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## **Employers and Your Resume**

**Looking for work in today's job market?**

**Start by developing a resume that will get you noticed and invited for interviews!**

When looking for work, resumes are the one aspect of the job search in which you, the job seeker, have TOTAL control. However, recent research by Ladders, a Manhattan-based company providing job search services for over 16 years, indicates that today's recruiters and/or employers generally look at an applicant's resume for about six to 7.4 seconds, sometimes even less. They look at specific areas and/or specific headings in order to determine how an applicant meets the job requirements and what sorts of skills he or she possesses before they make the initial 'fit or no fit' decision on the applicant.

The 2018 research conducted by Ladders used a two-stage process. In stage one, recruiters/employers were timed as they reviewed stacks of resumes to identify potential candidates. They were then observed using eye tracking technology which examined their eye movements to "record and analyze where and how long someone focuses when digesting a piece of information or completing a task."

The study concluded that during the brief time that recruiters/employers spend with your resume, they will look at six basic items – your name, current title and company, current position start and end dates, previous title and company, previous position start and end dates, and education. In fact, the recruiters and employers studied by Ladders spent more time concentrating on position titles than on any other portion of the resumes they reviewed. They also preferred clear, simple layouts and short explanatory descriptions. So, what can this tell you about creating an effective resume? Make every word count!

### **Pre-resume Prep . . . the Generic Job Application**

The first step in drafting an effective resume is to ensure that all of your relevant information is available and ready to include. However, for many of us, it is oftentimes difficult to remember all of the positions we have held or when exactly they took place. One solution is to download a generic application form from websites such as <https://www.pdfFiller.com/en/catalog/generic-application-for-employment> and fill it out. It may take you some time to complete the application, especially if you have been in the labor market for several years, but by compiling a job application, you can ensure that all of your personal information and job history is contained in one place and is ready to include on your resume. And, for those positions in which an application is required in addition to a resume, you will have your application completed and ready to submit!

## Resume Fundamentals

A resume highlights your skills, work experience and education as they relate to the specific job you are seeking. Resumes come in all shapes and sizes, and no one style is right for every position. So, to be successful when looking for work, write a resume that contains relevant information and targets (or matches) the job for which you are applying. Remember that each resume should emphasize your accomplishments in order to show a potential employer that you are qualified for the work you want.

According to today's employers, a successful resume should include the following four sections. Refer to the sample resumes and templates on pages 5 -16 for more detailed information on how these sections (or headings) can be used.

### Contact Information

The first thing to write on your resume is your **name** and **contact information**. **It is not necessary or required to list your street address, city and state**, but if included, be aware that employers might not consider applicants who commute over a certain distance. **Do** use either an e-mail address or telephone number (or both), and make sure that your e-mail address is professional, such as J.Smith@email.com.

### Career Summary (also called Professional Qualifications or Skills & Abilities)

Matching your skills, abilities or qualifications to the keywords in the job listing = **targeting** your resume to what the employer wants. Although the heading can be titled differently based on the position for which you are applying, you must **always** demonstrate how you meet the minimum job requirements. Only use about three to eight words or short phrases to describe your qualifications, 'soft' skills (personality traits or people skills) and transferable skills' (the abilities you have to do a certain job). Be specific – if the job listing requires knowledge of Microsoft Excel, state that you are "Proficient" or "Knowledgeable in MS Excel".

### Work or Professional Experience

This information is crucial for employers and is generally listed right under your skills and abilities. Include your last **10** years of work (**No more than 20**), and give the name of the employer, city and state in which you worked and dates (at least the years) that you were employed. **Include relevant details and accomplishments** for each job included, and list **all** jobs, even temporary or seasonal ones, so that there are no gaps in employment.

If the work experience you have matches the job listing for which you are applying, title this section "**Relevant Work Experience**". If you have other work experience that is not related to the job you are seeking, list it separately as "**Additional Work Experience**".

### Education

This section covers school(s) attended and any degree(s) received. Dates are not needed, unless you have graduated within the last 10 years, you have minimal work experience or you are attending school in-between jobs. **Certifications** and **Licenses** can be included here or placed under a separate heading. License numbers are not necessary.

## Resume **Do's** and **Don'ts**

### Do . . .

- ✓ Keep your resume to only one page if possible . . . no more than two. Use quality resume paper in colors like white, cream, pale blue or light gray.
- ✓ Use current 'standard' fonts such as Arial, Verdana or Calibri in either size 11 or 12. **Bold**, CAPITALIZE, *italicize* or underline resume headings, but only use **one** style.
- ✓ Match your skills, abilities or qualifications to the keywords in the job listing = **TARGETING**.
- ✓ Write your resume using words that any employer could understand. Use action words like "supervised", "operated" or "directed" to describe what you did in a particular job.
- ✓ Pay attention to the small stuff. Make sure your resume is free of typos and inappropriate lowercase letters, like "united states" or "i" rather than "United States" or "I". Proofread your resume at least twice and then have someone else read it a third time.

