

PLANNING 10: EDUCATION AND CAREERS

JOB-SEEKING AND JOB-KEEPING SKILLS

RESOURCE PACKAGE

**“PREPARING YOUR
RESUME & COVER LETTER**

CLASS SET

Preparing your résumé and covering letter

A résumé should be a summary of not more than two pages, highlighting information from your personal inventory. Some résumés include a career objective. Your résumé specifically highlights the type of position in which you are interested. Stating your career objective on your résumé can be effective because the employer knows your résumé is tailored to the position for which you are applying. Employers use résumés to assess your writing skills and to decide which applicants will go on to an interview. During an interview both you and the employer can refer to

the résumé, and it will stay behind after you have left the interview. Given all of these uses for your résumé, it's worthwhile to take some time in designing your own impressive, eye-catching résumé.

A short letter sent out with your résumé offers one more chance to attract the attention of employers and shows how you can meet their specific needs. The best way to prepare your covering letter is to take the advertisement for the position and underline the duties, qualities, and skills needed for the position. In your letter, use the same terminology as in the advertisement, making specific reference to each job requirement.

GUIDELINES FOR RÉSUMÉ WRITING

Do's

- Do type your résumé or have it typed. Use good-quality 216 x 279 mm unlined paper of a neutral colour.
- Do have plenty of white space with 3 cm margins all around. Remember, whatever is out in the emptier spaces catches the reader's eye. So plan your layout carefully.
- Do use the pyramid concept. Put the most important information first, because what will be read first will be remembered the longest. If you've just finished school, put your education first; if you've just had a very closely related job, put work experience first.
- Do use action verbs that will make you sound dynamic and action oriented.
- Do use full words, not abbreviations or informal work terms. For example, use television, not TV; mechanic's helper, not grease monkey.

Don'ts

- Don't have any spelling, grammatical, or typographical errors.
- Don't use poor reproduction methods. Each copy of your résumé should look like an original.
- Don't underline and capitalize just anything. Consider carefully what you want to stand out, such as the title of your position, the employer's name, or the dates of employment.
- Don't use the pronoun "I."
- Don't be wordy; use as few words as possible. For some résumés, you may want to use a bullet format, with phrases rather than full sentences.

THREE TYPES OF RÉSUMÉS

There are three main types of résumés, each with its own features, advantages, and disadvantages. In preparing your résumé, a crucial first decision is choosing the type of résumé best suited to your needs and background, and to the prospective employer's perspective. If you are applying in more than one occupational field, it's a good idea to have more than one type of résumé.

Chronological Résumé	Functional Résumé (or Skills)	Combination Résumé
<p>Structural Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work experience is listed in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent position and working backwards ■ Work experience is usually reported in the form of duties performed ■ Employment dates, job titles, and often the employer's name are highlighted in this format <hr/> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It's easy to read and easy to write ■ Employers are familiar with this format ■ It can show steady progression in your work history <hr/> <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does not display your skills ■ Not suitable if you do not have a steady work history; for example, if you are applying for your first job, or if you have been unemployed ■ Not suitable if you are changing occupations or if your experience comes from unpaid work or education 	<p>Structural Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emphasizes skills ■ Highlights skills acquired from work experience, unpaid work experience, or education <hr/> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Highlights skills from a variety of areas, which is especially useful to students ■ Skills can be directly related to a specific position ■ Jobs and experiences that aren't related to a career objective can be omitted ■ Draws attention away from a spotty work history <hr/> <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Takes more time and effort to write ■ Employers may be suspicious of this format, suspecting that something is being hidden ■ Does not highlight work history or previous employers, if mention of these might be beneficial 	<p>Structural Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Highlights work experience and skills ■ Employers can see related skills clearly ■ Work history is clearly outlined <hr/> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Very useful if you have a variety of skills and a stable employment record ■ Well received by employers ■ Shows employment history, positions held, dates employed, and employers, as in the chronological résumé ■ Employers are more accepting of this format than of the functional résumé ■ Useful for students with some work experience <hr/> <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ May be too long because it is a combination of two résumés ■ Not suitable in the case of limited skills and a spotty work history

A CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

Bryan Wilson
183 Brock Street, Apt. 48
Toronto, Ontario
M4Z 7C8
(416) 000-XXXX

Name and Address

Give your name, full address, and telephone number (with area code), fax number, and e-mail address at the top of your résumé.

