Effective Resumes & Cover Letters

Welcome!

134 Mary Gates Hall
(206) 543-0535
careers.uw.edu

Workshop Objectives

- Purpose of Your Resume
- The Employer's Perspective
- Targeting Your Resume to Match Employer Needs
- Resume Content and Categories
- Resume Styles and Formats
- Tips for Resumes in the Digital Age
- Effective Cover Letters
- Resources

What is a Resume?

- First impression
- Demonstrates your **match** for a position
- Showcases your "value" to employer
  Value = skills, talents, education & experience
- Purpose = get an **interview**
- Does a resume have to be one page?!

Curriculum Vitae (CV) vs. Resume

The curriculum vitae (CV) is a document that details your academic and professional accomplishments. CVs are more comprehensive documents than resumes. They are most often used for academic or research positions, whereas resumes are the preferred documents in business and industry.

Curriculum Vitae

- For positions in academia, research, grants
- Summary of ***all*** education & experience
- Space <u>is not</u> a premium; several pages long
- Will be thoroughly read by search committee
- Includes full list of pubs & presentations

Resume

- For everywhere else
- Summary of ***related*** educ. & exp.
- Space <u>is</u> a premium; 1-2 pages long
- Will be scanned quickly by recruiter
- Used as marketing tool

CV's & Resumes Worldwide

- http://www.jobera.com/cvs-a-resumes/international/cvs-a-resumes/cvs-a-resumes.html
- Click on Resumes → Worldwide; CVs → Worldwide; Curriculum Vitae → Worldwide

Did You Know?

Studies indicate that hiring managers spend an average of ***30 seconds or fewer*** *looking at each résumé when it is first received.*

- Most significant part of the resume:
  - top half of page
  - must give evidence of a good "match"

Skills Link to Jobs

- Value increases with the degree of match between your skills and how an employer views the position

- It's best to target one's resume to each position to show match

- Job description is the key to targeting your resume
  - Find the skill words (often described as "key" words)
  - Include skill words that match with your background on your resume
  - "**Summary of Qualifications**" section on resume – perfect for keywords

- Identify *your* skills & strengths via Skills Assessment & Identification exercise

Job Description / Targeted Resume

Information Technology Specialist 1

This Information Technology role allows you to participate in three project-based rotations in the Internet Services Group in order to prepare you for a permanent placement as an IT professional. Typical assignments after the program include work as a web developer, Internet programmer and quality assurance analyst among other functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

* Coursework in programming skills (C, C++, Java) and web development (HTML, JavaScript, XML, SQL)
* Operating system experience with UNIX or NT
* Strong interpersonal, analytical and problem-solving skills
* Demonstrated group leadership ability
* Experience in a technical field such as computer science and engineering
* Relevant work experience in application development or front-end web design
* Pacific Rim language a plus
* Able to move from one project to another with ease and effectiveness

Gary Gutenburg

2733 NE 95th Street Seattle, WA 98105 gary.g@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE: Position in Information Technology with Novel using my excellent interpersonal and programming skills

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS:

- 2 years experience in application development and operating systems
- Computer Skills: Proficient in Java, C++, SQL, HTML, XML, UNIX, LAN, WAN, web design, Microsoft Office
- Demonstrated customer service experience in technical settings
- Highly adaptable and flexible in changing environments
- Work well independently and on team projects with diverse populations
- Japanese: fluent reading and listening; basic conversational skills

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Computer Lab Technician, Frito Lay, Marysville**,** WA 7/09-9/11

- Provided computer instruction to all staff levels in modern computer lab
- Installed and maintained LAN/WAN/cloud systems using SQL, UNIX

EDUCATION:

University of Washington, Seattle, WA
BS in Informatics, **GPA: 3.5/4.0**, June 2009

Coursework included study of information systems and technology with a human-centered approach*: Info Systems Design, Computer Networks, Distributed Applications, Computer Programming*

Study Abroad: Keio University, Tokyo, Japan, Spring 2004 – Winter 2005
One-year exchange program, resided with host-family

THE CAREER CENTER
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Division of Student Life

Job Description/Targeted Resume

Women's Wellness and Integrated Social Health [WWISH]

We are currently seeking a **Social Media Whiz** who has excellent online **communication** skills, is fluent using Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and is able to learn other social media. This position requires a **creative thinker** and someone who enjoys exploring the Internet and discovering new ways to use it relating to women's issues.