### Don't . . .

- ✗ Use phrases like "I did this" or "my" when discussing your work or educational experience.
- ✗ List personal information such as age, marital status, social security number or hobbies.
- ✗ Include references on your resume. List them on a separate page and do not send them unless requested by the employer.
- ✗ Rely on acronyms or military jargon even if you are a veteran, as it could be confusing to civilian employers.
- ✗ Make your resume a biography. It is not your life story and employers do not expect (or want) it. Besides, you will need to keep some things to talk about in the interview!

### What about using a Resume Objective?

Creating the 'right' resume objective can be extremely challenging and difficult to do. Rather than being clear and concise, many resume objectives tend to be poorly written and very vague, and can actually hurt, rather than help, a job seeker. Companies that provide services for job seekers and employers, like Snagajob.com and Careersidekick.com, have suggested that many of today's employers say they dislike resume objectives and do not even bother reading them because, more often than not, these objective do not include any interesting or helpful information. Rather than the traditional resume objective, employers are now encouraging applicants to use a simple heading or description instead. If you include this heading, place it at the top of your resume, either above your name or directly below your contact information.





**Jane Jobseeker**  
 (555) 000-0000  
 JaneJobseeker@email.com

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## Administrative Assistant

### Profile

Seasoned professional with over 10 years of experience working in an office setting. Successfully managed multiple projects while performing various roles such as receptionist, file clerk, customer service representative and designer.

### Qualifications

#### Administration

- Worked efficiently under strict deadlines and budgets
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills
- Successfully researched a 30-million dollar project and compiled the data

#### Customer Service

- Strong ability to create and maintain positive internal and external networks
- Excelled at assisting 40 customers and partners per day with issues and complaints
- Skillfully, patiently and professionally handled tense situations

#### Technical Skills

- Adept with Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook)
- Six years of CAD software
- Capable of managing multi-line telephone system and other office equipment
- Able and eager to quickly master new software

#### Key Strengths

- Self-motivated, goal-oriented, highly organized, articulate and personable employee
- Excel at developing strong relationships with staff, clients and vendors
- Excellent multi-tasking and problem solving skills

### Professional Experience

<b>Designer</b>	That Kitchen Shop	Tacoma, Washington	2014 - 2019
<b>Designer</b>	Curtis Lumber Company	Olympia, Washington	2008 - 2014

### Education

Bachelor of Arts, **University of Washington**, Seattle, Washington

**First Name Last Name**

Address (optional)

Phone Number

E-mail address

## Position Title

**Professional Summary / Professional Profile**

A short statement that tells the employer why you and your skills make you the best candidate for the position you are applying for, based on the information the job listing contains. The information you include should increase your chances of receiving an invitation to interview.

**Qualifications Profile**

**Skill title** required for the position you are applying for

- Give an example of how you have achieved this skill that is relevant for the position
- Give an example of how you have achieved this skill that is relevant for the position
- Give an example of how you have achieved this skill that is relevant for the position

**Ability title** required for the position you are applying for

- Give an example demonstrating this ability that is relevant for the position
- Give an example demonstrating this ability that is relevant for the position
- Give an example demonstrating this ability that is relevant for the position

**Knowledge title** required for the position you are applying for

- Give an example using your knowledge that is relevant for the position
- Give an example using your knowledge that is relevant for the position
- Give an example using your knowledge that is relevant for the position

**Accomplishment title** required for the position you are applying for

- Give an example of the accomplishment that is relevant to the position
- Give an example of the accomplishment that is relevant to the position
- Give an example of the accomplishment that is relevant to the position

**Professional Experience (Optional)**

*(Work History: FT/PT/Temp/Intern/Volunteer; if relevant not to go beyond 20 years)*

**Position Title**                      Company Name                      City, State                      Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

**Position Title**                      Company Name                      City, State                      Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

**Education**

Degree or Certificate, **Name of Institution**, City, State                      Year (if within the last 10 years)

Major / Minor and/or listing of relevant courses (optional if you did not receive an actual degree or certification)

Diploma or GED, **Name of High School**, City, State                      Year (if applicable or required)

Professional Training and Development (courses or seminars relevant to the position)

## Combination Resume

## SAMPLE 1

### RITA RESUME

555.000.0000

rresume@email.com

#### ***Professional Qualifications***

- 10+ years of experience as Accountant at major accounting firms
- 7+ years of auditing experience for private and publicly held banking and manufacturing companies
- Technically proficient in MS Office Suite and the SCALA Business Solution
- Excellent bi-lingual communication skills (English/Spanish)
- Proven ability to successfully complete projects within time and budget constraints
- Exceptional analytical, research and problem solving skills
- Highly productive with minimal guidance or supervision