Career Summary

A qualified Mechanical Engineering Technologist with experience in automotive heavy metal stamping.

Career Summary

Give a brief, general statement about your career goal and experience.

Education

- 1995 AutoCad—Advanced Level Certificate
Pacific Institute for Technical Studies, Vancouver, BC
- 1994 Mechanical Engineering Technology Diploma
Huron College of Applied Arts and Technology, Toronto, ON
- 1991 Greenway Collegiate Institute
Etobicoke, ON—Secondary School Graduation Diploma

Education

List the schools or colleges you have attended and diplomas or degrees you have received. You may also include any subjects or programs you specialized in and any honours or awards you have received.

Work Experience

- 1995–1996 Customer Service Representative Supervisor (laid off—plant closure)
RST Technologies Limited, Downsview, ON
- Processed orders
 - Traced and expedited shipment of heavy metal stampings to automobile manufacturers
 - Handled inventory control using MRP system
 - Made suggestions resulting in 23% increase in department productivity

Work Experience

List your work experience, beginning with your most recent job. Include volunteer work if it relates to the job you are applying for.

Honours and Activities

- Dean's List (GPA 3.8/4.0)
- McLaren Award for first class standing in Mechanical Program
- Associate Member of the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologies (OACETT) since 1994
- Co-ordinator, Greenway Collegiate Blood Drive, 1993
- Liaised with Canadian Red Cross
- Organized facilities in co-ordination with college officials
- Wrote promotional material

Skills

Identify any business or other skills and abilities you have gained in school, on a job, or in other situations, and any activities you have participated in that relate to the job you want.

Interests

Cross-country skiing, tennis, swimming, chess, and home renovations

References

If your résumé is short, you may include references. If not, say "Available on request."

References Available on request.

A SKILLS RÉSUMÉ

Laura Calero
221 Ocean Drive
Fredericton, New Brunswick
(506) 000-XXXX

Job Objective

Seeking a position as a junior production editor. Desire position with opportunity for career growth.

Skills and Abilities

Computer Skills: Skilled on both Macintosh and IBM-compatible computers. Classes using IBM compatible computers in junior and high school. On-the-job training on Macintosh with New Books Publishing Company. Familiar with Windows, Microsoft Word, and Quark.

Communications: Excellent writing and speaking skills. Good with grammar and usage. Have had short stories published in high school journal, *The Athenaeum*.

Hardworking: Have worked outside of school since I was sixteen. In 1992 and 1993, as a swimming instructor during summer vacation. From 1993 to 1994, as a part-time sales associate for Ashbrooks. Worked 20 hours per week while going to school.

Customer Relations: As a sales associate with Ashbrooks, had direct customer contact. Successfully handled both sales and returns. Won "Sales Associate of the Month" award in April 1994.

Attention to Detail: I am precise and careful in my work. As a production assistant for New Books Publishing Company, I did proofreading and also input corrections on the computer.

