

Résumé and Cover Letter Guide

State Fair Community College
Career Services · Student Services Office, Hopkins
Center · Sedalia, MO 660-596-7306

<http://www.sfccmo.edu/pages/252.asp>



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What is a Résumé?

- A tool for you to use to market yourself towards a specific field or employer.
- An outline of past work history and education to convey your qualifications and relevant experiences to an employer.
- A representation of who you are as a person tailored to pique the employer's interest and that shows how you fit a specific job or position.
- A mechanism intended to get you an interview.

Different Types of Résumés

1. Chronological: The most traditional type of résumé that people use. The Work Experience section is set up so that the most recently held position is listed first. Jobs are then listed so the least recent job is the last one listed. The advantages of this format are that it is easily recognizable by employers and it allows you to show what you did in each position.
2. Functional: This résumé highlights the skills and abilities that you have gained from your work experience, your extracurricular activities, and your volunteer involvement. This format does not focus on dates or positions but on accomplishments and skills. This would be used if you have skills that are easily transferred to the position for which you are applying.
3. Combination: Uses both chronological and functional styles including a competencies section and a description of each job.

The Pieces of a CHRONOLOGICAL Résumé

1. Personal Data-This Section will always include:

- ✓ Your Name (the BIGGEST thing on the page)
- ✓ Local address (include permanent address if different)
- ✓ Local phone number (include permanent phone number if different)
- ✓ E-mail address (ONLY if checked regularly)

This section should not include photos, hobbies, personal interests or other personal information unless preferred by your field.

2. Objective- This section is Optional but if included should be under your contact information and make a concise positive statement about your work goals. Your objective indicates:
 - ✓ Job title
 - ✓ Place
 - ✓ Type of Job

3. Education- Include:

- ✓ The name of the school, city and state
- ✓ Your degree, major, date of graduation or expected graduation (month and year)
- ✓ Minor and/or area of concentration
- ✓ GPA, cumulative and/or that of a major, if it is above 3.0
- ✓ Relevant coursework if it is not implied by your major
- ✓ Other colleges you have attended
- ✓ Accomplishments (consistently worked 20-25 hours per week while full time student)

Do not include high school information if you have substantial post-secondary education or training.

4. Work History- Include:

- ✓ Job Title, place of employment, city and state, dates of employment
- ✓ Describe each job in a way that clearly highlights relevant skills. Use short concise statements using past tense action verbs, high impact adverbs, and qualifying adjectives (see list on career services website)
- ✓ Quantify when possible (supervised a staff of 10, increased sales by 12%)
- ✓ Relate your experience to the position of interest.
- ✓ Use alternative headings to separate experience that is most directly related to your objective.

5. Related Professional Information- Any of the following could be their own category but could be included on your résumé if appropriate in your area of interest.

- ✓ Licenses and Certificates currently held
- ✓ Honors, scholarships, awards, and fellowships earned
- ✓ Professional Organization memberships and offices held
- ✓ Affiliations with civic and community groups and volunteer work
- ✓ Extracurricular activities and leadership
- ✓ Internship or externship experiences

6. References-

Currently References' names, addresses, and phone numbers are listed on a separate sheet of paper. Your contact information needs to be at that top of this sheet as well, in case it was to become separated from your cover letter and résumé. It is not necessary to state that references are available, references are expected, and should always be sent with your cover letter and résumé.

Functional Résumés

If you choose a functional résumé you will place Competencies or Career-Related Skills just before work history or education. All other areas are as described above. See the example résumé on page 6.

Competencies or Career Related Skills- Inclusion of this section on your résumé can be very beneficial, especially if you do not have much work experience. You would have one to five subheadings that would describe the skills that you acquired through any activities and/or jobs you have been involve wit

Competencies or Career Related Skill examples include:

- ✓ Financial skills
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Creative skills
- ✓ Computer skills
- ✓ Writing skills
- ✓ Leadership skills
- ✓ Foreign Language skills

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is meant to:

- **tell** the employer what type of position you are seeking and provide your résumé objective.
- **entice** the employer to want to learn more about you.
- **impress** the employer by showcasing your knowledge about the company and its goals.
- **show** the employer how well you can express yourself.

The Parts of your COVER LETTER

Address the letter to a specific individual

- Use the name of the person responsible for hiring
- Using a specific job title is also acceptable (Director of Academic Admissions)
- Dear Sir or Madam is no longer considered proper

Write an attention-getting Introduction

State the position for which you are applying

Point out your relevant qualifications

Explain why the employer would benefit from hiring YOU.

- Avoid using "I" to start every sentence

Tell the employer when you plan to contact them with a specific time

- 1 week, 10 days
- Follow through on what you say you will do

Match your résumé and cover letter's stationary in size, weight and shade

Do not exceed one page.

Sound Positive and Confident!

Rowdy Roadrunner

Current Address

100 Road Runner Court, Room 555
Sedalia, Missouri 65301
(660)530-5800
rowdy@runner.sfcc.edu

Permanent Address

12567 County Road Z
Roadrunnerville, Missouri 65000
(660) 123-4567

EDUCATION

Associate of Applied Science in Accounting
State Fair Community College Sedalia, Missouri
Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2010
GPA 3.5/4.0

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Associate, Breaktime Service Station, Sedalia, Missouri;
September 2002 –Present

- ❖ Served Customers in a timely and courteous manner.
- ❖ Ordered and displayed various merchandise.
- ❖ Performed closing procedures nightly.
- ❖ Received Employee of the Month Award based on Performance.