#### ***Relevant Work Experience***

**Accountant**, Leverpol & Solomon, Seattle, WA

01/2009 – Present

- Supported outsourced financial services of Infinite Ltd., a joint venture between ExxonMobil Chemical Company, Shell Petroleum Company Ltd. and Shell Oil
- Directed activities of four staff members in the general ledger department
- Examined journal vouchers, general ledger reconciliations and numerous analyses
- Generated monthly close of financial statements, prepared management reports

#### ***Recent Accomplishments***

- Automated month-end reporting process
- Designed and developed general ledger procedure manual

**Auditor**, Accellor & Damien, Seattle, WA

05/2000 – 12/2008

- Audited a diverse portfolio, including private and publicly listed concerns involved in trading, investment holding, retail, manufacturing, and banking
- Coordinated and mentored audit team to meet objectives within time constraints
- Generated statutory accounts, management letters and audit issues memoranda

#### ***Recent Accomplishments***

- Established strategies to carry out comprehensive audit plans
- Recommended more effective internal controls after careful examination of current auditing system

#### ***Education & Training***

BA in Accounting, **University of Washington**, Seattle, WA

## Combination Resume

## TEMPLATE 1

### NAME

Telephone Number with Area Code

E-Mail Address

### **Professional Qualifications**

- Number of years of relevant work experience as requested in the preferred requirements
- Specific accomplishments that demonstrate/prove your professional value to the company
- Specific accomplishments that demonstrate/prove your professional value to the company
- Education, training or certifications relevant to the specific job
- Soft skills ('people' skills or personality traits) that will contribute to the company's success
- Transferable skills (ability to do a certain task) that will contribute to the company's success

### **Relevant Work Experience**

*(Work History: FT/PT/Temp/Intern/Volunteer; if relevant not to go beyond 20 years)*

**Job Title**, Company Name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

Describe the major tasks you performed what you did while at this job.

- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.

#### **Recent Accomplishments**

- Describe accomplishments you achieved while at this job, i.e. why what you mattered.
- Use bullets for each of these accomplishments.

**Job Title**, Company Name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

Describe the major tasks you performed what you did while at this job.

- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.

#### **Recent Accomplishments**

- Describe accomplishments you achieved while at this job, i.e. why what you mattered.
- Use bullets for each of these accomplishments.

**Job Title**, Company Name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

Describe the major tasks you performed what you did while at this job.

- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.

#### **Recent Accomplishments**

- Describe accomplishments you achieved while at this job, i.e. why what you mattered.
- Use bullets for each of these accomplishments.

### **Education & Training**

Degree or Certificate, **Name of Institution**, City, State

Year (if within the last 10 years)

**Wally Wilson**  
**555.000.0000**  
**wwilson@email.com**

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## Warehouse Associate

### **Qualifications**

- 5+ years' experience using reach, cherry picker, sit-down forklift and electric pallet jacks
- Able to count 1000+ stock items per hour in warehouse, and record data in computer with a 99% quality control standard
- Verified freight documents against shipment for accuracy
- Current valid WA driver's license and basic computer and data entry skills
- Ability to safely lift 50+ lbs. continuously in a fast-paced work environment
- Able to pass pre-employment background check and drug screen

### **Experience**

- Stock Clerk**, Costco, Seattle, WA 07/2012 – 05/2018
- Unpacked, marked and stored boxes and irregular-sized items on stockroom shelves.
  - Accurately kept shipping and receiving records for hazardous materials, weights, and damaged goods.
  - Cleaned and maintained supplies, tools, equipment, and storage areas in order to ensure compliance with company safety regulations.
  - Loaded and unloaded freight containers of furniture, food, and home electronics equipment using pallet jacks and forklifts.

### **Recent Accomplishments**

- Named "Employee of the Year" for 2013
- Designed new process for 90% faster verification of inventory

- Stock Clerk**, Staffing Temps, Seattle, WA 10/2011 – 04/2012
- Provided assistance to storage yard workers.

- Stock Clerk**, Food Lifeline (Volunteer), Des Moines, WA 02/2011 – 09/2011
- Unpacked, marked and stored non-perishable foods on shelves in warehouse and perishable foods in walk-in coolers.

- Sorter**, Services for the Blind (Volunteer), Kent, WA 03/2010 – 06/2011
- Move donated clothing and household items into warehouse and sort before unloading.

