

## **Writing an Effective Resume**

Your resume is your greatest marketing tool. A well-written resume enables you to present your qualifications to potential employers, and get an interview.

There are four different types of resumes. Each format serves a distinct purpose.

Choose the format that fits with the position you are applying for, the amount of relevant experiences you have, and the employer's preference.

### **Chronological Resume**

- This is the most widely accepted resume format and the easiest to write. This format illustrates your work experience by listing your job titles and responsibilities from your most recent position to your first job. It is sometimes appropriate to list only positions directly related to the desired job. If you have many years of experience, you need only list the last ten years of employment history. Individuals with substantial, progressively responsible work histories often prefer this type of resume.



**Functional Resume**

This resume is organized to highlight your qualifications,, with little emphasis on specific dates. This resume style is useful if you do not have a lot of experience, you are changing jobs, or if you have been out of the workforce for an extended period of time.

## FUNCTIONAL RESUME

### IGOTA POSITION

1234 Glover Road, Langley, BC V2Y 5P8  
e-mail: [position@twu.ca](mailto:position@twu.ca)

604-888-7777

### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 16 years accounting experience
- 15 years volunteer experience in 4 philanthropic organizations
- 5 years grant writing experience

### NON-PROFIT SKILLS

- Managed finances of provincial non-profit BC Accounting Association
- Created and submitted grant for operating expenses on behalf of Scoops snow shoveling for the elderly.
- Supervised volunteer as site supervisor for BC Habitat for Humanity

### SUPERVISORY SKILLS

- Managed team of 8 junior accountants, including daily work assignments and annual performance reviews
- Conducted all hiring, promotions, salary adjustments, terminations as needed
- Facilitated team development and conflict resolution when needed

### COMPUTER/PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Successfully completed implementation of new accounting software system two months ahead of schedule
- Consulted with Benefits Group to streamline operations, saving \$10,000 annually
- Revised voucher forms, resulting in a 2-day reduction in processing payments
- Worked in purchasing as substitute for vacationing employees
- Learned NASS computerized accounting software package

### EDUCATION

**BACHELOR OF ARTS in ACCOUNTING**, Trinity Western University, Langley, BC

### ACTIVITIES

Toastmasters: Administrative Vice President  
Habitat for Humanity, Family Selection Committee,  
Scoops, Volunteer Snow Shoveler for the elderly,  
Cross-country skiing, Managing Investments, Gourmet Cooking

### REFERENCES

Available Upon Request

### **Combination Resume**

- This resume style combines the Chronological and the Functional Resume. You may want to use this format if you have experience and skills and would like to effectively emphasize both. The combination format allows you to emphasize the preferred and most relevant skill areas.

SAMPLE: COMBINATION RESUME

**IWANA POSITION**

1234 Glover Road, Langley, BC V2Y 5P2  
604-888-1234; e-mail: [position@agape.twu.ca](mailto:position@agape.twu.ca)

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- ◆ University Graduate
- ◆ 3 years of student leadership experience
- ◆ Completed Co-operative Education Program

**ACCOUNTING SKILLS**

- ◆ Oversaw the TWU Students Association's finances, 2003-2004
- ◆ Personally responsible for completing all tax documents, 2002-2003
- ◆ Prepared weekly profit and loss statements, 2002-2003
- ◆ Submitted tax documents on a monthly basis, 2001-2002

**SUPERVISORY SKILLS**

- ◆ Managed team of assistants for TWU Students Association's finance department, 2003-2004
- ◆ Conducted all hiring and terminations as needed, 2003-2004
- ◆ Facilitated team development and conflict resolution when needed, 2003-2004

**COMPUTER/PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

- ◆ Successfully completed implementation of new accounting software system two months ahead of schedule, 2001-2002
- ◆ Consulted with Benefit Group to streamline operations, saving \$10,000 annually, 2002-2004
- ◆ Revised voucher forms, resulting in a 2-day reduction in processing payments, 2001-2002

**EXPERIENCE**

**FINANCE OFFICER**

Trinity Western University Students Association, Langley, BC 2003-2004

**ARTICLING CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION STUDENT**

JONF Chartered Accountants, Surrey, BC 2002-2004

**EDUCATION**

**BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

2002-2004

Trinity Western University, Langley, BC

Co-operative Education Certificate

Relevant Courses:

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## **Scannable Resume**

- The scannable resume is based on facts and nouns. Computers, not people, scan these resumes. These resumes need to be designed for maximum legibility by Optical Character Recognition software, not for visual appeal to a person. Some employers request a scannable resume but the majority of employers just request an email version of your resume.

