

# Your Winning Edge

*Resumes, Cover Letters, Job Applications*

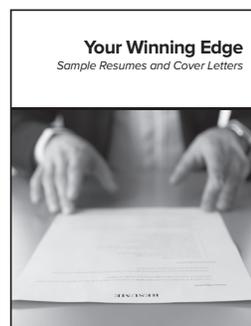


# Your Winning Edge, “The Series”

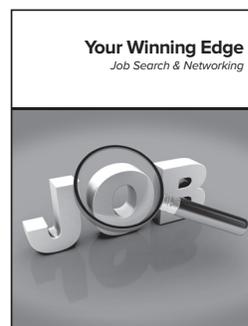
This publication is part of a series of documents designed as a comprehensive tool for jobseekers. Each publication focuses on different important aspects of finding and preparing for a job and giving you your winning edge.



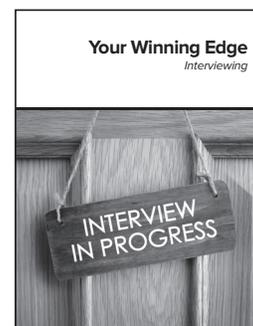
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# Chapter 1:

## Creating an Effective Resume







# Chapter 1: Creating an Effective Resume

## What is a resume?

The resume's primary function is to showcase your talents and skills to an employer—clearly, convincingly and quickly.

- A resume is an individual summary of your background, experience, training and skills.
- A resume tells employers what you have accomplished in the past and what you can do for their company now.
- Your resume is your most important job search tool and it leaves a lasting impression on a potential employer.
- The resume is a tool that you can use to get an interview. During an interview, in most cases, a resume operates as a guide for you and the employer.
- It is critical that you invest your time and effort into creating a resume that meets the employer's needs and highlights your assets.
- Resumes are targeted for specific jobs and can be edited and updated according to what job you're applying to.

## Why is a resume so important?

- Resumes are expected for almost all types of jobs from Clerks to Chief Executive Officers. Even with an employer's ability to search you on the internet, look you up on social media or LinkedIn, a resume is still an essential tool for your job search.
- Resumes are needed when attending networking events, such as job fairs.
- Resumes serve as focus for, and will help you improve, your interview. Once the resume is organized on paper, you will find it easier to discuss your assets.
- Resumes allow you to have all the facts at your fingertips. This will eliminate fumbling for dates and significant facts.

## Three types of resumes

Choosing the best resume format is extremely important because there are many factors to take into account. These include the length of your resume and your accomplishments, as well as possible shortcomings. Whichever resume format you choose, make sure to include examples of accomplishments that benefited your previous employers. Three common types of resumes are chronological, functional and combination (skills based). Keep in mind that businesses prefer either a chronological resume or a combination resume.

**Chronological-** Chronological resumes highlight consistency. This format stresses what you accomplished in each of the positions you held. A chronological resume focuses primarily on the history of your work experience and education. It also shows your progress and advancements in your career. This resume format is popular among businesses.

**Functional-** A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, without including chronological time and job titles. It presents a profile of your experience based on professional strengths or groups of skills. Your employment history usually follows, but in less detail than in a chronological resume. It is used most often by people with gaps in their work history, those who are changing careers and individuals with limited work experience. Employers generally do not prefer to receive functional resumes as they do not show your work history or career progress.

**Combination-** A combination (or combined) resume combines the best features of the traditional chronological (where the dates are in reverse order) and functional (where skills are listed in the beginning) resumes. A combination resume can also be referred to as a skills based resume.

## Choosing your resume type

Use this chart to help you identify what resume format will show your accomplishments most effectively.

### Resume selection chart

If you are.....	...then use a		
	Chronological Resume	Functional Resume	Combination Resume
A young worker and/or have limited work experience	Possible	Possible	Recommended
An older worker with a continuous work history	Recommended	Not Suggested	Recommended
Returning to the workforce after a gap in employment for a variety of reasons (Example: incarceration, parenting, illness, care giving)	Not Suggested	Possible	Recommended
Changing careers or your area of focus	Not Suggested	Possible	Recommended
Someone who has changed jobs frequently or has had a wide variety of jobs	Not Suggested	Possible	Recommended
Veteran entering a civilian job	Possible	Possible	Recommended

No matter what resume format you choose, an effective resume is targeted and tailored so that it does the following:

- Addresses a business's specific needs and shows that you are the best fit for the position.
- Focuses on a specific career objective or job posting within the first 15 lines of your resume.
- States your value as an employee with results that you produced that benefited your previous employers.
- Allows employers to easily and quickly read it.

## Gathering information for your resume

No matter what type of resume you choose, you will need to gather specific information in order to write your resume. Use the following resume template to organize the information you will need to include in your resume. Use the list of action verbs on pages 11-13 throughout this exercise.

### Contact Information:

The first section of your resume should include information on how the employer can contact you. Please be sure that your contact information is correct and up to date. The street address, city, state and zip code are optional to include on your resume.

First and Last Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Cell/Home) \_\_\_\_\_  
(include area code) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
LinkedIn URL \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective (optional)** – Job title you're applying for and reason to hire you:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Career Highlights / Professional Summary (optional):

List key achievements, skills, strengths and experiences that are relevant to the position for which you are applying. By highlighting your important experiences, the prospective employer sees that you have taken the time to create a resume that shows how you are qualified for the job.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Work Experience, Skills and Accomplishments:

This section of your resume includes your work history. Include the businesses you worked for, the dates of employment, the positions you held, a bulleted list of major responsibilities, accomplishments or achievements and a list of your skills. Use past tense for past jobs. Use extra blank paper if needed. Use key words from the job description you are applying to and the research you did on the job and the employer.

**Job Title#1** \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Worked \_\_\_\_\_

Company #1 \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Special Skills this Job Required \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title #2** \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Worked \_\_\_\_\_

Company #2 \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Special Skills this Job Required \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title #3** \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Worked \_\_\_\_\_

Company #3 \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Special Skills this Job Required \_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

**Education/Training/Professional Development:**

In the education/training section of your resume, list the schools you attended, the degrees or credentials you attained, graduation year and any special awards and/or honors you earned.

School, Degree/Credential \_\_\_\_\_ Date Earned \_\_\_\_\_

Awards/Honors \_\_\_\_\_ Date Earned \_\_\_\_\_

School, Degree/Credential \_\_\_\_\_ Date Earned \_\_\_\_\_

Awards/Honors \_\_\_\_\_ Date Earned \_\_\_\_\_

**A special note about the Education section of your resume:**

The education section of your resume should appear near the top of your resume if it is your strongest selling point. If your work experience is your strongest selling point Education will be placed near the bottom. In general, your resume should present your strongest assets and qualifications first to employers to gain and hold their interest.

