HOW TO WRITE A RESUME THAT GETS RESULTS

➢ The task of the <u>resume</u> is to get you an <u>interview.</u>
➢ A resume is an <u>advertising tool</u> with you as the product. **It is not an autobiography.**
➢ Your resume should be <u>targeted</u> toward the position you are applying for.
➢ Your resume should answer the following questions the employer will have:

1. Who are you and where can I reach you?	= Identifying information
2. What type of job are you looking for?	= Professional Profile
3. What can you do for us?	= Professional Accomplishments/Core Competencies
4. Where have you gained work experience?	= Work History or Professional Experience
5. What you have learned?	= Education (List GPA if 3.50 & over)

List education after professional profile if still in school or a recent graduate.

Before you can sit down to write the resume itself, you will need to do some **preliminary work**:

Step 1: You will need to list all your responsibilities and the tasks you did and where you did it. Create a **time line** of your professional life, starting with the first job you ever held, until the present time. Include non-paid activities such as volunteer jobs, internships and positions held in school and other organizations. (Go back 7-10 years only)

Step 2: Write a **job sketch** for all these activities. List all major duties and responsibilities. List a brief description of special projects. Make an analysis of results you achieved. An easy way to accomplish this task is to use 3X5 index cards. On the front, list the employer, your supervisor's name, the company address and phone number, your job title and the dates you worked there. On the back of the card write your job sketch. You can also create a "master copy" on your computer. (Print a copy in case of computer crashes). By doing this, you will have a permanent record of your work life. After you have completed steps 1 and 2 once, you can keep adding to your bio as you develop new skills and experience.

Step 3: Strategize on what to include and what not to include on your resume. (See page 3 of this handout) If you have had a variety of jobs in different industries or have changed careers you will need to have resumes for each.

Formatting your resume

There are two basis formats for resume writing: a **chronological** resume emphasizes your work history; a **functional** resume highlights your skills and abilities. Which type you use depends on your circumstances.

The **chronological** format is the most widely known and used format. It is organized by dates of employment in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent employer. This format focuses on your job titles and your duties and responsibilities. It works best if you have a stable employment record and are looking for a promotion or employment in a similar position. Employers prefer this type.

The **functional** format allows you to focus on what you are *capable* of doing (your functions) and downplays job titles and dates. It is organized around two or three or four of your strongest skill areas (for example, marketing skills, organizational skills and public relations skills). Examples of how you have used these skills are listed underneath each skill area. Employment history is still listed, but the emphasis is on your skills rather than your duties and responsibilities. This format works well for career changers, people with little paid experience and for people with large gaps in their employment. It also works well for people who have had a single employer where they performed many different functions. Note the attached examples for "Jane Smith." Using the same person and similar information, the resume on the right is an example of a chronological resume; the resume on the left is a functional one. **Employers prefer chronological resumes—if your situation allows, use the chronological format.** Font used should be consistent throughout your cover letter, resume and references.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF RESUME PREPARATION

➤ Your resume needs to be appealing to the eye. If you were an employer, would *you* want to read it?

➤ Many employers prefer a one-page resume, but if you have a lot of relevant experience, they prefer readability over length. Don't cram so much information on a single page that it becomes difficult to read. Don't go over two pages, though. Use a word-processing program such as Word to compose your resume. It is best to design your own, using common resume categories. **Do not use resume templates.** The formatting does not always transmit correctly electronically and they are frustrating to update. Make sure the text is well-distributed over the entire page. Start with margins of 1 inch around, and don't make them smaller than 0.7. Leave plenty of white space between text items. Print your resume and cover letter on high quality paper (white or cream) on a laser printer and use standard size paper.

➤ Use the same fonts throughout. Good fonts to use are Times New Roman, Tahoma, Garamond and Arial. Don't use fonts that are difficult to read! In general, you don't want to use a point type smaller than 10 or bigger than 14. Use **bolding**, <u>underlining</u> and CAPS for emphasis (sparingly, however). Be consistent in how you use bolding and capitals. For example, if you bold a previous employer in one entry, other employers should also be bolded. Be aware of visual effects, for example, how well the different entries on your resume line up.

➤ Avoid using personal pronouns (I, me, my). Do use ACTION VERBS and POWER WORDS! Be consistent in your verb tenses. Use the present tense only if you still hold a position; for all previous positions, use the past tense.

➤ Draw attention to your skills and accomplishments through the use of bullets and key words and phrases.

➤ PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, AND PROOFREAD! Your resume should be completely error-free.

➤ Don't put personal information such as age, height, weight, marital status, etc.

➤ An employer expects the standard resume categories of identifying information, work history and education, and will also look for a quick professional summary of your qualifications and core skills and competencies. Be CLEAR, CONCISE AND ORGANIZED.

➤ You can list your education either ahead of your work experience or underneath it. The general rule is that you list your strongest assets first. For recent graduates or people still in school, this is frequently their education. You don't need to list your high school education once you have taken college-level classes.

➤ Don't list salary information.

➤ Don't list reasons for leaving jobs, and don't include names of supervisors and full addresses of previous employers.