Education

High School Diploma, Kennedy High School, Fredericton, NB

Activities and Awards

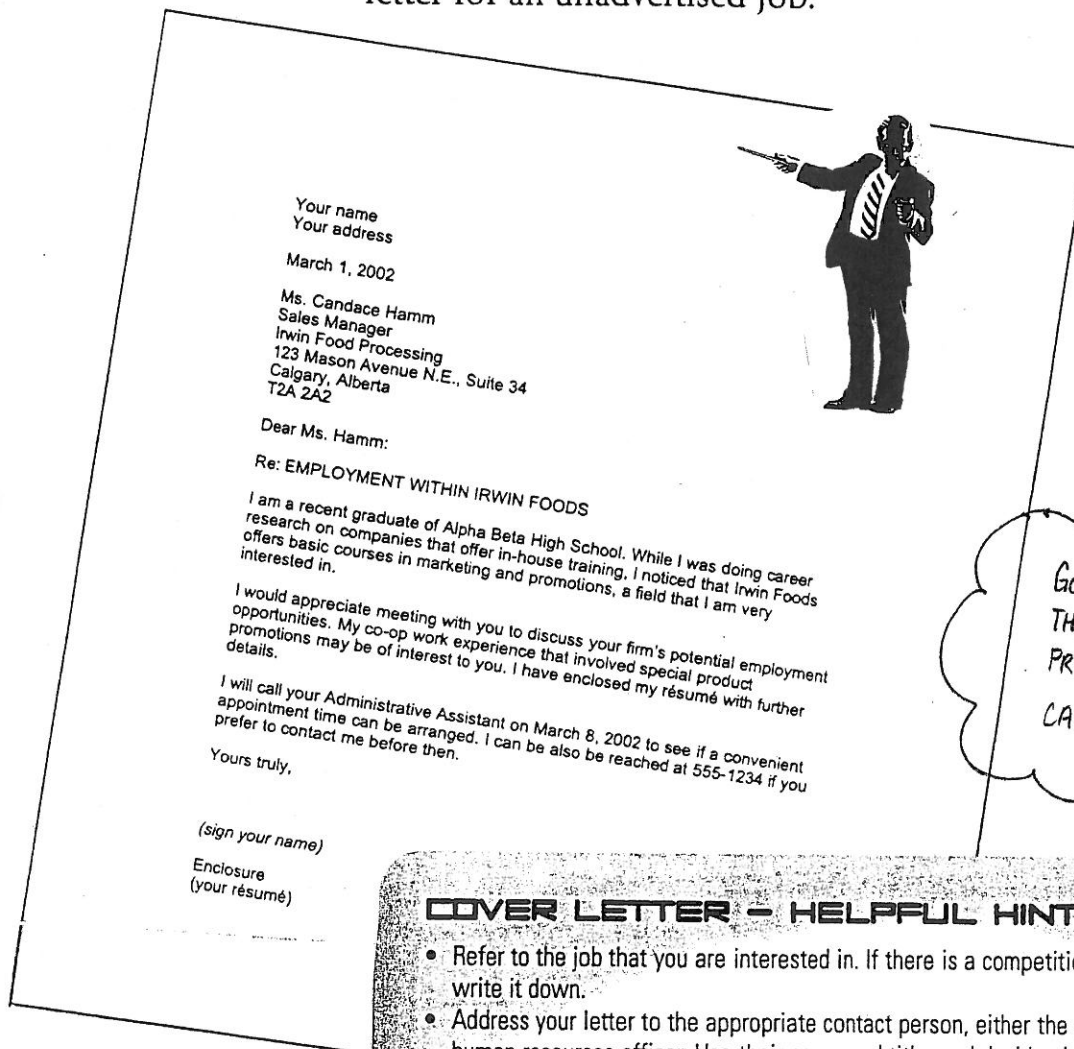
High School activities included member of student council, Yearbook sports editor, member of swimming team, member of Honour Roll for past three years.

References

Available on request.

TOPIC: COVER LETTER

Follow this format to write a cover letter for an unadvertised job.



Your name
Your address

March 1, 2002

Ms. Candace Hamm
Sales Manager
Irwin Food Processing
123 Mason Avenue N.E., Suite 34
Calgary, Alberta
T2A 2A2

Dear Ms. Hamm:

Re: EMPLOYMENT WITHIN IRWIN FOODS

I am a recent graduate of Alpha Beta High School. While I was doing career research on companies that offer in-house training, I noticed that Irwin Foods offers basic courses in marketing and promotions, a field that I am very interested in.

I would appreciate meeting with you to discuss your firm's potential employment opportunities. My co-op work experience that involved special product promotions may be of interest to you. I have enclosed my résumé with further details.

I will call your Administrative Assistant on March 8, 2002 to see if a convenient appointment time can be arranged. I can be also be reached at 555-1234 if you prefer to contact me before then.

Yours truly,

(sign your name)

Enclosure
(your résumé)



GOOD LETTER. BUT THERE'S A WORD PROCESSING ERROR! CAN YOU FIND IT?