If you did not complete a degree or are working towards a degree, indicate the number of credits obtained or semesters completed.

**Volunteer Work/Memberships**

Mention any volunteer work or professional organizations you might be a member of that are relevant to the job you are applying for. Hobbies, clubs or church groups that are not relevant to the job you are applying for should not be included. You can make this section heading "Miscellaneous" or "Relevant Activities" in order to include publications, presentations or unique talents related to the job. Use blank paper for additional activities, if needed.

Activity #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Worked \_\_\_\_\_

Agency #1 \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Activity #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Worked \_\_\_\_\_

Agency #2 \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

## Action verbs to use in a resume

Action verbs describe what you did at your job. Remember to use these verbs to describe your work experience when writing your resume and drafting cover letters. This will increase the impact of your writing and make potential employers take notice! Below is a sample list of action verbs that you can use to highlight your background:



### Communication/People Skills

Advertised	Interpreted
Arbitrated	Interviewed
Arranged	Involved
Articulated	Joined
Authored	Judged
Clarified	Lectured
Collaborated	Listened
Communicated	Marketed
Composed	Mediated
Condensed	Moderated
Consulted	Persuaded
Contacted	Presented
Conveyed	Promoted
Convinced	Proposed
Corresponded	Publicized
Debated	Reconciled
Defined	Recruited
Developed	Referred
Directed	Reinforced
Discussed	Reported
Drafted	Resolved
Edited	Responded
Elicited	Solicited
Enlisted	Specified
Explained	Spoke
Expressed	Suggested
Formulated	Summarize
Furnished	Synthesized
Incorporated	Translated
Influenced	Wrote
Interacted	



### Management/Leadership Skills

Administered	Hosted
Analyzed	Improved
Appointed	Incorporated
Approved	Increased
Assigned	Initiated
Authorized	Inspected
Chaired	Instituted
Considered	Led
Consolidated	Managed
Contracted	Merged
Controlled	Motivated
Converted	Navigated
Coordinated	Oversaw
Decided	Planned
Delegated	Presided
Developed	Prioritized
Directed	Produced
Eliminated	Recommended
Emphasized	Reorganized
Enforced	Replaced
Enhanced	Restored
Established	Reviewed
Executed	Scheduled
Generated	Secured
Handled	Selected
Headed	Streamlined
Hired	Strengthened



### Organizational Skills

Approved  
Arranged  
Catalogued  
Categorized  
Charted  
Classified  
Coded  
Collected  
Compiled  
Corrected  
Corresponded  
Distributed  
Executed  
Filed  
Generated  
Incorporated  
Inspected  
Logged  
Maintained  
Monitored  
Obtained  
Operated  
Ordered  
Organized  
Prepared  
Processed  
Purchased  
Recorded  
Registered  
Reserved  
Responded  
Reviewed  
Routed  
Scheduled  
Screened  
Submitted  
Supplied  
Standardized  
Systematized  
Updated



### Research Skills

Analyzed  
Assessed  
Balanced  
Clarified  
Collected  
Compared  
Conducted  
Considered  
Critiqued  
Detected  
Determined  
Diagnosed  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Experimented  
Explored  
Extracted  
Formulated  
Founded  
Gathered  
Handled  
Inspected  
Interviewed  
Invented  
Investigated  
Located  
Measured  
Organized  
Provided  
Researched  
Reviewed  
Searched  
Solved  
Summarized  
Surveyed  
Systematized  
Tested



### Creative Skills

Acted  
Adapted  
Began  
Combined  
Composed  
Conceptualized  
Condensed  
Created  
Customized  
Designed  
Developed  
Directed  
Displayed  
Drew  
Entertained  
Established  
Fashioned  
Formulated  
Founded  
Illustrated  
Initiated  
Instituted  
Integrated  
Introduced  
Invented  
Modeled  
Modified  
Originated  
Performed  
Photographed  
Planned  
Revised  
Revitalized  
Shaped  
Solved



### Teaching Skills

Adapted  
Advised  
Clarified  
Coached  
Communicated  
Conducted  
Coordinated  
Critiqued  
Developed  
Enabled  
Encouraged  
Evaluated  
Explained  
Facilitated  
Focused  
Guided  
Individualized  
Informed  
Instilled  
Instructed  
Motivated  
Persuaded  
Simulated  
Stimulated  
Taught  
Tested  
Trained  
Transmitted  
Tutored



### Helping Skills

Adapted  
 Advocated  
 Aided  
 Answered  
 Arranged  
 Assessed  
 Assisted  
 Clarified  
 Coached  
 Collaborated  
 Contributed  
 Cooperated  
 Counseled  
 Demonstrated  
 Diagnosed  
 Educated  
 Encouraged  
 Ensured  
 Expedited  
 Facilitated  
 Familiarized  
 Founded  
 Furthered  
 Guided  
 Helped  
 Implemented  
 Insured  
 Intervened  
 Motivated  
 Prevented  
 Provided  
 Referred  
 Rehabilitated  
 Represented  
 Resolved  
 Saved  
 Simplified  
 Supplied  
 Supported  
 Volunteered



### Data/Financial Skills

Achieved  
 Administered  
 Adjusted  
 Allocated  
 Analyzed  
 Appraised  
 Assessed  
 Audited  
 Balanced  
 Budgeted  
 Calculated  
 Computed  
 Conserved  
 Corrected  
 Determined  
 Developed  
 Estimated  
 Forecasted  
 Managed  
 Marketed  
 Measured  
 Netted  
 Planned  
 Prepared  
 Programmed  
 Projected  
 Qualified  
 Reconciled  
 Reduced  
 Researched  
 Retrieved  
 Sold



### Technical Skills

Adapted  
 Applied  
 Assembled  
 Built  
 Calculated  
 Computed  
 Conserved  
 Constructed  
 Converted  
 Debugged  
 Designed  
 Determined  
 Developed  
 Engineered  
 Fabricated  
 Fortified  
 Installed  
 Launched  
 Maintained  
 Operated  
 Overhauled  
 Printed  
 Programmed  
 Rectified  
 Regulated  
 Remodeled  
 Repaired  
 Replaced  
 Restored  
 Solved  
 Specialized  
 Standardized  
 Studied  
 Upgraded  
 Utilized

## Transferable skills

Transferable skills are universal skills that you can easily take with you from one business or job to another. They are skills you have used in the past that may relate to future jobs. Job seekers often feel they must look for the same job or title they last held. This puts limits on the types of jobs you look for. By identifying your transferable skills, you will open up more job opportunities. Below is an example of how a single skill (organization) is transferable across different occupations.