➤ Have a separate "reference sheet" with names, addresses and phone numbers of your references. (Don't mail them with your resume, unless you are requested to do so, and make sure you ask your references for their permission to include them on your list).

➤ **NEVER** send a resume without a cover letter, even when faxing or e-mailing your resume, unless the employer tells you otherwise. You can write your cover letter in the body of an e-mail and also attach it.

NECESSARY STEPS IN CREATING A RESUME THAT GETS RESULTS

1. It is essential for your resume to have a focus. It should be clear to someone reading your resume what your qualifications and skills are, what your education and training is, and if applicable any coursework that directly qualifies you for the job you are applying for.

2. You will need to understand the type of skills, knowledge and experience an employer is looking for in a candidate for *that* specific position and you will need to communicate how *your* skills, knowledge and experience match the employer's needs.

3. From your time line and job sketches (see page 1 of this handout), decide which three or four of your skills, past work experiences and education make you a particularly good candidate for the type of position you are interested in. You will summarize those key reasons at the top of your resume, underneath your personal information in a **professional summary** or similarly named section. A summary section has become a mandatory necessity on resumes. Employers quickly glance at this section to determine whether or not to give your resume a closer reading.

4. For each one of these skills, think of a time from your past work history (paid or unpaid) and education when (and how) you used those skills. This is your proof that you can do the job. You will need to describe these accomplishments (also called action statements) using ACTION VERBS that emphasize those accomplishments and NOUNS that are specific to the type of job. Take a look at the handout entitled, "List of Skill and Function Areas" to see examples of common terms for skill areas and the ACTION VERB handout for verbs to describe these skills.

5. Choose a resume format that best fits your situation: chronological, functional or a combination of both. A chronological resume works best for people who have a stable work record with few gaps, and for whom the position they are applying for is a natural career progression. Functional resumes show what you *can* do and downplay the where and when of your past job experience. A combination resume works best for people who worked for a single employer for a long time, where they have performed several different functions or for folks that want to highlight both their skills and work history and progression and expansion of their capacity as a worker.

6. Look at the resume examples to see how each resume is arranged. Choose the format that best fits your skills and experience.

7. Determine how you will transmit your resume to the employer. If you are sending your resume as an attachment, make sure you compose your resume in WORD, since that is the software that most employers use. If you are faxing your resume, your original needs to be a very crisp copy, because faxing reduces legibility. If you are mailing or hand-carrying your resume to an employer, print it up on resume paper. Finally, if the employer wants you to use a TEXT format to copy and paste your resume in an on-line format, you need to know how to do that. See the handout on scannable and plain text resumes. You will have to simplify your format in order to submit in this form.

(YOUR NAME)

(Your Address,Your City, State and Zip)

(Your Phone Number)((Your Email Address)

Professional Profile

(A short paragraph that tells the potential employer what job you seek and a brief summary/ highlights of professional experiences and qualifications. This introduction paragraph should cue the employer of your strong candidacy for the position you want to be considered for)

Core Competencies

•	•
•	•
•	•

(List your strongest skills and personal attributes - for example, Three years experience in office management; Proficient in the use of MS Word, Excel and Access, strong organizational skills. This section is known by different names (Core Competencies, Summary of Skills, Highlights of Qualifications, etc).

Professional Experience:

Dates of Employment   Job Title, Company   City, State
-
-
-

(List duties and responsibilities using action verbs and showing accomplishments).

Dates of Employment   Job Title, Company   City, State
-
-
-

Dates of Employment   Job Title, Company   City, State
-
-
-

Optional Headings: Computer/Technical Skills or other Specialized Skills/Certifications
(Especially useful in Professional/Technical Resumes), Awards/Honors, Community Service (if relevant and/or as filler if you have very little work experience).

Education:

Name of College, City, State
Degree and Date Degree was or will be received; if you don't have a lot of work experience, you can also list completed course work that is relevant to the position(s) you are applying to.)

Example of a **Chronological Resume.;** *This type of resume emphasizes your employment record. List each position in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent position.*

JANE SMITH
1701 Broadway Avenue East Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 555-1234 jsmith@sccd.ctc.edu

Administrative Assistant with four years of front desk reception, as well as extensive office support experience. Strong Math skills, with ability to creatively and effectively resolve problems; An advanced user of Microsoft Word, Outlook, Excel, Access, PowerPoint; and the use of Internet Browsers.

Summary of Professional Competencies
- Customer Centered Service Provider with experience answering phones, e-mails and in person inquiries
- Electronic calculators, photocopy and fax machines; 10-key by touch; Keyboarding speed: 60wpm
- Multi-tasking: creating documents and office support, while acting as first point of contact for busy office
- Office management and support of top executives; appointments & daily schedules, travel arrangements, meeting organization and preparations; document preparation (budget, reports, memos, letters, etc...)