Qualifications:
Must be available full-time. Excellent **organizational skills** and strong **attention to detail** . Effective **editing** and **writing skills**; Ability to **multi-task** in busy work environment. **Bilingual** skills desired but not required. **Bachelor's degree** in social related fields.

Duties:
Help organize WWISH office space**.** Develop relationships and manage posts on **Facebook , Twitter** and email. Make posts to **social media sites**, drive people to the WWISH site. Make posts on **Blog**; post comments on related blogs . Do **online research** about other women's organizations. Think of ways to **market** WWISH in new areas. **Research blogs and websites** related to WWISH mission.

Rebecca Kim
1234 Fremont Ave; Seattle, WA 90210
206.123.4567 (cell); rebeccak@uw.edu

Objective: Seeking full-time Social Media position with Women's Wellness and Integrated Social Health

Summary of Qualifications:

- 1 year *Internet research* experience in *busy* women's non-profit setting
- Savvy with social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs…)
- Clear and concise *editing*, *writing* and *oral communication* skills
- Highly *organized multi-tasker* with great *attention to detail*
- *Creative* thinking skills; successfully manage steep learning curves
- Enthusiastic about health, wellness and helping women find information and inspiration

Education:
University of Washington (UW), Seattle, WA
BA, Sociology, June 2011

- Minors: *Spanish*, Environmental Health
- Attended Pacific Northwest Women's Health 2009 regional conference

Resume Content Overview

- Basics: 10-12 point san serif font (Calibri is good);
  .8 inch minimum margins top, bottom & sides
- Content:
  - Contact information
  - Objective
  - Summary of Qualifications
  - Education / Related Coursework
  - Experience / Employment / Work History
  - Relevant Projects
  - Volunteer/Leadership Experience
  - Student/Professional Affiliations
  - Honors & Awards
  - Interests & Activities

Important Resume Section: ***Contact Info***

- Make it easy to contact you
- Provide name, address, phone number(s) and email at top of résumé
  - Listing multiple mailing addresses is fine if relocating
- Avoid *inappropriate* email address, i.e., imahottie@email.com
  - Utilize free sites, but check to see that spam filters don't filter out emails from employers
- Cell phones
  - Many employers conduct quick "screening" interviews
  - Be prepared for unknown #'s and unexpected calls
  - Professional message and timely responses

Possible Resume Section: ***Objective***

- Keep it simple
- Job title/position and name of company /organization
  - EX: Marketing Research Analyst at Juniper Corporation
  - EX: Domestic Violence Specialist with Northside Neighborhood Center
- For Career Fairs: More general but still simple and to-the-point

Important Resume Section: ***Summary of Qualifications***

- Shows that you are an excellent match for the position
- Content: Explicit list of the required/preferred qualifications that you have!
- Gets your resume off to a very good start
- 86% of employers prefer an objective or Sum. of Qualif. or both (NACE)

Important Resume Section: ***Education***

- Include highest level of education completed [BA, BS, MA, MS]
- List graduation date (month & year); if longer than 10 years, don't list date
- Special trainings or certifications
- GPA?
- Highlight relevant coursework if within the last 1-2 years
- Include continuing/ongoing education

Possible Resume Section: ***Relevant Projects***

- Any project, research, or activity that is directly related to the position
  - (see pp. 18, 20, 22, 23 in Career Guide)

- Great resume-building activity

EX: "Reductions in Pesticide Use in Washington Municipalities for City of Redmond," Final paper for ANTH 499: *Culture, Ecology, and Politics, Winter 2009*

- Examined policies and practices for 5 related metropolitan areas
- Conducted interviews with 3 city planners and 20 concerned citizens
- Performed qualitative and quantitative analyses regarding citizen reactions
- Wrote 10-page report and presented to Redmond City Council with recommendations

- May be listed as a major heading including several projects
  - (see p. 22 in Career Guide)

Important Resume Section: ***Experience***

- Start with recent position and employer
  - Include: **job title, company/org**., city, state, dates (months/years)
- Include accomplishments & duties
- Use action verbs (avoid "I" and "we" statements)
- Be truthful
- Quantify if you can ($, #'s and %'s are effective!)
- Bulleted statements are effective; avoid paragraphs
- How far back in the past to go for experience?