- Sales people **ORGANIZE** sales calls.

- Warehouse workers **ORGANIZE** inventory.

- Secretaries **ORGANIZE** information.

Keep in mind, if you are able to use a skill in one work situation, you should be able to use it in another, even if the work appears completely unrelated to your past employment or educational experience. At least 50% of what may be expected of you in a new job can often consist of transferable skills.

### Examples of transferable skills in professions:

Title	Skills	Target Occupations
<p><b>Secretarial/Clerical:</b></p> <p>Helen has 15 years of experience in a job with diverse tasks. She is skilled at answering multi-line phone systems, greeting customers, typing correspondence, and transcribing in minutes. She uses the latest computer system for correspondence and databases. She also maintains electronic appointment books, prepares materials for meetings, orders office supplies, and makes travel plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Organization</li> <li>• Management of multiple projects</li> <li>• Attention to details</li> <li>• Prioritize tasks</li> <li>• Time management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event manager</li> <li>• Purchasing agent</li> <li>• Manage repair or service calls</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Intake worker in human service or medical field</li> <li>• Insurance clerk</li> </ul>
<p><b>Material Handler/Laborer:</b></p> <p>Joseph is a worker who uses his physical strength all day to move heavy objects. In his job, he needs to detect product problems by visual inspection. He fixes these problems by using hand and power tools. It is important that he is punctual, follows safety procedures, and meets production levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of how to use hand and power tools for repair</li> <li>• Understanding of how materials are assembled</li> <li>• Plan when storing or loading materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant carpenter</li> <li>• Shipping and receiving clerk</li> <li>• Delivery person</li> <li>• Moving and storage worker</li> </ul>
<p><b>Retail Salesperson:</b></p> <p>Joan worked for 10 years as a cashier in one organization, achieving a high salary for her skills. She has knowledge of many functions of the retail business because she floated among several departments over the years. Joan's co-workers often praise her for her ability to step in during tense situations and calm people down.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• High accuracy and ability to learn new information</li> <li>• Relaying information to others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Insurance agent</li> <li>• Receptionist</li> <li>• Banker or teller</li> <li>• Outside or inside Sales</li> </ul>

These are just a few examples of how transferable skills you already have and use will serve you and your new employer in a different occupation. Work with your Department of Labor employment counselor to identify additional transferable skills and job opportunities specific to you.

## Addressing common job search challenges in a resume

There are several different challenges you could face when re-entering the labor market based on your background and experience. There are ways that you can address these challenges in a positive way to ensure your resume will be noticed by employers. Read through the challenges you may face and learn how to address them in your resume. Refer to the **Resume selection chart on page 8**.

### Returning to the Workforce/Gaps in Employment

You might be returning to the workforce after a gap in employment for a variety of reasons. If you do have gaps in your employment a functional or combination resume can be effective. The key is to highlight the positive (required skills) while you minimize the negative (gaps in employment).

- Using volunteer or short-term positions can help fill in the dates while providing current and important skills. Do not indicate if the job was voluntary, full-time or part-time and use years for dates instead of months. Years of service can be substituted for date ranges. It is often beneficial to indicate when jobs are temporary as it helps reduce the appearance of job-hopping.

### Criminal Records

- When incarcerated, you might have learned marketable trades and held jobs. Use this to your benefit by creating a combination or functional resume. Focusing on skills and qualifications allows you to highlight “the positive” and focus on strengths while reducing the emphasis on employment gaps.
- You can list your employer as New York State, the department worked in (such as the Carpentry Department) or the company that holds the prison contract. Don’t forget to include skills learned through volunteer work, hobbies and involvement in teams or organizations.
- Ask Career Center staff for a copy of “The Prime Objective” for additional assistance with re-entering the job market.

### Perceived Lack of Accomplishments or Skills

- We all have accomplishments. The challenge is to recognize and present them in a positive way. Highlighting accomplishments, instead of responsibilities, helps your resume stand out among the competition. Think about employment or relevant volunteer experiences, hobbies, teams or organizations in which you have been involved.
- Ask yourself questions to help identify your accomplishments: What have you accomplished that you feel was a job well done? Have you been selected, appreciated or recognized for something by an employer? What problems have you solved?

### Young Workers

If you are a young worker you should include all work experiences that helped you gain experience and knowledge, including positions as a part-time employee and/or volunteer. If you lack a traditional employment history, organize your resume by qualifying skills instead of by employer.

### Experienced Workers

More experienced workers should not include their entire employment history. Include the most recent employment history for about 15 years and remove older dates from the “Education” section. When related experiences go further than 15 years, include them in the “Summary of Qualifications” section. This allows you to showcase qualifications you may have started developing decades ago.

In your resume, don't promote your age; avoid phrases like "Seasoned Professional" and "Wealth of Experience." Consider removing your birth year out of your email address (ex. JimBeam1951@mail.com) as this could indicate your age to your potential employer.

Highlight your technology skills

- Show you're connected – job seekers should have an electronic footprint and be searchable on social and professional networking sites.
- Leave outdated technology out of your resume.

### **Military to Civilian Skill Translators**

Use information from the following websites to convert skills acquired in a military career into skills that can be utilized in civilian jobs: Cool Army website (<https://www.cool.army.mil/>) and ONET Crosswalk (<http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC/>). Transferring your skills will help civilian employers match your skill sets to their employee needs. However, be aware that the skills described by these websites may not accurately describe your military experience. For additional assistance with identifying your transferable skills, talk with a workforce professional at your local Career Center.

### **Lack of Technical Skills**

If you are unsure about how to post a resume on a website or create a "web(site)" resume ask for help at your local Career Center, local library or the career advisement center at your school to resolve your technical challenges. Workshops and classes might be offered at all of these locations to advance your skills.

### **Changing Industries or Careers**

Develop a list of transferable skills (skills used in previous jobs that are necessary for your target occupation) and then organize your resume to highlight those skills.

### **Lack of a Solid Career Focus**

If you do not know what you are looking for, how will you know that you found it? A job search can be overwhelming, but not knowing what you are looking for makes it even more difficult. Learning about careers and taking Career Interests and Work Values Assessments will result in less frustration, increased success and an eventual time savings. Complete self-exploration and career exploration assessments by visiting the New York State Department of Labor's JobZone ([www.jobzone.ny.gov](http://www.jobzone.ny.gov)) and My Next Move ([www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)).