Professional Experience
01/01-present   **Executive Assistant**, ALLRITE INSURANCE   Seattle, WA
- Manage front desk operations while providing administrative support for department manager and five sales staff
- Communicate with clients, resolving customer service problems and answering inquiries
- Prepare correspondence, reports, spreadsheets and mailing lists
- Schedule and confirm staff appointments

11/99-01/01   **Office Assistant**, ABBOTT COMMUNICATIONS   Seattle, WA
- Prepared correspondence, forms and budget documents for advertising agency
- Provided telephone support for 8 incoming lines
- Compiled information folders for prospective clients and maintained files.
- Created and updated client mailing lists.

10/98-11/99   **Receptionist**, DATA-COM   Seattle, WA
- Greeted visitors and answered incoming lines for small data Communications Company; filing, data-entry, copying and faxing documents.

Community Service
10/00-present   **Volunteer Tutor**, BRIGHTON ELEMENTARY   Seattle, WA
- Tutor 4th and 5th grade students in math and language skills, using a variety of teaching methods in after school mentoring/tutoring program..

Education
- Seattle Central Community College   Seattle, WA
  Associate Degree of Applied Science - Business Information Technology June 2001 - GPA 3.6.

Example of the **Functional** resume format
Benefits: Emphasizes your skills; Downplays employment history.
Drawbacks: May raise red flags with employer; Format isn't as well-known as chronological resume.

_____
(YOUR NAME)
_____
(Your Address,Your City, State and Zip)
_____
(Your Phone Number)((Your Email Address)

Position applying for & Professional Profile:
_____

Education:
_____
(Degree received, Name of College, City, State, Date degree was or will be received)

Summary of Skills:
- _____
- _____
- _____

Professional Accomplishments:
_____
(PA #1)
- _____
- _____
- _____
(Describe several instances of how you used these skills)
_____
(PA #2)
- _____
- _____
- _____
_____
(PA #3)
- _____
- _____
- _____

Work Experience:
_____
(Current/Last Job Title, Company, City, State, Dates)
_____
(Previous Job Title, Company, City, State, Dates)
_____
(Previous Job Title, Company, City, State, Dates)

Example of a **Functional Resume**; This type of resume emphasizes your skills and abilities; It downplays your job titles and employment record.

JANE SMITH
1701 Broadway Avenue East Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 555-1234 jsmith@yahoo.com
_____

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE
Administrative Assistant: Five years of progressively increasing responsibility and expertise including; customer service, sales and administrative support; Flexible worker; dependable team player with the ability to identify problems and provide workable solutions. Highly efficient and organized; Multi-task oriented, with ability to handle multiple projects and responsibilities simultaneously.

EDUCATION
10/1999-6/2001   Seattle Central Community College   Seattle, WA
Associate of Applied Science degree - Business Information Technology June, 2001. GPA 3.6

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS
• Three years of office support, office management and customer service experience
• Recent graduate of Business Information Technology program
• Efficient, detail-oriented and skilled at time management- effectively meet deadlines

SUMMARY OF SKILLS
• Processing projects utilizing MS Word, Excel and Access
• Preparing correspondence, reports, spreadsheets, mailing lists, forms and budget documents
• Data entry has included data base development, updating client mailing lists and scheduling sales staff appointments
• Keyboarding speed at 60+ wpm. Ten key by touch at 345 spm
• Multi-phone lines, photocopy and fax machines
• Proficient in the use of Email systems and Internet applications; outlook for scheduling appointments
• Managing front desk operations for busy insurance agency
• Providing administrative support to department manager and five sales staff
• Communicating with clients regarding insurance inquiries
• Resolution of customer service problems on a consistent basis
• Greeting visitors and answered up to 8 incoming phone lines, while performing other duties simultaneously

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
1/2001-present   Administrative Assistant, Allrite Insurance   Seattle, WA
2/1995-1/1996   Clerk, Abbott Communications   Seattle, WA
10/1990-11/1991   Receptionist, Data-Com.   Seattle, WA

EXAMPLE OF A REFERENCE SHEET

REFERENCES

JANE SMITH
1701 Broadway Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 555-1234
jsmith@yahoo.com

References

Paula Taylor
Department Manager
Allrite Insurance Company
114 6th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 123-4567
ptaylor@allrite.com

Jerry Smith
Sales Associate
Mainstream Communications
(formerly Office Manager
Abbott Communications)
345 Roosevelt SE
Seattle, WA 98122
(206)234-5678
jsmith@mainstream.com

Alex Suzuki
Volunteer Coordinator
Brighton Elementary
2000 Broadway
Seattle, WA 98122
(206)345-6789
alexs@brighton.edu

Although it is no longer customary to put "references available upon request" on the bottom of your résumé, you are expected to have a list of references available during a personal interview. Before making a list of references, ask permission from each person to make sure they are willing to serve as your reference. Your reference sheet is **NOT** submitted with your initial application and/or résumé, unless you are requested to do so. Choose people who can speak about your work history, either paid or volunteer; preferably a former supervisor or senior co-worker. If you have limited work experience, you can ask a teacher or family acquaintance to be your reference. On the top of the page, list your own name, address and phone number. Provide at least three references, showing their names, titles, organizations' names, addresses and phone numbers. Center or left flush this information on your references sheet.