Internal Auditor, Central Accounting Services, Sedalia, Missouri;
June 2001 – August 2001

- ❖ Participated in audit teams to review internal controls within various departments.
- ❖ Assisted in the completion of labor accounting and asset management in audits.
- ❖ Reviewed audit findings with various levels of management.

Camp Counselor, Camp Geiger, St. Joseph, Missouri;
June 2000 – August 2000

- ❖ Supervised a group of 9 boy scouts up to age 14.
- ❖ Created weekly curriculums and projects related to given themes.
- ❖ Communicated with parents about children's progress in the camp setting.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Volunteer, Humane Society, January 2005 – Present

Publicity Co-Chair, Habitat for Humanity, September 2004-August 2005

HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

Dean's List – 7 out of 8 Semesters
Member, Phi Theta Kappa
Chapter President, Phi Beta Lambda, 2009-2010
A+ Scholarship
Society of Professional Accountants
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

Rowdy Roadrunner

Current Address: 100 Road Runner Court, Room 555, Sedalia, Missouri 65301

Permanent Address: 12567 County Road Z Roadrunnerville, Missouri 65000

Contact Information: (660)123-4567 rowdy@runner.sfcc.edu

COMPETENCIES

❖ Financial Skills

- Assisted in the completion of labor accounting and asset management audits.
- Worked with a team of peers reviewing internal controls within several departments.

❖ Communication Skills

- Greeted and served customers in a timely and courteous manner.
- Reviewed audit findings with all levels of corporate management.
- Acquired verbal communication abilities through one-on-one interactions with parents and their children.

❖ Creative Skills

- Designed advertisements with the use of desktop publishing programs.
- Developed organization and design skills displaying various merchandise
- Created weekly curriculums and projects related to given themes for children.

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Date

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

(Space down four spaces)

Mr./Mrs. Recruiter's Full name
Recruiter's Title
Department Name
Company Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Mrs. Last Name Only,

The opening paragraph should state **why you are writing** and why you are interested in the organization. If you are writing a letter of application you should name the specific position for which you are applying. Also, tell the employer how you became aware of the vacancy. If a former employer or someone else referred you to the employer, this is the best place to drop that person's name and mention that he or she suggested you write. A letter of inquiry should provide evidence of your career-mindedness; it helps to refer to specific job functions, if not titles, when trying to determine if a vacancy exists.

The second paragraph is where you draw attention to your résumé and highlight specific skills relevant to the potential employer. This paragraph is devoted to explaining **how you are qualified**. Cite achievements and qualifications related to the position desired. If you have qualifications that are not noted on your résumé, this is your opportunity to discuss them.

The third paragraph states **why you are right for the job**. Use this paragraph to demonstrate your knowledge of the employer and their goals. Tell them why you should be considered for the position you are applying for. A little bit of homework on the company or the industry can really pay off by showing the employer that you are serious about your application, and informed about the type of work and experience that it requires.

The closing paragraph states **what you will do next** (such as calling to arrange and appointment at the employer's convenience) or what you would like the recipient of the letter to do next. Request action. Ask for an interview. Inform the employer when you will make contact with them again if appropriate. Either here or in you closing, thank the employer for their time. Restate you phone number and email address in case this becomes separated from your résumé.

Sincerely,

Your Signature Here

Your Name Typed

Enclosure(s) (This indicates that your résumé and/or additional materials are enclosed.)

Things to remember when writing your Cover Letter and Résumé

Always have other people look it over before you send it to employers.

Friends, the Career Center, faculty and advisors or people in the field you anticipate entering

Utilize the Career Center.

Send your resume by email or come see us in person and we'll be happy to look over it in person. It should only take a few minutes.

Put your résumé on high quality paper.

20 pound white, off white, light tan, or light grey are your best options. Think about color and type if you are going to fax or scan your résumé.

Be brief and prioritize your résumé.

Employers only spend about 30 – 40 seconds looking at a résumé. Put the important information first.

Don't use abbreviations.

Spell out words in addresses, names of states, and the type of degree you have.

Proofread your resume one last time before sending it to employers.

You may find that one mistake you missed before! Make sure you fix it. Use paper clips instead of staples, and place your resume in a large envelope instead of folding when mailing to prospective employers.

Electronic Resumes can be sent in multiple forms.

- Copy and paste your résumé into the body into the email. You don't have much control of the format in this method though.
- Attaching the résumé as a word document can also work. But some employers may have compatibility issues, or may be hesitant to open attachment for fear of viruses. Sending your resume as a PDF or HTML attachment provides for the greatest compatibility options.
- Online application forms. Some employers expect you to upload your résumé online.
- Some companies will scan your résumé into a database and let their computers make an initial cut. Because of this make sure to include keywords and nouns for your profession. In this case, avoid using underline, italics, large graphics, and fancy fonts as they will not scan well.