## What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of each Resume type?

Type of Resume	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Chronological</b>	Professional interviewers are <b>most familiar</b> with this format. <b>Easiest to prepare</b> since content is structured by familiar dates, titles, and companies. <b>A steady employment record</b> (without much job hopping) <b>Provides interviewer with a Guide</b> for discussing your work experience.	Starkly reveals <b>unemployment gaps</b> . If you don't have a consistent employment record, you may wish to use another format. <b>It may put undesired emphasis</b> on job areas that you want to minimize. <b>Skill areas are difficult to highlight</b> .
<b>Functional</b>	<b>Stresses selected skill areas</b> which are marketable or in demand. <b>Helps camouflage a spotty employment record</b> . Allows the applicant to <b>emphasize professional growth</b> .	<b>Makes some employers suspicious</b> . They may want additional work history. <b>Doesn't allow you to highlight companies</b> or organizations for which you have worked.
<b>Combination</b>	Can <b>emphasize most relevant skills and abilities</b> . <b>Gaps in employment can be de-emphasized</b> . <b>Format can be varied</b> to highlight functional descriptions and play down chronology.	This format <b>takes longer to read</b> , and an <b>employer can lose interest</b> unless it is succinctly written and attractively designed.

## **RESUME TIPS**

1. **Make your first impression count.**
  - Not only is your resume the first thing an employer sees from you—it is what the employer will use to decide whether you are selected to interview for the position you are interested in..
2. **Be concise.**
  - It is acceptable to go to 2 pages if you have 2 pages worth of information; however, we recommend not going over two except in certain cases. Often you are able concisely write a 1 page resume if you are looking for summer employment or your first entry-level job.
3. **Find others to help proofread.**
  - Have at least two other people proofread your resume.
4. **Use the active voice.**
  - Do not use phrases such as “Responsible for...”, “Duties included...”, etc. Write strong accomplishment statements starting with an action verb.
5. **Do not use first person and possessive pronouns.** The words “I”, “me”, “my”, “mine”, or “our” should never, ever appear in a resume.
6. **Avoid using resume templates.**
  - Gives a cookie-cutter appearance (your resume will look like every other person’s that used that template), lack of flexibility for individual needs, out-of-date formats, and lack of flexibility in editing/layout changes.
7. **Do not include irrelevant information.**
  - Do not include any information that will not in some way directly contribute to getting an interview.
8. **Only use a laser printer and neutral coloured resume paper.**

## **RESUMES....WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE**

- **Salary history or salary requirements.** Including such information is a lose-lose proposition. Naming a salary requirement that is too high may eliminate you from consideration; naming a low figure may indicate to the employers that you will work for less than they will otherwise would have offered. Wait until the interview stage to discuss salary requirements.
- **Leave out any references to age, race, health, religion, sex, and national origin.** Photographs have no place on the resume except for actors, models or other entertainment personalities.
- Do not use headings such as RESUME, FACT SHEET or CURRICULUM VITAE.
- Do not state your availability for employment or the reason you left your last job, as these topics are covered during the interview.

# Which Verbs will best illustrate my accomplishments?

## POWER VERBS

### Demonstrate Leadership, Decision Making, or Management Skills:

Allocated	determined	directed	elected	enlisted	formed
founded	governed	hired	initiated	inspired	instituted
led	managed	moderated	motivated	operated	oversaw
pioneered	presided	produced	recruited	represented	selected
spearheaded	sponsored	staged	started	supervised	

### Demonstrate Administrative, Organizational and Follow-Through Skills:

arranged	assembled	collected	centralized	coordinated	catalogued
distributed	disseminated	enforced	executed	formalized	implemented
installed	maintained	organized	planned	prepared	processed
routed	recorded	reorganized	scheduled	updated	

### Demonstrate Communication Skills:

acquainted	apprised	answered	briefed	conducted	contacted
demonstrated	drafted	educated	explained	familiarized	handled
informed	instructed	introduced	lectured	listened	presented
reported	responded	spoke	summarized	taught	trained
translated	wrote				

### Demonstrate Analytical or Research Skills:

Analyzed	assessed	audited	compiled	consulted	detected
discovered	documented	edited	evaluated	examined	gathered
identified	interpreted	interviewed	researched	searched	surveyed
tested					

### Demonstrate the Ability to Create or Innovate

Authored	conceived	conceptualized	created	composed	designed
devised	established	invented	originated	revolutionized	

### Demonstrate Counseling, Helping, or Mediating Skills

aided	attended	assisted	collaborated	contributed	counseled
comforted	facilitated	fostered	guided	helped	instilled
mentored	provided	settled	supported	tutored	treated

### Demonstrate the Ability to Convince or Sell

arbitrated	convinced	dissuaded	encouraged	marketed	mediated
negotiated	persuaded	promoted	publicized	resolved	sold
secured	solicited				

# FAQ'S OF COVER LETTERS

## 1. Do I always have to send a cover letter?

**YES**

Think of a cover letter as “holding the hand” of the resume. It guides it to the correct person, introduces you, and directs the resume to the correct objective.

