

Resume and Cover Letter Tips

Anytime a resume is sent by mail or email, it must be accompanied by a cover letter. The greatest challenge will not be what to include, but what to leave out.

■ Skills Identification

- ▶ Clearly identify your skills.
- ▶ Employers want to know what you can do, not just where you have worked.
- ▶ Your resume should be an honest presentation of your best qualities.

■ Language

- ▶ What you say is important, but how you say it is just as important. To highlight your skills and qualifications, use action verbs.
- ▶ Do not use slang or abbreviations.
- ▶ Have someone proofread it for spelling and grammatical errors.

■ Focus

- ▶ Keep it brief.
- ▶ Target your job search and your resume to your specific job goals.
- ▶ Prepare multiple resumes if you are planning to pursue two different occupations.
- ▶ Mention the company to which you are applying in the cover letter. Give specific examples of how your skills match the job they have available.

■ Appearance

- ▶ Should be typed.
- ▶ Should be neat, organized, and easy to read.
- ▶ Do not fold your resume or cover letter.

■ Cover Letter

- ▶ State the date, your name, and your address at the top of the letter.
- ▶ Below your name and address, write the name of the person to whom you are writing. Always address the letter to a specific person by name and title if known. If you do not know the name, simply use a title such as "Office Manager."
- ▶ State your interest in the job for which you are applying.
- ▶ Mention your skills, education, special training, and work experience that qualify you for this job.
- ▶ Provide a phone number so the employer can reach you.
- ▶ Thank the person for taking the time to read your letter.
- ▶ Use an appropriate closing such as "Sincerely."
- ▶ Sign the letter; do not just type your name.
- ▶ Avoid starting every sentence with the same word.
- ▶ Reflect your individuality, but do not try to be humorous, familiar, or cute.
- ▶ Use key words from the ad or industry.
- ▶ Show your knowledge of the company.
- ▶ Proofread the letter several times to catch errors. Give it to someone else to double check. Reading it out aloud can help.

