

GLC20 Unit 3: Preparations for Change

Activity 4: Application, Resume, Cover Letter

Overview

You will examine the key components of a resume and learn about various resume formats by looking at samples. People often overlook the importance of a proper cover letter to accompany the resume. After gathering all of the information about yourself, you will create your own resume, cover letter, and application form and produce a good copy for you to keep.

Lesson

Resumes

Your resume is an important component in the success of your job search. Your resume and cover letter are the first contact you will have with an employer, so making a strong impression is important. It will take employers seconds to decide whether your resume gets tossed or if they would like to interview you.

How Do They Decide?

If your resume shows them that you have the skills and experience that match those needed for the job, then your phone will be ringing. In other words, your resume has to show the employer what value you would be to the company by detailing your skills and experience that would be of benefit to the position.

Three Types of Resumes

Chronological

This is the most common type of resume. When using this type of resume, list your previous employment and education in reverse chronological order. Start off with your most recent job and work your way backwards, indicating dates.

A chronological resume is used to focus on your job experience and your educational training. When using this type of resume, emphasize your job title. Also include job descriptions, duties, and achievements. For education, you need to put emphasis on degrees, diplomas, and courses taken, but also include accomplishments.

Visit www.netxsteps.org/resume/resform1.html to see a Chronological Resume.

Functional

If you want a resume that focuses on your skills and personal attributes and not on your previous education or employment history, a functional resume may be better for you.

This type of resume works well for those who do not have a lot of previous work experience in the field they are pursuing or for new graduates.

Visit www.netxsteps.org/resume/resform2.html to see a Functional Resume.

Combination

If you want to focus on your skills, accomplishments, and experience, and also provide a chronological listing of employment and education, a combination resume may meet your needs.

The problem with this type of resume is that it can be longer, because the intention is to stress both skills and job experience. If you have a lot of experience in the area of the job that you are applying for and the skills acquired through educational training, then you should use this type of resume.

Visit www.netxsteps.org/resume/resform3.html to see a Combination Resume.

Process for Writing an Effective Resume

The process for writing an effective resume includes five stages.

1. Gathering information
2. Sorting information that is relevant to your target job
3. Choosing the right format
4. Writing a rough draft
5. Editing your draft copy to produce a good copy

Where do I start?

Create a file on the computer to detail and keep track of all your information you will need to create your resume. You will not use all the information you list on every resume you create, but having all your information in one place will make it easy to access. This can be called your "Paper Trail".

The Paper Trail

For each of the following nine categories, list as much information about yourself as you can. Use point form and make sure to include EVERYTHING. This will be the beginning of your "Paper Trail" and is the first step in the process of writing an effective resume. This is the most important step and the hardest one.

Sorting your information and deciding on what to keep and what not to keep is the second step, and you will have a chance to do that later. Create your paper trail document and save it, as you will need this every time you update your resume (in future years).

Here are the 9 categories:

1. Education

List all education you received, including high school, college, university. Include cities and provinces in which the schools are located, years attended, year graduated (or expected to graduate). Also, include courses taken, scholarships, and any awards you may have won while attending school.

2. Workshops, Seminars, Professional Development, Courses

List all the courses (not your school courses) you have completed. Anything from a cooking or crafts class to First Aid, WHMIS, CPR, Babysitting, Bronze Cross, etc. Include the full name of the course, where and when you took it, and the certificate name, if one was granted.

3. Trades, Certificates, Licenses

List the proper name of the certificate or license, the institution that granted the license, the year it was received and the date of any renewals, if applicable.

4. Professional Memberships

List memberships in any professional organizations.

5. Awards and Achievements

List awards or achievements from work, school, or the community.

6. Employment History

List each job that you have had. Include employer name, address, your job title, and the date you started and ended work there. List your job duties and include special projects or achievements while employed at each organization.

7. Volunteer Work

List all your volunteer work, including the name and address of the organization, your volunteer position title, the dates you were involved with the organization, and a description of your duties.

8. Hobbies / Interests

List all the things you enjoy doing in your spare time. Include interests that show a range of activities, for example, independent and group activities, physical activities, etc.

9. References

List at least three names of people who can be used as references. You may list more so you have this information handy in case you cannot use one of your first three choices. These individuals may include former supervisors (work and volunteer), teachers, coaches, family friends, or neighbours. Include their full name, job title, work address, home address (where applicable), and phone number. Make sure you ask them to act as a reference for you BEFORE you list them. Use people that will give you a good reference.

Cover Letter

What is a Cover Letter?

- it is a one page document that introduces your resume to the employer
- it should be typed unless a hand written cover letter is requested by the employer

The Purpose of a Cover Letter

- to direct your resume to the appropriate person
- to introduce you and your resume to a potential employer
- to highlight your interests and qualifications that specifically match the position you are applying for
- to create a favorable impression persuading the employer to review your resume
- to request an interview

Cover Letter Format

- an introductory paragraph that shows your interest and states your goals in pursuing a job
- a paragraph that outlines your skills and strengths and matches them to the employer's job requirements
- a background paragraph that shows your education and relevant experience
- a statement of appreciation

Preparation

- research both the organization and the position to which you are applying
- assess the job requirements and match them to your specific qualifications

Visit www.netxsteps.org/resume/covsamp.html to see samples of cover letters at NextSteps.