### **Certifications**

- Forklift Certification
- HAZWOPER
- CPR / First Aid

### **Education**

High School Diploma, **West Seattle High School**, Seattle, WA

## Combination Resume

## TEMPLATE 2

**Name**  
**000.000.000**  
**E-mail Address**

**Position Applying For (optional)**

**Qualifications**

- Number of years of relevant work experience as requested in the preferred requirements
- Specific accomplishments that demonstrate/prove your professional value to the company
- Education, training or certifications relevant to the specific job

**Experience** *(Work History: FT/PT/Temp/Intern/Volunteer; if relevant not to go beyond 20 years)*

Job Title, Company name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

- Describe what you did while at this job.
- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.
- Describe why what you did while on this job mattered.
- Bullet each of these accomplishments.

Job Title, Company name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

Describe what you did while at this job.

- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.
- Describe why what you did while on this job mattered.
- Bullet each of these accomplishments.

Job Title (Volunteer), Company name, City, State

Dates (Month/Year – Month/Year)

Describe what you did while at this job, as well as the organization's mission.

- Begin each sentence with a past tense **action** word and be as specific as possible.
- Describe why what you did while on this job mattered.
- Bullet each of these accomplishments.

**Certifications**

- Certifications or trainings relevant to the specific job

**Education**Degree or Certificate, **Name of Institution**, City, State

Year (if within the last 10 years)

**Military Resume****(BEFORE)****Pat Riut***\*Missile Systems Subject Matter Expert\**55 Capitol St  
Lacey, WA 54321555-000-0000  
Patriut@military.com**Equipment Proficiencies**

- Expert skill utilizing AFATDS
- Testing – Laboratory and Field Environments
- Quality System Assurance
- Canon Artillery and Digital Fire Control Systems (DFCS)
- Specialized training on IPADS, C2PC, LCMR & DGR equipment
- System Software Analysis and Report

**Awards and Recognition**

- |       |   |      |
|-------|---|------|
| ▪ LOA | Marine Expeditionary Forces Fleet Week    | 2011 |
| ▪ COC | Marine Expeditionary Forces Iraqi Freedom | 2008 |
| ▪ NAM | Achievement Medal                         | 2007 |
| ▪ COC | Marine Combat Training Battalion          | 2002 |

**Training & Education**

- |                                     |                   |      |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|------|
| ▪ Artillery Operations Chief Course | Fort Sill, OK     | 2011 |
| ▪ Peacetime Government Detention    | Oklahoma City, OK | 2010 |
| ▪ AFATDS                            | Fort Bragg, OK    | 2008 |
| ▪ Field Artillery Fire Controlman   | Fort Sill, OK     | 2003 |
| ▪ Marine Combat School of Infantry  | Camp Lejeune, NC  | 2001 |
| ▪ Marine Corp. Martial Arts Program | Black Belt        | 2002 |
| ▪ LMHS – High School Diploma        | Charleston, WV    | 1998 |

**Military Experience**

Gunnery Sergeant / E-7/ FDC / FSCC Instructor

*USMC Field Artillery School**Fort Sill, OK**Mar 2008-Apr 2012*

- Oversaw instruction of all FDC Marines & FSCC procedures
- Traveled to WA, VA&FL to teach UO Chiefs fire mission processing and SINGARS (RT-1523F)
- Expert of skills in target acquisition to include analysis, meteorology and 43E Radar,
- Utilized various target acquisition systems including: LCMR, AN/TPQ-36(V)10, AN/TPQ-46B Radar, IPADS and DGR
- Served in Afghanistan as Platoon Operations Chief, with the first combat deployed HIMARS unit

## Military Resume

(BEFORE)

Platoons Operations Chief, Sergeant / E-6

*Camp Corregidor, Iraq*

*Apr 2007-Feb 2008*

- Modified and corrected JRSOP for Adjust Fire, TOT, multiple fire mission sequencing
- Trained 12+ FC's in FCD, fire mission processing and setting up communication
- Inventoried, performed PMCS and embarked platoon's worth of gear from camp to camp within Afghanistan
- Directed 100+ dry fire exercises to ensure capacity of the AFATDS & all components
- Lead an advance party to the platoon's projected position and supervised the implementation of the FDC, during which time they were able to attain the ability to begin launch 48 hours ahead of schedule

Battery Operations Chief, Sergeant / E-5 – E-6

*Camp Fallujah, Iraq*

*May 2006-Apr 2007*

- Routinely updated AFATDS Database to reflect current situation at all times
- Ensured subordinate FDC Marines understood the preparation of fire control equipment
- Instrumental in training FDC Marines at the SPMGTF COC throughout Iraq
- Converted Romeo Battery 3/13, Echo 4/11 and Lima 2/12 from M114 Howitzers to HIMARS. Trained FDCs in company maneuvers to include: fire mission processing, ammunition management and training and readiness evaluations
- Volunteered to join the operation rear party, helping to ensure the relieving company was trained on all fire direction processes through errors during their dry fire exercises
- Oversaw the implementation of Echo Company's HIMARS first live munitions fires, as well as over 150 dry fire missions, all the while preserving a 100% safety record

