

# Resume and Cover Letter Guide

## *General Resume Tips*

### FORMAT

---

- Maintain a one to two page resume; two pages are recommended if you have worked for five or more years; exceptions include federal resumes, resumes uploaded into text boxes, and CVs
- Keep format consistent throughout the document
- Avoid fancy or difficult to read font styles
- Keep font between 10-12 point size
- Ensure your name is prominently displayed on the resume (use bold, a larger font size, or all caps)
- Bold or capitalize section headings to make them stand out; headings should be centered or on the left
- Single space within sections
- Use standard 8.5 x 11 paper in white or ivory when printing the resume

### CONTENT

---

- Tailor your resume to the position you are seeking and integrate key words pulled from the job description; have different resumes for different career areas
- Focus on results and outcomes of work experiences to establish accomplishments
- Quantify information whenever possible
- Use positive language to sell yourself and your accomplishments; avoid being negative
- Leave out personal information (e.g. social security number, marital status, non-smoker, etc.)
- Provide accurate information that can be verified; avoid exaggerations
- Prioritize content by listing the most important sections first; entry-level candidates should list education towards the top of the resume, but more experienced candidates can prioritize the work experience above the education
- Use reverse chronological order: list your most recent experiences first and then work back in time; applicable for the education and experience sections
- Place all references in a separate document from the resume; do not include "References Available Upon Request" on the resume
- Spell out all abbreviations

### SECTIONS FOR THE RESUME

---

- **Heading:** list your name and contact information, both phone and email
- **Objective:** clearly define the objective and avoid general statements that provide no information to a reader; experienced candidates with work in a consistent field may leave off the objective; focus the objective on what you can offer the employer and not what you will gain from the job
- **Summary or Profile:** summarize qualifications and accomplishments in this section; best used for experienced candidates
- **Education:** include the name of the institution, the location (city, state), the degree, minors/specializations/areas of concentration and the expected or completed date of graduation (month year); can include GPA if applicable; high school information should not be included on a professional resume unless the institution provided a specific skill related to the job
- **Experience:** provide the job title, organization name, location (city, state), and dates worked; use bullet points to provide concise information; begin each point with an action verb; focus on key accomplishments by listing relevant skills, examples and outcomes of experiences; quantify accomplishments when possible; can include part time, contract or volunteer work if applicable
- **Skills:** detail computer, language and/or technical skills
- **Additional Sections:** ensure that each additional section helps focus the resume on the job you want; the sections can include training, certifications, flight ratings/time, activities, professional memberships, awards/commendations, relevant coursework, project experience, volunteer experience, etc.

## ***General Cover Letter Tips***

### **FORMAT**

---

- Use a standard business letter format where the content is aligned to the left
- Maintain a length of one page and divide the content into three to four main paragraphs
- Use the same font as your resume if possible
- Sign your cover letter in blank ink; if submitting electronically, type your name

### **CONTENT**

---

- Always address the letter to a specific contact person; if you do not have a specific contact, use "Dear Sir or Madam"
- Write out all abbreviations
- Use the job description to customize the cover letter
- Use the cover letter to expand on the resume and avoid repeating exact information
- Maintain a positive tone, accentuate skills and illustrate how these skills translate into assets for the position you are seeking
- Format
  - Paragraph One:** focus on why you are writing; list the position title, company name, how you found the position and any company-specific information
  - Paragraph Two:** detail your qualifications for the position; provide examples of experiences, skills and achievements that relate to the position
  - Paragraph Three:** conclude the letter with a statement that sums up your purpose; provide an action statement; list your contact information; always thank the reader for his or her time

### ***Additional Information for Resumes and Cover Letters***

Finally, **proofread** all your career-related documents for content, grammar and structure. Sample resumes and action verbs can be found at <http://www.erau.edu/career/resumes/index.html>, and sample letters are available at <http://www.erau.edu/career/letters/index.html>.

#