### **Multiple Career Options**

Sending a generic resume to a potential employer is not the best approach for a job search. Minor adjustments to how you describe your skills and qualifications will be needed as your targeted position changes. Begin by ranking targeted occupations according to your priorities: such as job opportunities, salary ranges, your interest and possible ease of entering the potential workplace. Craft a resume and conduct a job search for the occupation you want the most.

## Resume templates and sample resumes

Review and use these resume templates and sample resumes to assist you in writing and formatting your resume. For additional information or to build a resume online go to: [www.jobzone.ny.gov](http://www.jobzone.ny.gov).

### Combination/Skills resume template

#### Name

Street Address

City, State Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address

#### PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Example 1: Number of years' experience in work relevant to job applying to.
- Example 2: Credentials, education or training relevant to job applying to.
- Example 3: A key accomplishment that shows your qualifications for the job.
- Example 4: Personal characteristics or traits that you possess that are relevant.
- Example 5: Computer skills/list skills

#### SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill

- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill

- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill
- ✓ Relevant skill

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

---

##### ONE MAJOR SKILL (that is directly relevant to the job applying to)

- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.

##### ANOTHER MAJOR SKILL (that is directly relevant to the job applying to)

- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.

##### ANOTHER MAJOR SKILL (that is directly relevant to the job applying to)

- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.
- A job task or accomplishment that illustrates this skill.

#### WORK HISTORY

---

Job title, Company Name, City, State

month/year – month/year

Job title, Company Name, City, State

month/year – month/year

Job title, Company Name, City, State

month/year – month/year

#### EDUCATION / TRAINING

---

Name of degree or Credential, School/University Name, City, State

Name of degree or Credential, School/University Name, City, State

#### MILITARY EXPERIENCE (Optional heading)

---

Military Branch – Position Held

#### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE (Optional heading to include if relevant to job applying to)

---

Organization – Position Held

## Combination/Skills resume sample

### James O'Connor

10 Broadway  
Buffalo, New York 14204  
716-555-5555  
[JamesOConnor@mail.com](mailto:JamesOConnor@mail.com)

#### PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Skilled professional with over five years of customer service experience.
- High School Diploma with training in dealing with difficult customers.
- Manage a high-volume workload; resolve an average of 100 calls per day.
- Positive and helpful individual; determined to increase customer satisfaction.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Word, Customer Service Software and can type 50 words per minute.

#### SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- |                        |                       |                    |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| ✓ Communication skills | ✓ Conflict resolution | ✓ Multi-line phone |
| ✓ Positive attitude    | ✓ People oriented     | ✓ Empathy          |
| ✓ Active listening     | ✓ Analytical thinking | ✓ Patience         |

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

---

##### CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Successfully multi-tasked in a fast paced environment; managed a multi-line phone, difficult callers, and built trusting relationships with customers.
- Resolved customer complaints by listening, identifying problems and taking corrective actions.
- Earned the highest customer satisfaction rating in 2016 at Memories Inc., information based on customer surveys compiled over a year's span.
- Helped achieve the company's retention goal of 85% by achieving a personal goal of 95% retention of customers.
- Assisted with an on-the-job training program that reduced training time from 10 weeks to 8 weeks.

##### SALES

- Consistently generated additional revenue utilizing thorough product knowledge and friendly sales techniques to up-sell products and services.
- Developed a unified sales pitch used by Customer Service Representatives across the company to increase overall sales. After implementation, sales increased 25%.

##### BANKING

- Continuously met sales quotas by providing information and recommendations to customers on appropriate services and products after assessing their needs through conversation and account analysis.
- Exceeded production goals by serving an average of 10 customers per hour with efficiency and accuracy.
- Received The Employee of the Month Award for outstanding customer service and transaction accuracy.

#### WORK HISTORY

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Customer Service Representative, Memories Inc., Buffalo, NY	February, 2014 - Present
Customer Service Representative, ABC Co., Buffalo, NY	May, 2010 - February,
2014 Bank Teller, MKB Bank, Lancaster, NY	March 2007 - May, 2010

#### EDUCATION / TRAINING

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Certification in 'How to Deal with Difficult Customers', CSR Training Inc, Lancaster, NY  
Notary Public, New York (Commission expires December 2020)  
High School Diploma, Buffalo High School, Buffalo, NY

#### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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Business Professionals of Buffalo – Member

## Chronological resume template

[Street Address], [City, ST ZIP Code]•[phone]•[email]

# [Your Name]

## Professional Profile

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[Describe your work experience and strongest skills.]

## Work History

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[Company Name] [City, ST] [Dates of employment]

**[Job Title]**

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

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[Company Name] [City, ST] [Dates of employment]

**[Job Title]**

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

---

[Company Name] [City, ST] [Dates of employment]

**[Job Title]**

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

---

[Company Name] [City, ST] [Dates of employment]

**[Job Title]**

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

## Education

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[School Name] [City, ST] [Dates of attendance]

**[Degree Obtained]**

- [Special award/accomplishment or degree minor]

# Penny Johnson

243 Washington Boulevard, Pleasant City, NY 12345 • 555-555-1234 • pjohnson@yahoo.com

## Professional Profile

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Over 10 years' experience in the Customer Service industry with career progression from customer service representative to department manager. Proven accomplishments in service delivery, office management, program planning, project management, policy development and problem resolution. Recipient of multiple Quality Service awards.

## Work History

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USA Mobility Albany, NY 2015 - Present

### Quality Control/Training Representative

- Reviewed in-place processes and determined solutions for streamlining effectiveness, resulting in 20% increase in production.
- Assisted Training Director in the preparation of numerous documents.
- Team leader for the identification and implementation of changes designed to increase the quality and quantity of production; received salary bonus for superior work.

Superior Marketing Rensselaer, NY 2010 - 2015

### Senior Rep / Team Leader

- Identified and promoted the need for further employee development and training in an effort to reach the highest possible performance standards.
- Provided feedback and support to staff of 25 concerning customer service procedures.
- Implemented interpersonal and communication skills when assisting staff with difficult callers.

Advance Telecom Troy, NY 2007 - 2010

### Customer Service Representative

- Continuously exceeded company mandated quota for calls answered per shift.
- Utilized communication and problem solving skills with clients.
- Provided problem resolution for approximately 500 calls each week.

## Education

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School of Business Albany, NY

### Associate of Arts in Business Administration

Dean's list for last two semesters.

# Functional resume template

[Street Address, City, ST ZIP Code] [phone] [email]

## [Your Name]

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### Employee Profile

[Describe your work experience and strongest skills.]

