offers one, politely decline it.
- Do not smoke before the interview
- Do not bring any one with you

Grooming

- Dress one step above the position that you are applying for
- Your attire should be professional and conservative
- Clothing should be clean and neatly pressed
- Shoes should be in good condition and polished. Do not wear athletic shoes. Women should wear flat or low heel shoes, no open toes
- Trim fingernails appropriately, polish should be neutral or soft
- Cover tattoos

Things to avoid:

- Cologne/Perfume
- Excessive/Gaudy jewelry and makeup
- Wild hairdos
- Hats

Bring:

- A pad folio with a clean lined pad and black pen for taking notes
- Copies of your résumé and reference document
- Business cards

Arrival

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early, no earlier and never late
- Announce your arrival to the receptionist
- Use the rest room and get a drink of water
- Turn off your cell phone
- Do not chew gum

Interview

- Introduce yourself to the interviewer with a smile and give a brief, firm handshake
- Sit where you are instructed to sit. Do not slouch, place your feet on the floor in front of you and rest your hands on your lap, knees or armrest of chair. Avoid bouncing your feet or jittering.

When answering questions:

- Restate the question when answering
- Speak clearly and direct your answers to the interviewer
- Use complete sentences and avoid yes/no answers
- Do not cover your mouth with your hand or mumble
- Maintain good eye contact

At end of interview:

- It is OK to ask questions, but have them prepared
- Avoid questions about benefits or pay
- Send a thank you note within 24 hours (e-mail is OK)

Sample Interview Questions

These are common questions that an interviewer may ask during the interview. Be prepared with a response that shows thought, logical progression, ability to solve problems and achieve positive results. Remember, the employer wants someone who will be an asset to the company and will improve results or drive the bottom line!

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. How would you describe yourself?
3. How would your friends describe you?
4. How would former co-workers describe you?
5. Why did you leave your last job?
6. How do you explain the gap in your work history?
7. What two or three things do you value most in a job?
8. Describe your ideal job/manager.
9. What did you like most/least about your last job?
10. What is your greatest strength? Weakness?
11. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
12. Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation and what you did to get through it with positive results.
13. Tell me the most successful thing you have accomplished in your life.
14. Tell about a situation when you had conflict with a co-worker or supervisor and how you resolved it.
15. Have you ever been able to convince someone to see something your way when they thought they were right?
16. Have you ever had to think on your feet to get out of a difficult situation?
17. What do you know about our company? Our competition?
18. Why do you want to work for this company?
19. Why should I hire you over the other candidates for the position?
20. What are your salary expectations?

Other

The trend today is toward more abstract questions to test one's ability to handle stress and pressure, to demonstrate innovation and creativity, or to just be able to think on your feet. How would you respond to these?

1. What is your favorite color?
2. If you were a kitchen appliance, what would it be?
3. What is your favorite animal?
4. If you could travel back in time, when would you want to live?
5. If you could visit another planet, what would it be?

