

YOUR RESUMÉ & COVER LETTER – TIPS

Your resume is your marketing tool - the "door opener" to a job interview.

It should show the prospective employer that you possess the qualifications they are seeking. Therefore your resume should be tailored to the skills and qualifications needed for the job. You will need to research what skills an employer needs before you start writing your resume.

1. Resume Appearance Basics

- Only 1 - 2 pages in length, produced on a computer, using white or neutral toned, high quality paper
- Use size 11 or 12 font with a slightly larger font for your name and headers
- The language must be grammatically correct, free of spelling errors and mixed verb tenses (use spell check but also have another person proofread it)
- No abbreviations or contractions - the style should be formal
- Must be visually pleasing - try to balance the amount of print and white space and use a good quality printer
- Be concise - preferable to use point form rather than long sentences (use bullets)
- Leave a one inch margin on all sides
- Ensure that your resume is well organized and laid out in a logical manner
- Dates are recommended to be placed on right hand column
- Bold information that should stand out such as your name, degree and job titles

2. Resume Content Basics

- **Focus the resume on your skills and abilities that match with employers' needs! You need to know the employers needs to do this effectively!**
- Everything on your resume should have a reason for being there - **delete anything that is not relevant**
- Eliminate personal pronouns such as "I" in the resume
- Create demonstration statements with an action verb – be consistent with verb tenses. Eg. demonstrateded if in the past, demonstrate if in the present
- Present information in reverse chronological order - start with most recent information and work backwards
- Lead with the most important information - leave information of lesser value for page 2 – have a relevant work experience section and an additional work experience section in order to accomplish this best.
- Research the different type of resume formats available and decide which one will present you in the best possible light – chronological or combination?
- Make the reader's job easy and pleasant by keeping the information clear and to the point - the resume will only be scanned for a few seconds initially
- Normally the resume is not a stand-alone document - usually accompanied by a covering letter which indicates the position that you are applying for.
- References are not usually included on a resume – provide a separate sheet with these references at the end of your interview. Your references should be able to highlight your relevant skills and performance. Keep in touch with them especially during your job search process. They should be provided your resume and be informed of the jobs you are interested in as well as the ones you are interviewing for.
- Personal information does not belong on your resume. This may include: age, marital status, health status or disability, gender, family composition, picture, race, national origin, social insurance number, salary, or reason for leaving a job.

Read, reread and reread your resume! Errors may eliminate you from the competition.

The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce your resume and to convince the employer that they should read it. The cover letter should demonstrate that you have the skills that the company is looking for.

3. Cover Letter Basics

- Always typewritten and not more than one page long
- A summary of the key points as related to the job you are applying for
- Contains an opening, body and conclusion
- The opening clearly explains your reason for writing (job objectives) & why you want to work for the company. It is also a good idea to show that you are knowledgeable about the company (that you've done some research on them)
- The body highlights your skills, education, experience and accomplishments to match the employer's advertised or perceived needs - why they should hire you
- The conclusion is your summary of how you feel that you are a "good fit" for the company, a request for an interview and how you can be contacted
- The cover letter must be customized to the job that you are applying for
- If possible find out the name of the person who is responsible for the hiring and address the letter to them
- Ensure that you show that you have the necessary qualifications set out in the job advertisement. Don't assume that the employer will have this information
- Sound enthusiastic - sell yourself as a potential asset to the company

Visit our website for other resources on resumes, cover letters, interviews and job search at www.umanitoba.ca/student/careerservices.

