

Résumé tips

Craft an effective cover letter

A strong cover letter may not guarantee you land a good job, but a poor cover letter may guarantee you won't. On its own, an effective cover letter can catch the eye of hiring managers tasked with finding worthy candidates among stacks of applications, while a poor cover letter may ensure hiring managers never even glance at an applicant's resume.

An effective cover letter should be concise, conveying an applicant's work history and goals in a few paragraphs or less. The following are some additional ways to craft effective cover letters.

- Address a specific person when possible. When responding to a job posting that listed a specific contact, address your cover letter to that person rather than beginning the letter with, "Dear Sir or Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern."

Personalize each cover letter you write so the hiring manager does not get the feeling that you are sending out cover letters en masse. Make sure names are spelled correctly and job titles are accurate.

- State your purpose early on. The purpose of your letter, which is to state the job you're seeking, should be made clear early on. Hiring managers often handle the vetting process for a host of positions at their companies, so the earlier the hiring manager knows which position you're applying for the better. Hiring managers may become frustrated when applicants don't make their intentions clear or do so in the

An important aspect of a job search is updating and polishing your resume and online presence.

final paragraph instead of the first.

- Explain why you are a qualified candidate. While it's good to note your work history, your resume will do the bulk of that legwork. A cover letter is your opportunity to show how your work history makes you a qualified candidate for a specific position. Remember to be concise but relate a specific example that illustrates how your work history would help you thrive in the position for which you're applying.

- Exhibit some knowledge about the company to which you're applying. An effective cover letter should help you stand out among your fellow applicants, and expressing some knowledge about the organization can do just that. The goal here is to illustrate how you and the organization are a good fit, so you don't need to go overboard or be too specific. But hiring managers are likely to be more impressed by applicants who do their



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homework and show a knowledge of the company than applicants who submit a form cover letter where the company is scarcely mentioned.

- Be cordial in your closing. A cover letter should close with a cordial request for an interview or a friendly way of indicating you look forward to a company's response to your application. In addition, thank the reader for his or her time and mention you would be delighted to answer any questions he or she may have.

An effective cover letter can go a long way toward making a strong first impression on a prospective employer. Men and women should look at their cover letters as their first opportunities to connect with a company and write their letters accordingly. — Metro



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No matter your chosen field, a strong resume and effective cover letter help you appear at your best.

Ways to update a résumé

The job market can be competitive, as new graduates flood the field each and every year. But graduation season is not the only time of year when the competition to find work gets heated.

Many job seekers may benefit from revamping their résumés before beginning their search. It's not uncommon for recruiters to receive thousands of résumés for each job opening they post, and the sheer volume of applicants can make it difficult for job seekers to get their résumés seen. In such instances, job seekers must take steps to tip the odds in their favor.

Many a night's sleep has been lost worrying about applying to jobs. Questions can make for a restless night's sleep on the eve before a job interview.

Writing a résumé is another aspect of the job hunt that can stoke your nerves. Men and women may pour over job timelines and skill summaries for hours in an effort to ensure they have included the right mix of information to get noticed.

Though résumé writing has changed considerably over the years, some conventional wisdom about résumés still prevails, and how closely potential applicants adhere to these rules goes a long way toward determining if they earn a chance at an interview. By following these guidelines, job seekers may have a

better chance of getting their résumés into the right hands.

- Put a professional purpose. Modern standards may suggest that listing a career "objective" is old fashioned. However, it is helpful to customize your résumé so that it is geared toward the position for which you are applying. A career objective may reflect how you are a strong candidate for each specific job you apply for. Use some specifics that tie into the particular job or company and you may catch the hiring manager's attention in the process.

- Embrace keywords. Many employers now use application tracking software to sift through the scores of résumés that are submitted for each opening they post. Keywords make it easy for employers to sort through thousands of résumés. The right keywords will flag your résumé and increase your "relevancy score" in the main HR/recruiting software programs available.

Adapt your résumé for each application you submit. Use some of the words listed in the initial job posting and description. In addition, look at similar job postings and incorporate some keywords listed in those ads so that you have all the bases covered.

- Trim the fat. Less is often more regarding résumés. List all of the pertinent information, then go over the résumé again and again and cut out

any irrelevant information to remove clutter. Only include information that is relevant to your career goals. Don't be afraid of job gaps, either. Many of today's recruiters understand that the changing economy can make it challenging to maintain steady employment.

In addition, one page is best. However, if your experience is extensive or one page cannot contain a long job history, don't be afraid to submit a two-page résumé.

- Highlight what you have done. Rather than listing every job responsibility and position in chronological order, use a résumé to highlight specific career accomplishments. This is a time to be your biggest fan and tell the world all of the great things you have accomplished. Remember to include evidence to back up the claims.

According to a 2015 survey by CareerBuilder, employers say that résumés that include links to a candidate's portfolio, website or blog garner more attention than résumés without such links.

That being said, do not embellish your skills. Always be open and honest on your résumé. You may be asked to prove you can perform certain tasks, and if you cannot back up what is included on a résumé, you will have wasted your time and that of the interviewer.

- Include relevant outside history, such as volunteering, internships and school history. A mix of information on the résumé that will reflect your versatility.

- Put your own voice in the résumé. Rather than using standard verbiage on your résumé, personalize what you want to say. Hiring managers want to hire a human, not a machine. When speaking about yourself, be sure to use strong action words that define your skills even further. HR professionals cite terms like "managed," "achieved" and "improved" as examples of positive, assertive words.

The résumé should showcase your professional accomplishments and how your skills relate to the job you're applying for. This way the company understands you have researched the position and are in tune with what they're looking for in an applicant.

- Check for imperfections. A résumé is a reflection of you, so one with typographical errors or a poor layout is never acceptable. Ensure your résumé is as professional and error-free as possible. Have a friend or a proofreader look it over before distributing.

Updating a résumé with the goal of standing out among a crowded pool of applicants is a great way for job seekers to land a new job. — Metro

Community Job Fair

in the Casino's Event Center
Thursday, March 23rd from 10:00am – 3:00pm

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Bartender/Server
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Dish Machine Operator

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No openings at this time

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Majors that might help you get hired

As the cost of college tuition continues to rise and the job market grows increasingly competitive, college students are giving greater consideration to their prospects of being hired before choosing a major. A 2015 study commissioned by the National Association of Colleges and Employers asked 201 employers which degrees are most in demand. The following are the results of that study.

Most in demand bachelor's degrees:

1. Accounting
2. Computer Science
3. Finance

4. Business Administration/Management

5. Mechanical Engineering

Most in demand master's degrees:

1. Computer Science
2. Electrical Engineering
3. Mechanical Engineering
4. Information Sciences & Systems
5. Business Administration

Most in demand doctorate degrees:

1. Electrical Engineering
2. Computer Science
3. Software Engineering
4. Computer Engineering
5. Mechanical Engineering

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