Corporal / Lance Corporal / Private / E-1 – E-4

*E Battery 3EBN, 11THMAR, 3RD MAR DIV, Fort Lewis, WA*

*May 2000-Apr 2006*

- Performed the duties of Company Chief in a HIMARS Platoon during live fire exercises. Squad was the first equipped with HIMARS.
- Conducted pre-operational checks and classification evaluations
- Accurately established that the safety data designed at the launchers and within the AFATDS were in compliance within the mission and commander's objective
- Consistently monitored AFATDS Database to reflect present conditions at all times
- Ensured subsidiary FDC Marines comprehended the training of all equipment
- Routinely recognized BOC in an appropriate method in order to perform fire missions thereby guaranteeing the commanders scheduled operations

**Military Resume****(AFTER)****Patrick J. Riut**

Address (optional)

555-000-0000  
Patriut@email.com**Operations Management***Strategic Planning / Staff Development / Coaching and Mentoring**Resource Allocation and Optimization / Process Improvements / Relationship Management*

Results-producing management professional with over ten years of experience steering and directing all aspects of operations and equipment maintenance. Successfully orchestrated multiple projects with competing priorities involving program development, safety initiative and quality control.

**Operations and Management Skills**

- Project and Operations Oversight
- Policy and Procedure Development
- Risk Management / Quality Control
- Team Building and Retention Initiatives
- Cost Analysis and Reporting
- Technology Assessment and Solutions
- Process Redesign / Change Management
- Government and Vendor Relations

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**Bachelor of Arts in Business Management (2010) – **University of Phoenix****Professional Development**

Extensive Management, Leadership, and Strategic Analysis/Planning Courses

**Technical Proficiencies**

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint &amp; Outlook); FormFlow; Windows &amp; UNIX Platforms

**EXPERIENCE**United States Marines Corps (*domestic and international locations*)**Operations Manager***March 2008 - April 2012**Provided direction to 19 member-team, implementing effective staff and resource management strategies*

- Oversaw gathering, review and analysis of sensitive information critical to strategic planning
- Aligned staff resources with workflow requirements; provided teams with up-to-date operation information in highly dynamic environment
- Implemented plans to optimize staff training in support of organizational goals for domestic and international initiatives
- Directed operations in collaboration with senior management from multiple departments

**Selected Contributions:**

- ♦ Effectively oversaw diverse team in managing five million dollars of equipment while consistently meeting all critical deadlines
- ♦ Authored numerous policy changes accepted and implemented by executive management

## Military Resume

(AFTER)

### Operations Director

April 2007 - February 2008

*Directed planning & operations for 60+ staff comprising 11 separate occupations across four divisions*

- Collaborated with team leaders to coordinate staff rotations as well as track and process administrative and legal documents
- Managed training, evaluation, and mentoring programs
- Leveraged cutting-edge technology resources to drive research, analysis and strategic planning; prioritized daily activities to maximize staff productivity and meet organizational objectives
- Established core development standards, policies and procedures and maintained administrative records
- Earned responsibility for multiple aspects of risk management to include overall project plans and schedules
- Assessed daily activities and processes; created and presented weekly reports with recommendations to senior executives

#### **Selected Contributions:**

- ♦ Developed comprehensive security plan successfully implemented site wide
- ♦ Commended for managing team that surpassed comprehensive inspection requirements by 100%
- ♦ Authored numerous policy changes accepted and implemented by executive management

### Team Leader

May 2001 - April 2007

*Served as principal advisor to senior manager in all matters pertaining to security, including information gathering and analysis*

- Managed remote staff activities involving operations, planning and scheduling; oversaw logistics, transportation, and equipment distribution critical to team success
- Orchestrated full range security activities from safeguarding staff and equipment to gathering sensitive information and developing reports for executive-level decision makers
- Provided security services and ensured individual and organizational protection through program implementation
- Reviewed, evaluated, and disseminated information
- Appointed bottom-line responsibility for equipment valued at \$1.25M
- Organized daily and weekly business procedures, briefing senior management on overall progress
- Regularly collaborated with senior, adjacent, and secondary teams

#### **Selected Contributions:**

- ♦ Proactively directed 18-member team in earning top ranking out of ten teams to achieve highest level of proficiency in group history

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal – 2005, 2009 & 2011

Certificate of Commendation – Marine Expeditionary Forces – 2001, 2007 & 2012

## What About a Cover Letter?

Oftentimes, job seekers wonder whether or not to send a cover letter along with their resume. The short answer is “yes.” Today’s employers expect personalized cover letters that show them why you are a strong fit for the position and a valuable candidate worth taking the time to interview. However, if an employer requests a cover letter, you need to send one - a real cover letter, not a sentence or two. Bottom line . . . it is in your best interest to send a cover letter even if it is not a requirement.

