

# Resumes & Cover Letters

Point of the cover letter and resume: To be offered an interview or further discussion

- Cover letters accompany resumes; they draw attention to the most important information in your resume that you want the reader to be sure to see

Resumes: show that you CAN do the work required

Cover Letters: show that you WANT to do the work required; displays enthusiasm

## Cover Letter Tips:

- Create a new cover letter for each position
- Define your clear purpose that you really want the position; you are not begging, but instead displaying your enthusiasm
- Show interest in long-term commitment to employment with organization (especially if you know that there has been high rate of turnover)
- Negative past information and items of concern should not be included in the cover letter or resume; can discuss during the subsequent interviews
- Avoid errors in both the cover letter and the resume
- Address it to a specific person, if possible
- Can utilize cover letters and resumes as a marketing tool about your skills and experience
- Target both documents to the specific employer and/or customer; reflect the research you have done

## Basic Types of Resumes:

### Chronological

- Structure based on reverse chronological dates of employment experience
- Logical progression of information; easy to read and follow
- Ideal to use if you have been in an industry for many years and you are continuing in this industry
- Highlights promotions

- Highlights unemployment gaps and “job hopping”
- Very logical

### Functional

- Structure based on skill sets or areas of accomplishments; thereby not necessarily date-driven
- Connect areas of accomplishment to examples of your experience
- Can be less easy to read unless categories and examples of experiences are clearly defined
- Ideal for changing careers and shorter employment periods
- Identifies employer needs and connects your skills, experience and education/training to solving the needs

### General Resume Tips:

- Avoid sounding like a bland job description by using action verbs and accomplishment statements
- Accomplishment statements: specify how you uniquely did something (i.e. managed a team of 30 Code Enforcement Officers effectively; exceeded organizational goal of budgetary savings by 30%, etc vs. supervised officers; met yearly budget goals)
- Utilize your “2-Minute Me” and “My Accomplishments”
- Identify KSA’s (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities) of position
- Keep verb tenses consistent (i.e. –ed, -ing)
- Utilize industry-specific language
- Have white-space
- Avoid writing beyond 2 pages (if have 2 pages, make sure they are two full pages)
- Free of grammatical and lay-out errors; use higher-quality paper
- Be clear as to the objective or focus of your resume (whether towards a specific position or an industry) and build all experience towards that purpose
- Use bullets and short statements instead of large paragraphs of verbage (harder to read and your experience & skills do not pop out on the page)
- **Remember: cover letters and resumes are usually read for 7 to 10 seconds before an initial decision is made to screen out or read further**

# Chronological Resume

Name  
Address  
Phone/Email

**Objective** (can be the position title, or more generic, but focused label)

**Summary Statement or List of Specific Highlights** (if applicable)

**Experience** (In reverse chronological order)

Date      Title, Company

- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set

Date      Title, Company

- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set

Date      Title, Company

- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set

Date      Title, Company

- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set
- Example of my experience, skill set

## **Relevant Education/Training**

Degree, Organization, Date (or “in progress”, “expected completion” date)  
Certification or License  
Specialized Training  
Conference attendance

# Functional Resume

Name  
Address  
Phone/Email

**Objective** (can be the position title, or more generic, but focused label)

**Summary Statement or List of Specific Highlights** (if applicable)

**Areas of Effectiveness** (usually 3-5 total skill areas with max 10 examples each)

Skill Area 1: XXXXXXXXXX (example, Leadership & Management or Knowledge of Code Regulations, etc.)

- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area

Skill Area 2: XXXXXXXXXX

- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area

Skill Area 3: XXXXXXXXXX

- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area
- Example of my experience, skill set meeting this skill area

**Relevant Experience** (reverse chronological order, in month/year or year format; can be paid or unpaid if relevant)

Job Title, Employer, Date  
Job Title, Employer, Date  
Job Title, Employer, Date

**Relevant Education/Training**

Degree, Organization, Date (or "in progress", "expected completion" date)  
Certification or License  
Specialized Training  
Conference attendance