SKILLS MATCHING WORKSHEET

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Condense information/produce concise summary notes accurately with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.	
Write letters and reports that are logically structured and contain all relevant information.	
Adapt writing style in consideration of different audiences.	
ORAL COMMUNICATION	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Ask and answer questions, clarify, and summarize what others are communicating.	
Provide clear explanations and directions while instructing, educating and providing feedback.	
Communicate with others using a variety of communication strategies to negotiate, mediate, resolve difficult issues and sell ideas.	
TEAMWORK	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Demonstrate respect and care. Is open and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others.	
Actively contribute to team projects/tasks; fulfils required roles, participates in discussion to improve effectiveness.	
Accept and share responsibility. Learn from constructive criticism and give positive and constructive feedback.	
LEADERSHIP	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Accept responsibility for decisions and display a positive attitude and perseverance.	
Models a strong desire to succeed by demonstrating adaptability to achieve goals.	
Take initiative in leading, supporting and motivating others in developing individual skills or tasks to achieve goals.	
PLANNING AND ORGANIZING	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Effectively apply organizing and planning skills to manage work.	
Work effectively to complete deadlines when under pressure.	
Proactively plans and manages work; monitors results through to successfully complete plans.	
PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Make decisions in accordance to accepted practices and guidelines.	
Use problem-solving strategies to identify and resolve problems, issues and determine solutions.	
Recognize inconsistencies in reasoning. Makes decisions in situations that fall outside established guidelines or where the choice among options is less obvious.	

ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Gather relevant secondary data and organize information in a logical manner.	
Collect primary data and/or assist in carrying out surveys, focus groups, and lab analysis.	
Analyze samples/surveys for quantitative/qualitative research.	
NUMERACY: able to carry out arithmetic operations/understand	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Perform calculations for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, and converting between fractions and decimals.	
Perform complex calculations and operations that require using advanced multi-step mathematical strategies.	
Analyze or compare numerical data to identify trends or compare statistics.	
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Performs basic computer tasks, such as creating documents, saving files, and sending email.	
Design web pages and a wide range of software skills.	
Demonstrate in depth knowledge of computer software and information technology systems.	
PRESENTATION SKILLS	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Present basic information to one or more people using appropriate resources, vocabulary, and non-verbal language.	
Prepare and present advanced information with clarity with the ability to respond to questions in a timely manner.	
Facilitate interactive presentations of advanced information customized to the interests and needs of the audience.	
PERSONAL MANAGEMENT	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...
Demonstrate professionalism in recognizing expectations in work culture to maximize success in the workplace.	
Embrace new opportunities, learn continuously, and identify importance in every job/task.	
Anticipate the unexpected and respond quickly to sudden changes in circumstances.	
OTHER	I USE THIS SKILL WHEN...

Demonstration statements are used to show an employer how you have demonstrated a specific skill. A combination resume will have demonstration statements beneath each skill heading on the first page of the resume as well as under Work Experience (e.g., Employment and Volunteer). Similarly, on a chronological resume, demonstration statements are placed under your Work Experience. Do not exceed more than 8 accomplishment statements per job.

The most compelling resumes are those that show HOW you have demonstrated a specific skill, not simply telling the employer that you possess a specific skill. One of the best ways to clearly outline a skill in our demonstration statement is to be strategic in our choice of Action Verbs. The Action Verb should clearly indicate the skill that you are trying to demonstrate to an employer. Eg. “Collaborated” indicates that you are demonstrating your Teamwork skills.

Tip: Avoid “passive” action verbs (eg. Provided, assisted, worked) that are general in nature and are not directly linked to a specific skill. Reflect on the specific tasks you completed and skills used/applied.

ACTION VERB	<h2 style="text-align: center;">NOUN</h2> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>BONUS: <u>QUALIFY OR QUANTIFY</u> Use Adjectives and Numbers to jazz up your statements</p> </div>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">IMPACT</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">ANSWER 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? What was achieved?</p>
Awarded	employee of the month	three times over	as a result of providing a consistent and high level of service to customers
Supported and counseled	clients	ages 7-14	by email, phone and in-person during times of extreme personal crises
Graded	assignments	of 100	undergraduate Chemistry students, providing written feedback and ideas for improvement during bi-weekly office hours
Taught	complex	laboratory techniques	to university students requiring additional help in order to improve overall success in coursework
Interacted	compassionately	with elderly patients	when delivering meal trays in a busy hospital environment

Step 1: Think about Your Target Position and Industry

It's important to consider what jobs and organizations to which you will be applying. Your resume and cover letter should be tailored for the position and employer. As your review postings, note:

- What competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) the employer is looking for / the position requires. Your resume and cover letter should highlight those that matter most for the position.
*Tip: Also reflect on how your **education and courses**, not just past experiences, connect to the job!
- What terminology does the employer use? Speak their language and reflect appropriate vocabulary in your documents.