Just like your resume, your cover letter needs to be targeted. Again, take the skills that match the job criteria and highlight them. You will need to show the recruiter/employer that you are a qualified candidate. Remember, you will only have a few seconds to convince him or her that you should be considered for an interview. When you are writing a cover letter, or sending an e-mail message to apply for a job, it is important to include all the required information in your cover letter, such as your contact information, a salutation, information on why you are qualified for the job, a closing and your signature.

### Sample Cover Letter

Date, 2020

Contact Name  
Business Name  
Street Address or PO Box  
City, State, Zip

Dear Contact Name (or Hiring Manager or HR Department):

Having read your on-line advertisement (WA2240313) for an Accounts Payable Specialist, I believe that I am uniquely qualified for the position and am including my resume for your consideration.

For the past five years, I worked in a transportation environment, and provided accounts payable support to those vendors with whom my company served, including managing vendor files, scanning and forwarding vendor invoices and tracking vendor setup. In addition, I have a successful record of providing quality customer service to both vendors and clientele, and have twice been recognized as “Employee of the Month” for doing so. I am a dedicated individual with excellent communications and organizational skills, and can work independently with little or no supervision. I have proficiency in various types of accounting software, such as Quickbooks and SCALA, as well as hands-on experience with Halse Imaging Systems.

With my qualifications, I am confident that (Name of Company) would benefit from having me as part of its accounting team, and would appreciate an in-person interview to discuss the position more fully. Thank you very much for your review of my credentials, and I hope to hear from you within the next several days.

Sincerely:

Your Signature

Your Name Printed  
E-mail Address  
Cell or Home Telephone Number

## Frequently Asked Questions

After reading these FAQs, don't forget to contact your Program Manager or the Career Hub if you have more questions about your resume or need additional information. You can also search for jobs on [www.WorkSourceWA.com](http://www.WorkSourceWA.com)

### Resume Basics

**Q1. Do I need a resume? If so, why?**

**A1. Yes**

The purpose of a resume is to attract the attention of a potential employer enough to *want to interview you*. A resume provides a brief overview of your skills and recent experience and should clearly demonstrate your ability to perform the job you are applying for.

**Q2. How do I select the right resume style or format?**

**A2. It depends on a variety of factors related to your work experience**

The resume style you select will depend on **how strongly** your experience matches the current opening. An employer will consider your specific combination of relevant job titles, length of stay in each position and the unique set of skill, knowledge and ability you possess. To remain competitive, you may need to prepare your resume in a different format.

Choose a **chronological style** format to target your resume when either **advancing your career within the same industry** or applying for a position you have held **directly and most recently**. This style will emphasize a **very strong match** when your recent job title(s), work experience and education perfectly fulfill the position requirements. The remainder of the resume can include a few additional qualifications to further impress the employer. Please see the chronological template in the packet for an example of this resume style.

Select a **functional format with dates of employment** to target your resume for positions in which you **lack recent or directly related work experience**. This style demonstrates a **good match** and can be effective if you have no work experience, experienced short periods or several gaps in employment or are starting a career in a new industry. Fill most of the resume with qualifications obtained through transferable skills. Transferable skills include work and personal abilities gained from job experience, interests and life skills. The remainder of the resume will briefly list your actual work or volunteer history, job titles and education. Please see the functional template in the packet for an example of this resume style.

Use a **combination style** format to target your resume when applying for either **similar positions within the same or a new industry** or if you are **returning to the workforce after a single gap** in employment. Demonstrate a **strong match** when the combination of your recent job titles, education,

experience and transferable skills matches the current opening. This flexible and popular style allows you to place almost equal emphasis in these areas. Please see the combination templates in the packet for examples of this resume style.

**Q3. I've been told I need to target my resume for every job I apply for. What does this mean?**

**A3. Adjust the resume by matching your qualifications to each job**

Creating a new resume each time you apply for a job takes time, but is well worth the effort. Customizing or **targeting** your resume is important as it can increase your chances of getting an interview. Even if you apply for similar jobs, employers will evaluate how well your experience fits their particular needs. Write your resume so that it answers their questions and provides details about your qualifications. For hints, examine the attached resume templates, compare the job listing or come in to Goodwill's Career Hub to have your resume reviewed.