Application Form

Some positions require you to fill out an application form. Be brief, concise, and accurate with your information. Proofread your application and ensure that there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes. Try to avoid crossing things out.

Helpful hints for writing an application:

- use a black or blue pen, never red.
- PRINT neatly, in bold letters.
- don't write the year of your high school graduation.
- leave no blank spaces; if something doesn't apply to you (e.g., military experience), write "N/A."
- where it says "salary desired," write "open" or "negotiable."
- have the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all past employers and references on the application.

Assignment

- 1. Resume** - Since most students do not have extensive work or educational experience when they begin their career pursuit, a functional resume that highlights their skills, personality, and attributes may be more beneficial - although you are not limited to that format. Use the **Resume Planning Sheet** to start organizing the information that you will need on your resume. Once you have completed the Resume Planning Sheet, find a job advertised in the local paper or online and create a resume using the format you feel is the most appropriate. You will submit the completed resume and Resume Planning Sheet.
- 2. Cover Letter** - You already selected a job you are interested in when you prepared your resume. You are now going to prepare a cover letter to accompany your resume for that job. Follow the cover letter format from the lesson. Before you start, complete the **Cover Letter Planning Sheet**. You will submit the completed cover letter and the planning sheet.
- 3. Job Application** - You already selected a job you are interested in when you prepared your resume and cover letter. You are now going to complete a sample job application for that job. Use the helpful hints from the lesson. You will submit the completed sample application form.

Resume Planning Sheet

PERSONAL DATA	<p>Name: Full Address: Phone Number: or Cell Number:</p>
JOB GOAL	<p>To obtain a position in:</p> <p>(be specific to the job for which you are applying)</p>
SPECIAL SKILLS	<p>Target your personal skills to the job you are applying for.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
EDUCATION	<p>Grade: School: Year: Subject pathway you are pursuing:</p> <p>(Ensure that your education is listed in <u>reverse chronological order</u>. Include diplomas, awards, and certificates that you have received.)</p>
WORK HISTORY	<p>Company Name: City: Dates of employment:</p> <p>(You may want to add additional info depending on the type of resume you select.)</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<p>You may want to add additional headings that would make you more marketable to a potential employer.</p> <p>(Go to http://www.nextsteps.org/resume/reswords.html#headings) for ideas.</p>
REFERENCES	<p>On a resume you can write: Available upon request.</p> <p>Work or Academic References: Position or Title: Full Address: Work Telephone Number:</p> <p>You should contact people who could offer information about your strengths and weaknesses. There are three types of references: Work Reference (e.g., former supervisor) Academic Reference (e.g., former teacher) Character Reference (e.g., soccer coach, volunteer co-ordinator)</p>

Cover Letter Planning Sheet

Your Name:

Your Address:

Your City, Province, Postal Code:

Date of Letter:

Employer's Name:

Employer's Title:

Company Name:

Company Address:

Company City, Province, Postal Code:

Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (Name of Employer):

RE: POSITION YOU ARE APPLYING FOR WITH THE COMPANY

Introduction:

What is the position you are applying for?

Why are you applying for the job?

How did you learn about the job opening?

Explain why you are writing. Name the position for which you are applying and indicate how you heard of the opening.

Body of Letter -

What are your qualifications and skills as they relate to the job?

If you are applying to a job ad, include a paragraph (or more) which shows that you have the requirements for the position. These could include academic qualifications, skills, and qualities. This makes the task of matching you to the job easy.

Don't forget to mention your resume.

Closing - Use an appropriate closing (e.g., "I look forward to hearing from you and can be reached at 416-867-5309.") Don't forget to personally thank the reader for taking the time to read your letter.

Sincerely yours,

Your signature

Your name typewritten

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT (SAMPLE)

Personal						
Last Name			First Name			Middle
Apt. No.	No.	Street	City	Province	Postal Code	Tel. No.
						()
Position(s) applied for:				Rate of pay expected? \$ per		
Referred by:						
Are you applying for a full- or part-time position?					No. of hours:	
Specify the days and hours that you are available during the week.						
How did you learn of our company?						
Are you legally entitled to work in Canada? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence for which a pardon has not been granted? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
If hired, on what date will you be available to start working?						

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (LIST IN ORDER OF PRESENT/LAST EMPLOYER)						
From/To	Position	Name and Address of Employer	Supervisor's Name	Tel. No.	Duties and Responsibilities	Reason(s) for leaving
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/				()		
/				()		
/				()		
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Education and Training

School	Address	Highest Grade Completed	Degree, Diploma, Licence, or Certificate
High school			
College/University			
Vocational/Business Or Other			
List any other Professional Designations			
Other Special Skills and Training:			
Typing/Computer skills (Indicate proficiency in particular software):			
Extracurricular activities, awards, etc.			

Personal References

Name	Occupation	Phone No.
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		()

The details of this application are true and complete. I understand that if employed, falsified statements on this application shall be considered sufficient cause for dismissal.

Applicant's signature: _____	Date: _____
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