Step 2: Reflect on Your Experiences & Skills

Job/Volunteer Position: _____

(You can similarly reflect on your courses and course projects)

Example: Programming Assistant, Riverside Retirement Community

Reflection:

A. What did I do on the job / in that role / in that course?

B. HOW did I complete my work? Reflect on: **People** – Who did I work with to complete tasks and how did I work with them? **Practice/Process** – What steps and new or established techniques did I use? **Policies** – What rules, guidelines, regulations and protocols did I follow? (i.e. safety, confidentiality) **Tools and Technology** – What equipment, software, etc. did I use to complete tasks?

What tasks and activities did I complete? <i>What did I do?</i>	*Task Reflection: How did I do it? + Skills Assessment: What skills did I use/develop? Knowledge learned? Think about achievements – were you commended for anything? Did you complete your work different from others?

Example: - developed /adapted activities for residents

Consulted w/ my supervisor and other staff for approval and to generate ideas. → Team work, organization, time-management, creativity, strategic/thoughtful

- guided and participated in the activities

I was energetic, positive, patient, supportive; used communication skills, provided demonstrations/guidance/mentoring

Step 3: Articulation – Write Your Demonstration Statements

Formula: Verb + Noun + Impact (view task assessment and skills assessment to answer *how, what, why, etc.*)

*Use adjectives and adverbs throughout the statement to highlight the impact and your skills and attributes.

*No personal pronouns. Writing 'I' or mentioning self in your statements is unnecessary.

Example:

- Collaborated with staff to develop and tailor recreation programming for a diverse group of older adults

- Facilitated workshops and activities by providing instruction, guidance, feedback and support

Practice writing YOUR STATEMENT(S) in the space below:

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ACTION VERBS FOR RESUMÉS

ANALYTICAL SKILLS

Analyzed	Classified	Expedited	Recommended	Studied
Answered	Collected	Extrapolated	Reconciled	Surveyed
Appraised	Compiled	Forecasted	Resolved	Synthesized
Assembled	Critiqued	Interpreted	Reviewed	Systematized
Assessed	Estimated	Investigated	Specified	Validated
Clarified	Evaluated	Processed	Structured	

COMMUNICATION/PEOPLE SKILLS

Addressed	Corresponded	Formulated	Negotiated	Resolved
Authored	Directed	Influenced	Persuaded	Spoke
Collaborated	Drafted	Interpreted	Promoted	Translated
Composed	Edited	Lectured	Publicized	Wrote
Contacted	Elicited	Mediated	Reconciled	
Convinced	Explained	Moderated	Recruited	

CREATIVE SKILLS

Acted	Designed	Founded	Invented	Revitalized
Adapted	Developed	Illustrated	Modified	Shaped
Composed	Devised	Initiated	Originated	Solved
Conceptualized	Directed	Instituted	Performed	
Created	Established	Integrated	Planned	
Customized	Fashioned	Introduced	Revised	

DATA/FINANCIAL SKILLS

Administered	Audited	Developed	Planned	Reduced
Allocated	Budgeted	Estimated	Projected	Researched
Analyzed	Balanced	Forecasted	Purchased	Tabulated
Appraised	Calculated	Managed	Quantified	Tracked
Applied	Computed	Marked	Reconciled	

EDUCATION SKILLS

Advised	Demonstrated	Evaluated	Guided	Supplemented
Adapted	Designed	Familiarized	Informed	Taught
Corrected	Developed	Facilitated	Instructed	Trained
Coached	Enabled	Fostered	Persuaded	Tutored
Communicated	Encouraged	Graded	Solved	

HELPING SKILLS

Advocated	Coached	Encouraged	Informed	Rehabilitated
Aided	Counseled	Expedited	Instructed	Represented
Assessed	Demonstrated	Facilitated	Intervened	Resolved
Assisted	Diagnosed	Familiarized	Motivated	Supported
Clarified	Educated	Guided	Referred	Taught