**Q4. I have sent out several resumes and received no response. Is it my resume?**

**A4. Possibly**

This could be a strong indication that you need to rework or target your resume. Rather than sending out the same generic information, it is **crucial** to target your resume for every job you apply for. In this competitive job climate, employers might have dozens or even hundreds of resumes to look through to fill just one position. Employers want to know why you are a good fit for **their** position. Remember, your resume must attract the attention of a potential employer enough to *want to interview you*. Research the company and clearly describe how your skills and experience match the specific job announcement. Take a look at the attached resume templates or come in to Goodwill's Career Hub to have your resume reviewed.

**Q5. I have been told that my resume isn't specific enough. What details do employers look for other than my employment, skills and experience?**

**A5. Include quantifiers, keywords and accomplishments**

To add strength to your resume, give the potential employer a better idea of what your previous job really involved. Provide details that will assist the employer to measure **how well** you performed your responsibilities. Describe your work experience by including a brief explanation, or *quantifier*, to your statements. Quantifiers can include size, type, scope and amount.

Write your job duties in the form of an *accomplishment* explaining the results of your actions and why it **mattered**. For example, "*Led a crew of five carpenters to complete \$300K residential remodel project on time and under budget.*" In this example, providing brief details about the size and type of project, as well as scope of responsibility adds meaning to the accomplishment of completing the project on time. The following example explains the type, speed and detail of your work: "*Processed 30 cash, credit, and debit transactions per hour with 98% accuracy.*"

Your resume may stand a better chance of getting past electronic scanners if you include *keywords*, or **specific nouns**, to explain your level of skill. Keywords are specific to the job or industry and can include places, people, equipment, software, data, position titles, certifications and degrees or courses of study. No matter which resume format you select, every resume should include keywords, quantifiers and accomplishments.

**Q6. Should I include references on my resume?**

**A6. No**

References should not be included on your resume. If an employer requests references, include them in a *separate* document. If references are not asked for during the application process, bring several copies with you when you are invited to interview.

## **Employment Gaps and Barriers**

**Q1. I just graduated from school and have never had a real job. What do I put on my resume when I have no work experience?**

**A1. Include your skills, abilities, education and volunteer experience**

Just because you have never held a paid job does not mean you don't have valuable experience that can be used in the workplace. In performing volunteer work or as being a member of a service club or community organization, you gained skills and abilities that can readily transfer into a job. Did you volunteer to tutor children in reading? Then you probably used organizational, time-management and customer service skills. What about being involved with an area homeless shelter? There's a good chance you needed good communications and leadership skills.

When writing your resume, it is helpful to list all of the things you did as a volunteer or as a member of an outside group or organization, and then think about how these items might apply to the workplace. An easy way to think about this is to consider what would happen if a certain job, say a cashier, did not exist anymore. How would someone with the skills of a cashier use those in another occupational setting?

Another way to show your value in a resume is to include your education and certifications, especially if you are a recent graduate or your work experience is limited or non-existent. It takes hard work and determination to complete a course of study, and employers like to know that you, as an applicant, are able to meet and succeed at a challenge such as school. Make sure to include any awards or honors you may have received, as these too can illustrate your work ethic and skills.

**Q2. I have been at home caring for family. Should I explain my gap in employment on my resume?**

**A2. Choose to explain it in a cover letter rather than in your resume**

Even if a cover letter is not requested, in this instance it might be a great way to minimize any fears an employer might have about your employment gap. In your letter you can share that you're looking to return to the workforce and then describe how your skills make you valuable.

If you have a large gap in your work history, use one to two sentences to **quickly and positively explain** the gap. For example, *"I have five years of administrative experience working in a clinic setting. From 2016 to 2018, I was away from the workforce caring for family but am now ready to contribute my administrative and healthcare experience to your position"*. In this example, the gap is sandwiched between five years of related experience and a demonstrated readiness to return to the workforce, explaining the gap in a positive and straightforward way.

**Q3. I was laid off from my last job and haven't worked for two years. Should I list "unemployed" as the reason for the gap on my resume?**

**A3. No**

If you have been unemployed for a period of time, you still have valuable experience that can be used in a new position. Any volunteer work you might have done while unemployed uses skills that can transfer over into the workplace, and employers appreciate the effort it takes to volunteer while simultaneously searching for a job. Also consider including any self-help training or education you might have completed while unemployed. For example, improving your computer skills through the training programs available at Goodwill is a clear illustration of your work ethic and determination to learn and to grow.

**Q4. I've worked for a lot of different companies over the past 10 years and find employers are passing me over because of this. Is there a way to write my resume to make this less obvious on my resume?**

**A4. Yes**

If you've held the same type of job in several short periods of employment of less than six months, discuss your *combined* years of experience and industry expertise in your summary of qualifications. Downplay short periods of employment by listing the year only instead of both the month and year. For example: 2014 instead of 2/2014 to 3/2014.