## 2. Do I have to send it to a certain person?

**YES**

If at all possible, find out who the DECISION-MAKER is that will be hiring for the job and address the cover letter to that person. Try to avoid the Human Resources department since they only handle the logistics of hiring—they don't make the decisions to hire.

## 3. How do I find out to whom to send the resume and cover letter?

**ASK**

Do a little research. Be a little sneaky. It is easier to find out who would be making the decision in smaller companies than in larger companies. The simplest method is usually the one most overlooked—calling the company and asking. If that doesn't work, however, do some homework. If it's a publicly held company, you may be able to find out from the company report who would be over the department to which you would be applying. Talk to an employee of the company. If all else fails, you may fall back to some slightly unorthodox methods, which include calling a random extension number and asking to be connected to the “operations manager” (or whomever you are trying to find).

## 4. Do I staple the cover letter to the resume?

**NO!**

Staples are never used in a resume package. Neither do you fold your cover letter and resume and send it in a standard number 10 envelope—mail them flat in a 9x12 envelope.

## 5. Must I include a cover letter when faxing my resume?

**YES.**

Format the cover letter with matching the heading from the resume, then instead of using a standard business letter format for the address, use a fax cover sheet format for To: Date: Fax Number: Number of Pages: RE: Message: In the “Message” section, write the body of the cover letter. Be sure to **sign** your Fax Cover sheet; it's easy to forget.

## 6. What do I say in a cover letter?

**COVER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:**

- Why you are corresponding with them and what position you are applying for.
- What makes you **UNIQUELY** qualified for this position.
- Why you want to work for them (show enthusiasm).
- Your availability, flexibility, and contact info.

**7. Do I need to write a cover letter when emailing my resume?**

**YES**

Simply start your email as you would a cover letter then at the end state something like “Resume attached in Word” .

Adapted from the Career Moves enewsletter

# COVER LETTER

## Cover Letter Content

## Sample Cover Letter

<p>Your Present Address City, Province Postal Code Date</p>	<p>Box 900 Trinity Western University Langley, BC V2Y 1Y1 March 5, 2002</p>
<p>Name of Employer/Contact Title or Position Company Name Street Address City, Province Postal Code</p>	<p>Mr. John Doe Manager, Human Resources Do-Re-Mi Incorporated 456 Any Street Anytown, BC V5T 6K0</p>
<p>Dear (Name of Contact):</p>	<p>Dear Mr. Doe:</p>
<p>Opening Paragraph: Why Are You Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Open with a strong sentence that will capture the employer's interest</li> <li>➤ For advertised positions, make reference to the file number and the position title, how you heard of the opening or what type of work for which you are applying. If no position has been advertised, indicate that you are investigating career possibilities in the field.</li> </ul>	<p>While attending the December Meeting of the International Trade Council, I met a colleague of yours, Mr. Myron Davies. Following an interesting and informative conversation, he suggested that I write to you concerning the Sales Training position now available in your organization.</p>
<p>Second Paragraph: What You Have to Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Brief statement about your skills, experience and accomplishments that will arouse the employer's curiosity.</li> <li>➤ Relate your talents for that which the employer is looking.</li> </ul>	<p>My varied experiences include sales and marketing of different product lines, knowledge of marketing and advertising strategies, computer familiarity and software development, and employment in diverse work cultures. I am an initiator and an achiever, as indicated by the different software packages I have designed and by having received recognition for outstanding sales performance.</p>
<p>Third Paragraph: Why This Company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain briefly why you are interested in working for this employer.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrate that you know something about the organization.</li> </ul>	<p>I am interested in working for International Marketing Systems because of the quality of service you provide your clients and the professionalism you require of your employees. I know I can contribute along these lines and would therefore like to become part of your company and its projected growth.</p>
<p>Closing Paragraph: Follow-Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Request an interview and indicate that you will call to arrange a suitable time.</li> </ul> <p>Sincerely, Handwritten signature Name Typed Here</p>	<p>I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications and will call you next week to arrange an appointment.</p> <p>Sincerely, <i>Jane Smith</i>  Jane Smith</p>