Additional Resume Sections To Consider:

- Additional Skills (Technical, Lab, Languages, etc.)
- Honors and Awards
- Volunteer Activities
- Activities/Interests
- Student/Professional Affiliations
- Do not need to list references on a resume
  - Send if requested; bring to interview

Resume Styles

- **Reverse Chronological Resume** (Career Guide p. 18)
  - most common
  - may include **Summary of Qualifications** (Career Guide pp. 19, 20, 23)
  - past experiences listed with most recent first
  - works well if experience is within the same field; supports your current job goal
- **Functional (skills) Resume** (Career Guide p. 19)
  - emphasis is on presenting skills and strengths
  - used with a short work history, recent educational degree, or several jobs used similar skills
  - good format for career changers
- **Combination Resume** (Career Guide p. 22)
  - Experience is organized first by skill sets, then projects, and then work history and education in reverse chronological order within the category
- Okay to use Career Guide resume examples as templates and to take a section from one resume and use in another

Resumes for Career Fairs

When you need a more general resume:

- Still try to tailor as much as possible (to top 5-7 employers)
- Create several versions for specific purposes
  - Example: One for marketing jobs & one for project management positions
- After learning more about what jobs are available, follow up with a more targeted resume
- Attend our "**Career Fair Success**" workshop or view online at http://careers.washington.edu/Workshops

Emailing Resumes

- When sending your formatted résumé, **attach** as a **PDF** or **Word** document; check that you **did** attach the **correct** doc
- Include your *name* in the document title
- Subject lines of emails important
- Spell check your email messages
- Include an unformatted TXT (text) version of your resume & cover letter in the body of your email, so the employer can preview
  - Some employers may not open attachments for security reasons
  - "I have attached an MS Word version of my résumé and cover letter, as well as pasted a plain-text version of my resume below".
- See example in Career Guide (p. 21)

Online Applications

- Important to always follow directions on web site
- Sometimes you need to submit an unformatted resume to an employer website
  - Left justified, no bolding, no italics, no indenting, no bullets, no columns
  - Capital letters instead of bolding (for section headings, job titles, etc.)
  - Use double-spacing to separate sections
  - Asterisks or dashes instead of bullets
  - When copying and pasting résumé into text box, make sure the entire résumé, including contact information, is copied and pasted
  - After pasting resume into text box, ***go back and review*** (if you can) & adjust if necessary
- If application website ***allows only one resume*** to be posted, then resume may need to be more generic and comprehensive, so that it is ***appropriate for several positions***
- For each job you apply to, **copy/paste job posting & save** for future reference, then use for interview prep

Cover Letters: The Basics

- One page [3-4 paragraphs] letter where you introduce yourself to an employer
- Highlights your interest in their organization and position, how you "match" their opening(s), and request an interview
- Provides context for your resume
- Explains why you are qualified for the job or internship and what you can contribute, what you have to offer them

Cover Letters: The Basics

- Reflection of your written communication skills
- Most effective when letter is tailored to position and employer; demonstrates you've done your homework/research
- See examples on pages 20, 21 & 24 in the Career Guide
- Not every employer wants or requires a cover letter; follow their directions

Cover Letters: What to Include?

First paragraph

- Explain purpose of your letter/resume – usually to apply for a specific position and/or team/department of interest
- Note how you heard about the position
- Provide information related to how you "match" their needs
- Show enthusiasm (for position, company, mission)

Middle paragraph(s)

- Emphasize what you have to offer and how your skills/experience relate specifically to this particular position
- Provide context for experiences on resume

Cover Letters: What to Include?

Last paragraph

- Request an interview
- Thank the employer for their consideration

Express interest and enthusiasm

- Address the *"why them"* theme (mission, services, products, did somebody refer you to them?, etc.)

Emailing

- Attach cover letter with resume or use your email message as your cover letter, following letter format described in this workshop

Resources

careers.uw.edu

- **Event calendar**
  - Workshops, Career Fairs, Networking Panels, Information Sessions
  - On Campus Interviewing [Recruiting] (fall, winter, spring)
- **One-on-one support**
  - Career counseling appointments (fee involved for alumni)
- **Grad Student web page**
  - Resume & cover letter examples for jobs in academia & industry
- **Alumni services web page**
  - http://careers.washington.edu/Alumni/Write-a-Resume-CV-or-Cover-Letter

Proofread your documents before submitting to employers; no mistakes!
Have your resumes & cover letters reviewed at the Career Center

Thank You!

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