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### Professional Highlights

#### [Field or Area of Achievement]

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

#### [Field or Area of Achievement]

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

#### [Field or Area of Achievement]

- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]
- [Job responsibility/achievement]

### Skills

- [Professional or technical skill]
  - [Professional or technical skill]
- 

### Employment History

[Job title][Company Name][City, ST]

[Job title][Company Name][City, ST]

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### Education

[Degree][School Name][City, ST]

## Functional resume sample

222 Any Street, Pleasant City, NY 54321 111-112-9181  
Phillip@mail.com

# Phillip Kelley

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## Profile

Experienced warehousing and logistics employee accustomed to working in a high-volume facility and licensed for pallet jacks and fork trucks. Experience includes training and supervision.

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## Professional Highlights

### Supervision

- Maintained schedule for cleaning crew of 8-10 members assigned to warehouse (32,000 square feet)
- Trained new employees on all products and processes for nightly cleaning
- Maintained daily production logs and set goals to address areas in need of special consideration

### Shipping & Inventory

- Ensured an average of 400-600 items were ready for shipment each month
- Efficiently operated a commercial laminator and trained three other staff how to operate the machine
- Earned "Rookie of the Month" award for learning jobs quickly

### Material Handler

- Ensured more than 800 products were loaded on correct trucks each week
- Operated pallet jacks and fork trucks
- Loaded and unloaded 15-20 48'-53' trailers (weekly)

### Skills

Inventory management

Safety team member

Preventive maintenance

Dry & refrigerated storage techniques

Packaging and bill of lading preparation

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## Employment History

### Inventory and Shipper

Huntersville Corporation - Huntersville, NY

### Material Handler

City Distribution - Amsterdam, NY

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## Education

High School Diploma – Prairie Town High School -Prairie Town, NY

## Sample resumes

View these sample resumes for additional examples of chronological, functional and combination resumes. Ask for a copy of the 'Sample Resumes and Cover Letters' booklet at your Career Center for additional sample resumes.

### Sample 1-Continuous Work History, Chronological Resume

Peter was honorably discharged from the military in 2008. His 'Military Experience' section shows his years of service and military work experience. Peter's work history has been consistent since leaving the military and a chronological format is a good way to show both aspects of his career.

## Peter Pointe

222 Main Street, Watertown, NY 11211

Peter\_P\_Pointe@mail.com

(111)112-9181

www.linkedin.com/in/peterpointe/

(111)098-9754

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### OBJECTIVE

To obtain a challenging position in the transportation scheduling, warehousing, materials handling or related field so I can be an active contributor to the organization's productivity.

### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

#### **Inventory and Material Handler**, Huntersville Corporation, Pleasant City, New York, 2015-2017

- Maintained schedule for cleaning crew of 8-10 members assigned to warehouse (32,000 square feet)
- Ensured an average of 400-600 items were ready for shipment each month
- Earned "Rookie of the Month" award for efficient operation of \$3,000 commercial laminator and ability to train three other staff to operate the machine

#### **Warehouse Material Handler**, Pleasant City Distribution Center, Pleasant City, New York, 2012-2015

- Loaded and unloaded 15-20 delivery trucks (weekly)
- Operated stand up lift
- Was responsible for picking up and maintaining material list of merchandise worth more than \$1.5 million

#### **Warehouse Material Handler**, Reliable Drugstore, Watertown, New York, 2009-2012

- Ensured more than 800 products were loaded on correct trucks each week
- Operated walker pallet jack
- Received personnel commendation in 2009 for assisting other employees in increasing their accuracy and efficiency when handling materials

### MILITARY EXPERIENCE

United States Marine Corps, Lance Corporal E-4, Honorable Discharge, 2004-2008  
Air wing operations involved scheduling more than 3,000 flights, filing approximately 500 flight plans, assisting with mission planning for 12 units.

### EDUCATION

High School Diploma, Watertown High School, Watertown, New York

## Sample 2- Gap In Employment, Functional Resume

Jamie Faye has a 2-year gap in employment due to caring for her children. Her resume is in a functional format to highlight her receptionist skills instead of her lapse in employment.

### Jamie Faye

10 Broadway  
New York, NY 10015

JamieFaye11@mail.com  
(347)856-8888

#### **Summary of Qualifications**

10 years of experience working in an office environment. Excellent time management and customer service skills. Effectively assists customers with scheduling appointments, general questions and complaints.

#### **Strengths**

- ◆ Time management
- ◆ Scheduling
- ◆ Multi-line phone
- ◆ Mail distribution
- ◆ Written and Oral Communication

#### **Professional Highlights**

##### **Customer Service**

Assisted customers by phone, email and personal interaction.

- ◆ Highly skilled in greeting visitors.
- ◆ Answered inquiries regarding appointment times and general information. Forwarded calls to appropriate staff and took detailed messages for unavailable staff.
- ◆ Contacted customers via telephone to remind customers of their scheduled appointments, left messages and rescheduled as appropriate.

##### **Scheduling**

Scheduled customers for appointments and follow-up appointments.

- ◆ Checked customers in for their scheduled appointments and updated any outdated customer information in computer system.
- ◆ Provided required paperwork for new customers and ensured all areas of the forms were completed. Entered customer and insurance information into the computer system timely and accurately.
- ◆ Utilized the scheduling system to appropriately schedule customers for follow up appointments.

##### **Clerical**

Maintained electronic and paper files for each customer.

- ◆ Created a new filing system to improve organization.
- ◆ Entered all new customer information and insurance information.
- ◆ Sorted incoming mail and mailed out correspondence.
- ◆ Managed office equipment, including repairs and ordering office supplies as needed.

#### **Work History**

**Receptionist**, MKK Associates

New York, NY

**Office Assistance**, Ken's Chiropractic LLC

Bronx, NY

**Receptionist**, NYCENT

New York, NY

#### **Education**

Associate in Arts, Business Administration, Borough of Manhattan Community College

## Sample 3- Changing Careers, Combination Resume

Renee is changing careers from a housekeeper to a Certified Nursing Assistant. Her education is listed in the top half of her resume to show her new, relevant certification. Her skills focus on her desired occupation, as opposed to her previous occupation.

**Renee A. Judson**  
5 River St  
Jaffersville, NY 30221  
ReneeJudson@mail.com  
Phone: (518) 619-5046

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### Objective

Seeking employment as a certified nursing assistant in a nursing home, adult daycare facility or in home health care.

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### Education & Training

<i>Certified Nursing Assistant</i> Jaffersville Community College	02/2018 Jaffersville, NY
<i>High School Diploma</i>	Jaffersville, NY

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### Nursing Skills

- Measure and record patients' vital signs such as height, weight, temperature, blood pressure, pulse and respiration.
- Maintain accurate, detailed reports and records.
- Administer medications to patients and monitor patients for reactions or side effects.
- Monitor, record and report symptoms or changes in patients' conditions.
- Administer prescribed medications or start intravenous fluids, noting times and amounts on patients' charts.
- Observe patients; chart and report changes in patients' conditions.
- Provide physical support to assist patients to perform daily living activities, such as: getting out of bed, bathing, dressing, using the toilet, standing, walking or exercising.