**Q5. I'm over 40 years old and I think my resume is being overlooked because of my age. What can I do about this?**

**A5. Don't let your resume give the employer a chance to guess your age**

Your resume may be hindering your job search if you are including graduation dates (more than 10 years from the current year) or including jobs you held more than 20 years ago. Removing certain dates may help you get through the resume screening process. Unfortunately, it won't help you on an application

where ALL dates must be entered. Ultimately, the employer will know your general age once you meet, so pay attention to personal grooming as this may help you to compete during an interview, and be comfortable discussing your skills, examples from your past jobs, accomplishments and future career goals.

**Q6. I have only had two jobs since I began working - one for 18 years and another for two years. Should I leave out my longest job since it goes past the recommended 10-20 years?**

**A6. No**

In this situation, it's OK to have more than the recommended 10-20 years so keep the job of 18 years. If you remove it from your resume, it will appear to employers that you have very little work history or experience and would create a very large gap in your work history.

**Q7. I have a felony and the job I'm applying for will require submitting to a background check. Should I even apply for the job?**

**A7. Yes**

Most employer background checks go back about 10 years and focus on how the felony relates to the duties of the position. Many employers treat felonies on a case-by-case basis. If you are a good fit for the open position, you should apply. When your felony does not conflict with the duties of the position, your skills and qualifications may override your background. If you're bondable, be sure to share that in your cover letter or interview.

Employers would prefer to learn about your conviction face to face in an interview rather than reading about it later on your background report. Be prepared to **quickly and sincerely explain** what you have learned from your mistake.

## Changing Careers

**Q1. I am willing to take a lower level position in an industry I am interested in, but have been told that I'm overqualified. How can I get my foot in the door with my resume?**

**A1. Target your resume**

Avoid being labeled as overqualified by demonstrating your ability to perform the **specific job**. Carefully sift through your qualifications and include only the relevant experience and education required at this position level. Target your resume using a **combination or functional format with dates**, and list **recent** employment dates while placing greater emphasis on your transferable work skills. You may also include a cover letter to support your resume, in which you can provide examples of how your skills make you valuable and capable. At the interview, be prepared to answer a question about your vast experience. The question really means "Are you a good fit for our company?" Be sure to share your enthusiasm to learn and be challenged in a new opportunity.

**Q2. I'm changing careers – what resume format should I use?****A2. Use a functional format with dates of employment**

If you're trying to get your foot in the door of a new industry, focus your resume on your *transferable skills*. Transferable skills include **hard** skills gained in previous jobs and **soft** skills, or personal strengths. Use a functional format with dates to create a resume that clearly indicates at the top what type of position you are seeking followed by any related qualifications.

Use the job listing to make a connection between the position's requirements and what you've done. Explain, or translate, uncommon job titles, company names and jargon in a way that will attract the attention of the recruiter. Take a look at the functional resume templates in this packet or come into the Career Hub to have your resume reviewed.

## In Conclusion

As any employment counselor will tell you, the key to receiving an invitation to interview for a job starts with the resume. However, creating a resume that results in an interview is not always easy. Serving as a Business Services Consultant for WorkSource Pierce County in 2011, my colleagues and I were oftentimes frustrated by the quality of resumes we were pre-screening for employers. We decided to go directly to those employers with whom we worked and asked them all one very simple question . . . “What is the difference between an ordinary resume and one that results in an interview?”

The response from our employers was overwhelming and provided such helpful advice that it seemed unfair not to share this information with any and all job seekers. Our Business Services team and several Labor Exchange Specialists from both the Tacoma and Lakewood WorkSource offices began researching effective resumes in 2012, and the information we discovered, along with continuous employer input and suggestions, formed the basis of this Resume Guide. Since its initial launch of what was then termed a resume kit, and while working in other workforce development environments, I have conducted on-going research on job search skills and strategies, updated the material contained in the kit and received input and suggestions regarding the content from numerous employers throughout the Puget Sound region. As a result, this updated Resume Guide has been used by job seekers with whom I have worked to achieve success in their search for employment. I sincerely hope you will find it effective in your job search as well.

The resume kit was originally published in October 2012 by the following staff of WorkSource Pierce County: Erin Blades, Malia Buehs, Carmen Cook, Angel Cruz, Meiko Gray, James Helling, Susan Hicks, Jayme Kaniss, Mike Masten, Jennifer Peppin, Justin Vautrin and Patricia Zaknich.

In 2016 and 2019, the Resume Guide, as it was subsequently renamed, was refined and updated, and received copyright certification in December 2019 as © Dr. Jayme Lukas Kaniss, 2019.

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