COVER LETTER - HELPFUL HINTS

- Refer to the job that you are interested in. If there is a competition number, write it down.
- Address your letter to the appropriate contact person, either the employer or a human resources officer. Use their name and title, and double-check the spelling. If the ad doesn't supply a contact, phone and get the right name. And never assume a person is male or female based on a first name – check it out.
- Refer to how you heard about the job, i.e. job posting, newspaper article, or from someone in your network of contacts.
- Refer to what the company does, and how your skills, abilities and experience can be a valuable addition to their team.
- Make sure the employer knows what action to take – will you call the employer or should the employer call you, and when?
- Provide your name, phone number and address.
- Keep your letter to one page. Type or print it out on good quality, 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.
- Proof-read your letter, and ask someone else to read it as well. Correct the errors, and print a clean copy.
- E-mail, mail or hand-deliver your cover letter and résumé. Keep a copy for your files, and note the date that it was sent out.
- Allow plenty of time for delivery. Don't wait until the last day before a deadline.

Job Advertisement for "Hamburger Heaven"

Vancouver Sun - April 1st

Employment opportunity - cashier



Hamburger Heaven



Looking for an energetic, high school student
to serve customers at our busy restaurant.
Applicants must be able to take and assemble orders,
manage money and work with minimal supervision.
Applicants must have good communication skills
and a friendly personality.
Must be able to work after school and weekends.

Contact: Mr. Ron MacDonald (Manager)
Hamburger Heaven
5281 Saffat Way
Surrey, BC
V5W 8J2

See Cover Letter written for this advertisement on next page...

COVER LETTER for Job Advertisement "Hamburger Heaven" (previous page)

1206 Jolie Avenue
Surrey, BC
L0V 2B4

April 6, 2006

Ron MacDonald, Manager
Hamburger Heaven
5281 Saffat Way,
Surrey, BC
V5W 8J2

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

I am interested in applying for the position of cashier at Hamburger Heaven, as advertised in the April 1st edition of the *Vancouver Sun*.

I am a Grade 10 honour roll student at Enver Creek Secondary. I have developed leadership and communication skills through my involvement with Student Council as I have organized several school events. My enrollment in the Chef Training Course at school requires me to work in the school cafeteria on a weekly basis and my duties include taking and assembling orders, as well as working at the cash register. I have enclosed a resume with further details.

I know I would enjoy being a part of the Hamburger Heaven staff. I am available for an interview at your convenience. You can contact me at (604) 332-1357. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Brad Pitts

Enclosure: resume

007 Canine Drive
 Surrey, British Columbia D0G 2Y0
 (604)123-4567
 m.ruffo@telus.ca

TRANSPARENCY

SAMPLE

Malcolm Ruffo

Career Objective

Looking for employment related to security services. Guard duties to start but hoping to advance to spy work as my skills develop.

Education

Sep 04 - Present
 Enver Creek Secondary School
Grade 10
 Surrey, British Columbia

Skills & Abilities

- » Good communicator – Demonstrate a variety of skills such as barking, whining, head tilting, wagging of tail, and straightened ears.
- » People person – Maintain constant contact with family and friends by staying at their side during work or play.
- » Determined – Take on challenges through to completion e.g. tearing fuzz from a tennis ball, removing rubber bladders from rugby balls, etc.
- » High energy – Prefer to be active by running and exploring. Speed is demonstrated when the doorbell rings (i.e. average 1.5 seconds to get to the door)

Extracurricular Activities

- » Cross Country Running – Membership on Enver's team required extensive training (average 1.5 hours daily).
- » Swimming – Specialize in long distance, dog paddle events.
- » Wrestling – Neighbourhood middle weight finalist.

Awards & Certificates

- » Dog Obedience Level 2

Volunteer Experience

Sep 04 - Present
 Student Volunteer
Enver Creek Secondary Green Team
 Surrey, British Columbia

- » Pick up litter on school property and surrounding neighbourhood.

References

Denise Doolittle
 Veterinarian
 Perfect Pooch Inc.
 Surrey, British Columbia
 (604) 222-3333

Daniel Doborman
 Track and Field Coach
 Enver Creek Secondary School
 Surrey, British Columbia
 (604) 574-8149