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### Volunteer

Elderly Companion River's Ledge Nursing Home	05/2015 - Present
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### Work History

Jaffersville Knitting Mill, Jaffersville, NY Sewing Machine Operator	07/2011 - 01/2017
Clean Sweep Inc., Albany, NY Cleaner	03/2008 - 06/2011



# Chapter 2:

## Cover Letters







## Chapter 2: Cover Letters

### Importance of writing a cover letter

Your cover letter is a letter of introduction. It usually is the first thing the employer will see and read about you. A cover letter should answer, “Why should the employer hire you?” It should also grab an employer’s attention and point out why you, above all other applicants, should be contacted for a personal interview.

A cover letter:

- Is usually submitted with a resume but should not duplicate your resume information.
- Includes your good qualities and/or what your supervisors or coworkers value about you.
- Gives you the opportunity to address the person who makes hiring decisions and encourage them to read your resume.
- Helps market your resume.

Expect to change the letter so it can contain specific information for each employer’s needs. Just as you will need to tailor your resume for each job you apply to, you will also need to tailor your cover letters to each job you apply to.

### Deciding the purpose of the cover letter

There are three types of cover letters: a cover letter in response to a job posting, an inquiry asking about positions at a company that are not posted, and a networking or informational cover letter. The purpose of your letter will help you decide what needs to be written and how. This guide will provide you tips and samples for the cover letter that is specific to a job posting, as this is the most common format. Read about all three types of cover letters below:

**1. A cover letter that is specific to a job posting** should encourage an employer to read your resume and include highlights of your experience and accomplishments relevant to the job. Keep the specifics of the job posting in mind and use keywords from the job description in your letter. Choose your language carefully and keep the cover letter professional. Do not make the cover letter too long; keep the cover letter to one page.

Read the application instructions and job description carefully before applying. The quickest way to land a cover letter in the trash is to disregard instructions. For example: if the instructions ask for a cover letter as an attachment, do not place it in the body of an email message. Be sure to use spell check before submitting your cover letter. Do not submit a cover letter that has spelling or punctuation errors.

**2. “Cold” cover letters of inquiry to an employer who has not advertised a job** allow you to contact a potential employer directly without a referral or a job posting. Many job seekers use “cold” cover letters to search for vacancies that are not advertised or for future job openings.

**3. Networking or informational cover letters** have one main purpose – to introduce (or reintroduce) you to a contact whom you hope may have some useful information or advice to help you with your career.

## Tips for writing an effective cover letter

Your cover letter tells a story. It has a beginning, middle and an end. If you tell your story clearly, you'll increase your chances of getting your resume read. Below are some tips on writing an effective cover letter.

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Always include your contact information.	Your name, address, email address and phone number (with area code) should be included in the cover letter. Include an electronic signature (jpg image) if sending the cover letter via email.
Address a specific person who can hire you.	"Dear Sir/Madam" letters are less likely to get attention. Network, research or call to find out exactly who is making the hiring decisions. Get the correct title, gender and spelling of the person's name for the letter.
Make the opening sentence relevant and memorable.	Employers scan cover letters. First sentences that tell how your skills and abilities match the job will encourage the employer to continue reading. Grab the employer's attention by pointing out how you can make a difference in a way no other candidate can.
Research the company and tailor each letter to the specific job.	Research the company and explain why you have chosen to apply. Avoid writing generic or nonspecific cover letters. Refer to the specific job in the first paragraph. Use terms and phrases from the job posting and company's website.
Briefly describe your skills as they relate to the job.	Tie your experience and skills to the job description. Clarify how your expertise will benefit the company directly, but be brief. Employers receive hundreds of cover letters daily, so get right to the point with as few words as possible. Never send a letter that is more than a page in length.
Use professional language. Type and proofread your cover letter.	Write the letter in your own words. Convey your enthusiasm and individuality, but avoid anything overly personal. Avoid using acronyms, contractions and jargon. Avoid making grammar and spelling mistakes as they communicate that you do not pay attention to details. Have someone else proofread your letter. Cover letters are a reflection of your writing skills, so make it an example of your best work.
Visual impression and formatting must be consistent.	The visual impression of your cover letter can be just as important as what's written in it. Use a consistent font and font size. Match the letterhead style on your cover letter with your resume.
Be confident, creative and positive! Avoid negatives.	Your cover letter and resume are your bestselling tools to get the interview. Highlight parts of your background that show that you will work well in their work environment. Do not discuss employment gaps or any other potentially negative issues in the cover letter.
End with an action you will take.	Call the employer to make sure your cover letter and resume arrived. You will greatly increase your chances of getting an interview if you call the employer directly after sending it. Ask if it would be possible to set up an interview.

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## Steps for writing a cover letter

An employer may want a cover letter in the body of an email message, as an attachment or in the application system. Use the following steps below to develop a cover letter.

- **Get ideas for your cover letter.** Draw on the same skills and accomplishments you identified in your resume. Use the research you did for the specific job posting. The bottom line is to know what you can offer to get the job done.

Most cover letters involve three sections in the body of the letter: an explanation of why you're writing, an elaboration on your qualifications and a closing statement with a suggested plan of action.

### **Paragraph One: Explain to the recipient why you are writing.**

Are you replying in response to an ad? Were you referred by someone? Did you read news about the company that suggested there might be an open position? Be brief and engaging to increase the chances that your resume will be read. The opening sentence or first 20 words should attract the reader's attention.

### **Paragraph Two: Describe your qualifications for the opportunity.**

Given what you know about the employer's needs, what can you offer? Make a reference to your resume, but don't just repeat the content of it. Include specific information addressing the needs of the employer. Explain how you are skilled at what you do and how the employer will benefit by hiring you. Elaborate and expand as needed. This is your chance to include extra information that you were unable to fit into your resume.

### **Paragraph Three: Explain how you intend to follow up.**

It is your responsibility to follow up after sending your resume. In the last paragraph of the letter, say how and when you intend to do this.

As a general rule, only one paragraph would be required for steps 1 and 3, while step 2 might involve two or more paragraphs. The letter itself should not exceed one page. However, since it's likely to be read online, it's important to be brief. An emailed cover letter must do the same job as a regular cover letter.

Once you have included the above information in a brief and engaging way- stop! If you include too much information, the reader may decide that he/she does not have enough time to read all of your cover letter. That may leave your letter at the bottom of the pile or not read at all.