ACTION VERBS FOR RESUMÉS – CONT'D

MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Administered	Coordinated	Increased	Motivated	Reorganized
Analyzed	Delegated	Improved	Organized	Reviewed
Approved	Directed	Initiated	Overhauled	Scheduled
Assigned	Enhanced	Inspected	Oversaw	Spearheaded
Attained	Engineered	Instituted	Pioneered	Supervised
Chaired	Established	Led	Planned	Troubleshoot
Consolidated	Evaluated	Managed	Prioritized	
Contracted	Executed	Modeled	Recommended	

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Accomplished	Consolidated	Ensured	Launched	Revitalized
Achieved	Controlled	Expanded	Monitored	Secured
Administered	Coordinated	Facilitated	Orchestrated	Streamlined
Arranged	Cultivated	Formalized	Overhauled	Surpassed
Assigned	Delegated	Generated	Persuaded	Synchronized
Attained	Demonstrated	Guided	Prioritized	Targeted
Collaborated	Dispatched	Implemented	Redesigned	Transformed
Communicated	Encouraged	Integrated	Reshaped	Upgraded

RESEARCH SKILLS

Analyzed	Critiqued	Extracted	Located	Summarized
Clarified	Diagnosed	Identified	Organized	Surveyed
Collected	Evaluated	Interpreted	Researched	Synthesized
Compared	Examined	Interviewed	Reviewed	Systematized
Conducted	Gathered	Investigated	Solved	Tested

How to Deconstruct a Job Posting
How Do I Make a Tailored Resumé?

QUALIFICATIONS

HOW DO YOU MEET THE CRITERIA?

SKILLS, ABILITIES OR DUTIES

HOW DO YOU MEET THE CRITERIA?

Fill out the table and use it as a checklist for what needs to be on your resumé and emphasized. Since these are the things the employer cares about, take a look at the rest of your resumé and try to remove or take the focus away from things which are not of interest to the employer

PERSONAL
LETTERHEAD

Anita Career

201 – 110 Job Search Road
Small Town, MB R7N 2C4
(204) 555-0989 AnitaCareerAbc123@cc.umanitoba.ca

DATE June 12, 20XX

CONTACT
NAME/TITLE,
COMPANY, &
ADDRESS

Ms. Nicole Chau
Human Resource Manager
Health Policy Research Centre
398 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R4L 2X9

DEAR... Dear Ms. Chau,

INTRODUCTION

I am extremely interested in the Research Assistant opening at the Health Policy Research Centre, competition A3421, as advertised on your website. Your organization has an outstanding record of high calibre research which regularly impacts the way local health institutions and governments deliver health services to Manitobans. I believe that my psychological research experience coupled with my strong interpersonal skills would make me an excellent addition to your team.

- ✓ Job title
- ✓ Posting#
- ✓ Why this company
- ✓ 2 skills

BODY

I am particularly intrigued by the research being done on the intersection between poverty and youth mental health. I have studied these topics extensively in my psychology degree – often citing Health Policy Research Centre publications in my writing on the subject. Beyond this, I have strong statistical analysis skills. I have been trained in all areas of statistical analysis, utilizing various tools in my previous research experience, which I presented at the Manitoba Youth Symposium. I have a talent and a passion for research, which I would enthusiastically bring to my work with your organization.

- ✓ Explain unique skills needed at company
- ✓ Prove skills, going beyond resumé

My knack for research is enhanced by my ability to work with others. I have honed my communication skills through my supervisory experience in the service industry and consistently demonstrated teamwork in my extensive volunteer experience. Further, by volunteering with Open Door Society, I not only developed the ability to be an effective listener, but also worked closely with stakeholders in your research. I gained insight into the experiences of the low socioeconomic status youth which are central to your research as well as the community health agencies who serve them. This makes me uniquely qualified to research this subject.

- ✓ Relate skills back to needs of company

CONCLUSION

I am confident that I have the qualifications and skills that are a great match for this position.
I look forward to meeting with you in an interview to further discuss this exciting opportunity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

- ✓ Say thank you
- ✓ Mention Interview

Sincerely,

Anita Career