- Proofread, edit and get another set of eyes to review your writing. An extra set of eyes will be able to identify any errors you may have missed.
- Format your cover letter or cover email message. The content you develop above needs to be organized in a certain way. View the sample cover letters on the next few pages to help you format your cover letter.

## Sample cover letters

Use the sample cover letters in this section to learn how to format your cover letter. Read tips on how to make your cover letter stand out and see examples of how to sell your skills to the business through your cover letter.

### Sample 1- Bulleted List Cover Letter

Maria's cover letter shows how her qualifications meet the requirements of the employer. She uses a bulleted format to draw attention to her "Experience," "Excellence" and "Initiative."

#### Maria Lopez

123 Central Avenue, Pleasant, NY 12206

(518) 222-2222 / m.lopez@mailbox.com

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March 31, 2018

Pat Sanchez  
Human Resource Director  
Your Company  
55 Any Street  
Buffalo, NY 12345

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

I am responding to your advertisement in the February 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Online Paper* for an office manager. As I read the requirements, I became convinced that my background and skills match your description of office manager. I have the experience you are looking for, produce excellent work and am not afraid to make suggestions that can increase Your Company's productivity.

- **Experience.** I hold an Associate's Degree in Business from Erie Community College and have 13 years of experience in office management.
- **Excellence.** As an Assistant Production Manager, I earned the "Rookie Management Award" for best team morale and productivity in 2013. While working for Any Corporation as an Office Manager, I received five annual awards for extraordinary efficiency and accuracy; the most recent in 2017.
- **Initiative.** I submitted a proposal to our Division Chief to create an Access 2016 database to maintain records and SOP for our division. The database was implemented. As a result, the company's workload was decreased by 15% in 2016 and 17% in 2017. I received the company's regional "Innovation Award" in 2017 for my efforts.

I am bilingual, enjoy working in a product management setting and feel I have the training and experience to be a true asset to Your Company. A copy of my resume is enclosed for your consideration. I will phone your office early next week in hopes to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss my qualifications in more detail.

Sincerely,

*Maria Lopez*

Maria Lopez

## Sample 2- Table Format Cover Letter

Jeremy's cover letter lists the employer's requirements alongside his qualifications. This tabled and shaded format may draw more attention from employers who may be sifting through hundreds of cover letters.

Jeremy Kline

**12 Broadway, New York, NY 10001**

(111) 123-4568 / J.Kline@mail.com

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March 31, 2018

Amy Rabbit  
Human Resource Director  
AR, Inc.  
10 State Street  
New York, NY 12345

Dear Ms. Rabbit:

I am responding to your job posting on the New York State Department of Labor Job Bank. As I read the requirements, I became convinced that my background and skills match your description of office manager. I have the experience you are looking for, produce excellent work and am not afraid to make suggestions that can increase AR, Inc.'s productivity.

<b>Your Requirements</b>	<b>My Qualifications</b>
Associate Degree in Business	Associate Degree in Business; Manhattan Community College
5 years of experience managing office; Product management setting	7 years as Office Manager; Sunnyside Corporation, New York, NY  6 years as Assistant Office Manager; Lee's Product Management Co., Brooklyn, NY
Bilingual	Fluently speak, read and write Spanish

I enjoy working in a product management setting and feel I have the training and experience to be a true asset to AR, Inc. Examples of how I have proven myself as a dependable and creative manager with excellent communication skills are included in the attached resume.

I will phone your office early next week in hopes to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss my qualifications in more detail.

Sincerely,

*Jeremy Kline*

Jeremy Kline



# Chapter 3:

## Job Applications







## Chapter 3: Job Applications

The job application is often your first step. As part of your job search, you may complete application forms in addition, to or instead, of submitting a resume and cover letter. Employers use them to learn about your qualifications and compare you to other applicants.

### **Job application preparation**

You should be prepared to spend anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour completing an online application. The more prepared you are, the less time consuming the process will be.

Whether filling out job applications in person or online, collect the following information before you start filling out applications:

- Names and addresses of your past employers
- Dates you worked
- Names and addresses of at least three other persons who know of your abilities and background and are willing and available to serve as references
- Names and addresses of all schools you attended and the type of diploma or certificate, if any, that you received
- Subjects you took in school

Be sure to collect all of this information prior to starting your job application online, or prior to arriving at a job site to request or fill out an application. Using your resume as a guide when filling out applications is helpful because it contains all of the above information needed for most applications.

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## Tips for completing job applications

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Be Attentive:</b><br><b>Read everything carefully.</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Before you begin to fill in the blanks, read everything on the application carefully.</li><li>• Pay close attention to what is being asked and how you are expected to respond.</li><li>• After you complete the form, read it again to ensure no information is missing.</li><li>• Do not write in sections that say, “Do not write below this line,” or “Office Use Only.”</li></ul>   |
| <b>Be Prepared:</b><br><b>Draft a personal data sheet.</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check online to see if you can get a copy of the application form you will be asked to complete. Fill out the application form to bring with you. By having the information ready ahead of time, it will increase the likelihood of it being complete and accurate.</li><li>• If you cannot get a copy of the application, create a personal data sheet before leaving home. This should include all the information you might need to complete an application, like names of previous employers, employment dates, addresses and telephone numbers. Use the personal data sheet as you fill out the application. If you have a resume, use it as your personal data sheet along with a list of references.</li><li>• Most applications will have space set aside for you to list the names and contact information for each reference. Include this information on your personal data sheet.</li><li>• If you are not sure about any part of the form, ask the person who gave you the form to explain.</li></ul> |
| <b>Be Neat:</b><br><b>Create a good impression.</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print or write clearly so that your application can be read easily. Use a reliable black or dark blue ink pen. These ink colors copy better and are considered standard colors to use.</li><li>• If you are filling out a paper application: Make a rough draft. Write your responses on a separate sheet of paper before completing the real application. Or get two copies and use the first one as a rough draft.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Be Certain:</b><br><b>Always list your “position desired.”</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask the person giving you the application what positions are open and name the position you are interested in on the application when asked. Do not leave this question blank or write “any” or “open.” If you’re answering a job ad or looking for a specific position, enter that job title.</li><li>• If you are not applying for a specific position, enter the name of the department in which you wish to work.</li><li>• Fill out more than one application if you are interested in more than one job.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Be Current:</b><br><b>List recent information first.</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List your most recent jobs and education first. By listing your most recent activities first, employers will be better able to gain an understanding of your current abilities. Include vocational schools and training programs attended as well as your college and high school experiences.</li></ul>   |

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## Tips for completing job applications

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- Be Complete:**  
**Answer every question.**
- Make sure that your application creates a good impression by neatly answering all the employer's questions.
  - If a question does not apply to you, write, "does not apply." This shows the employer that you did not overlook anything.
  - If you wish to discuss a question in an interview, write, "Will discuss in interview."
  - If you are unsure of some details on the application, bring it home and return it when it is completed.
  - Do not forget to sign your application if there is a place to do so.

- Be Positive:**  
**Answer questions honestly.**
- Tactfully answer questions about leaving past jobs. Choose your words carefully with this question. Avoid using the words "fired," "quit," "illness" or "personal reasons." Always use positive statements.
  - The information that you provide on an application may become part of your permanent employment record.
  - False information you provide can become the basis for dismissal.

- Be Aware:**  
**Plan for handling illegal questions.**
- Applications may contain questions that are illegal to ask before receiving a conditional offer of employment, such as questions about your marital status or the number of children you have.
  - You need to decide how you will respond if asked an illegal question. If the question does not bother you, answer it. If it does, you can use "not applicable" or "N/A." But be aware that you may get screened out by having too many "N/A" responses.

- Be Thorough:**  
**Describe relevant skills.**
- List the types of computers, machinery, equipment and tools you are able to use. Indicate any licenses you may have.
  - Provide only the information that the employer asks for to promote your qualifications.

- Be Concise:**  
**Target your qualifications**
- To decide what information to include, research the company, its products or services and the skills needed for the job. Include only the information and experience that meets the specific needs of the job. Many applications have limited space to record your skills, experience and accomplishments.
  - See if you can attach a resume that details all of your skills, experience and accomplishments.

- Be Open:**  
**Give a range for salary.**
- Employers may use responses to a desired salary to screen out applicants. It is best to give a salary range or write "negotiable," even if you know the wage you want. This leaves you room to negotiate a higher salary.

- Be Correct:**  
**Double check the completed application.**
- Proofread what you have written on the application to make sure there are no spelling, grammar or punctuation errors. Check employment dates, telephone numbers and addresses for accuracy. If possible, have others review the application. They may catch errors that you might miss.
  - Avoid using abbreviations, except for "N/A."

## Online applications

Today, many employers expect job seekers to apply for jobs online. You may need to apply on the employer's website or on an online job board, like Monster or CareerBuilder. Follow the instructions explicitly and do not email your resume to an employer unless the job ad asks for this. To apply online, you will need access to the Internet and an email account.

If you don't have a computer:

- Free Internet access is available at public libraries and Career Centers. Make sure you have a USB drive (sometimes called a flash drive or thumbnail drive). This will allow you to bring or save your resume information when working on a public computer. These drives are small and inexpensive. You can purchase one at many retail stores.
- If you need an email address, many sites offer free accounts. Visit EmailAddresses.com for a list of free web-based email. Popular free services include Gmail from Google and YahooMail. Use a simple email address with your name or initials. Your email should be appropriate and simple, do not use emails like SuperHotGuy@hottie.com. This type of e-mail address is not considered professional.

If you want easy access to your resume, Google Docs has an online word processor. You can save your files there online and export them as PDF files when applying for jobs.

## How to complete an online application

Before you can apply online, you first need to register with the job website. This simply means that you need to create an account. To do this, you will need to choose a login name and a password. Many websites will use your email address as your login. You will have to register separately for each job website.

Once you have an account, you can add the information from your resume. Below are the three most common ways to do this:

- Attach a file of your resume. Many applications allow you to browse for a file on your computer or USB drive. They often ask for a PDF, text or Microsoft Word file. Select your file and click "ok" or "insert." It's just like attaching a file to an email message. Online applications often indicate if the file has been successfully uploaded.
- Copy and paste your entire resume into the online application. Open your resume file. Highlight all of the text using the mouse. Select "Copy" from the menu or by right clicking. Go to the online application to insert your resume. Select "Paste" from the menu or by right clicking. Make sure you check the formatting of your resume. You can add your resume to an email message using the same method.
- Enter your work history manually one field at a time. Some online applications have different fields for different information. For example, you enter a past employer's name in one field, your dates of employment in another and your duties in yet another. This type of application can be very time-consuming to complete. To save time and reduce errors, cut and paste text from your resume using the method above.

If you're having trouble completing the application, look for a "Help" button or link. Staff at your local Career Center cannot complete applications for you but can provide you guidance to complete your application at one of our Career Centers.

## **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**

Many companies use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to screen candidates for job opportunities. An ATS is a computer program that sorts through resumes and online job applications to determine which ones are the best fit for the positions for which they were submitted. Applicant Tracking Systems process your resume or application differently than human recruiters. Whereas human recruiters are often looking for grounds for automatic rejection, such as spelling errors or lack of relevant skills, Applicant Tracking Systems operate by searching for keywords.

Applicant resumes and job applications must first survive the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) before a person looks at them. Here are some tips to help your resume or job application get past the ATS and into the hands of a hiring manager.

### **(ATS) Tips**

1. Make sure you're qualified for the job and you clearly demonstrate your qualifications. The ATS will weed out unqualified candidates.
2. Identify key words in the job description and take the time to use these key words in your resume or job application. Incorporate these words when describing your experience to match the requirements in the job description.
3. Make sure all of your information is completely spelled out; avoid abbreviations or use them in addition to the full spelling as we've done in this section on Applicant Tracking System (ATS). Abbreviations that may be understood by hiring managers may not be recognized by a computer.
4. Fill out all fields on the application. Recruiters sometimes skip over candidates who don't complete their applications. Also, an ATS may filter candidates by their responses to certain fields in the online application. Don't be filtered out of the process by leaving blanks.
5. Lastly, use a simple format and avoid special characters, fonts, graphics or underlines. Most websites will recommend acceptable formats such as Word or PDF. Use a recommended format.

## **Additional resources**

If you need additional assistance with resumes, cover letters or organizing your information for job applications please visit your local Career Center. You can meet with staff one-on-one or sign up for a workshop specific to your needs. Ask Career Center staff for a workshop schedule while you are visiting.

Ask staff at your local Career Center for a copy of the 'Sample Resumes and Cover Letters' booklet for additional sample resumes and cover letters.

Use the JobZone website ([www.JobZone.ny.gov](http://www.JobZone.ny.gov)) to:

- Complete career and personal assessments
- Create a resume
- Post your resume
- Job search using your resume
- Use the job search tools

Use the New York State Department of Labor website, [www.labor.ny.gov](http://www.labor.ny.gov) to learn about recruitments, job fairs and to access additional job seeker resources.



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