



Business Communication MGT 3201

➔ Communicating through a Resume



The Resume

- Think of a resume as just another form of “specialized business writing”
- A resume can be the difference between getting a job and never getting an interview
- Like other business messages, we must Plan, Write and Complete the resume (3 step process)



True or False?

- The purpose of a resume is to list all your skills and abilities...
- If you think FALSE, then what is the **purpose** of a resume?



FALSE. The purpose of a resume is...

- To generate interest in you and get you an interview



True or False?

- A good resume will get you the job you want



FALSE. A good resume...

- Will get you in the door...that's all



True or False?

- Your resume will be read carefully and thoroughly



FALSE. Your resume...

- In most cases, your resume needs to make an IMMEDIATE impact on the reader...maybe you have 30 seconds before they decide whether to interview you or not.
- Many resumes are first screened by a computer for key words...if you don't have the key words then a human may never see it



True or False?

- The more good information you present about yourself in your resume, the better...

FALSE

- Recruiters do not need that much information about you at the resume collecting stage, and they probably won't read it.



True or False?

- If you want a really good resume, pay to have it prepared by a specialized resume writing service

False

- You have the skills needed to prepare an effective resume, so do it yourself. Only if the position is very high level or specialized would you pay someone else to write your resume

True or False

- If I have been to a great university, have an excellent GPA or lots of qualifications it will be a huge advantage getting a job

FALSE

- Proven, practical skills and demonstrated attitude is what will get you a job. Qualifications are only really a big help if it is your first job out of university...but if you have previous employment, this is what matters. Jobs are practical things, not theoretical.

Analyze your audience

- Research the company online. What is their culture like? What are their growth plans? What are their values? What is their strategy?
- Call up and find out more about the job. Get the person's name to whom you should apply
- Is the contact person on Face book or LinkedIn?
- Talk to people who work there, know about the company or are previous employees



Gather information

- Always update your resume
- Do not have just one version of your resume...it needs tailoring to each job
- Review your resume for relevance and interest
- Gather every bit of experience you have that is relevant and write the resume to the job description
- Seek to do things (in jobs or the community) that broaden and strengthen skills and experience

Organize your resume

- Organize your resume around your strengths
- Highlight what recruiters are looking for:
 1. Think in terms of results
 2. Show how you get things done
 3. Prove you are well rounded / multi-skilled
 4. Show signs of career progress
 5. Show you are a team player but also can lead
 6. Demonstrate flexibility and willingness to change
 7. Prove that you communicate effectively
 8. Highlight relevant passions



Identify and resolve likely problems

- Frequent job changes
- Gaps in work history
- Eclectic work history across professions
- Inexperience
- Over-qualification
- Long term service with one company
- Being fired from jobs
- Criminal record or health issues
- No referees



Resume design

- Career-based (focus is on employment history, positions held, responsibilities)
- Skills-based (focus is on proven skills gained through projects across different jobs)
- Education-based (focus is on academic qualifications and achievements)

Writing the resume

- Be honest
- Do not use I, abbreviations, acronyms, colours, decorations and symbols like %, &, @, #
- 1 or 2 common fonts, 12point text (14 or 16 for headings). Do not overuse bold type or underlining. Bullet points are good. Spacing is important.
- Layout must be consistent – same spacing, same type of bullets, same writing style.
- Verb sentence openers (saved; trained; solved, created; established etc)

Analyze a Resume

- In pairs I want you to look over an example of a bad resume. There are at least 20 things wrong with it. See how many you can find.
- We will then go over it together. Be prepared to say **why** you think the mistakes you found are wrong.
- A copy of the resume is also in the “Class Activities” folder on the L Drive



Business Communication MGT 3201

➔ Preparing Cover Letters

The Cover Letter

- When you submit your resume (electronically, in person or through the mail) it should be supported by a cover letter
- The cover letter is the first thing a prospective employer will read.
- If the cover letter is poor, they probably will not bother to look at your resume
- A cover letter is usually about 1 -2 pages depending on the level/requirements of the advertised job



Purpose of the Cover Letter

- The cover letter introduces you to the reader
- It sets out your claim for the position
- It should create interest in you so that the reader wants to look over your resume
- It should specifically explain how you are perfect for the job
- The objective is to clearly show a perfect match between you and the position



Standard Cover Letter

- Many companies, especially large ones, have a standard online template for resumes, but not so much for cover letters
- The cover letter is often your email to which the resume is attached
- Therefore; your email cover letter can be your only chance to freely express yourself
- Email cover letters should be short, so how you use words to generate interest in yourself becomes very important



Analyze your Audience

- Try to find out the name and position of the person you are addressing
- Call them beforehand to find out more about the job, then mention this in your cover letter
- The cover letter should be conversational, direct and businesslike...this is what the audience will expect. Excellent presentation and no typing errors is essential for a great first impression



Tips for the Cover Letter

- Be clear, keep it very focused on the job. No long paragraphs or verbose sentences
- Prove that you understand the job and company
- Tell them why the job is ideal for you
- Sound interested and enthusiastic in the prospect of working for them
- Do not brag; do not mention salary (unless they asked); do not sound desperate



Tips for the Cover Letter

- Align your core values to theirs
- Prove how you have a passion for their core products / services
- Show how you have been preparing / working towards such a job
- Mention something unique about their business and why this appeals to you
- Indicate that this is a company you see a long term future with



Tips for the Cover Letter

- If you are weak against some of the selection criteria, think how you will compensate for this
- Perhaps highlighting similar or transferable skills
- Perhaps showing a desire to acquire the skills they are looking for
- Perhaps highlighting different but valuable skills you have that the company would desire
- Perhaps showing you are working towards certain skills / knowledge

AIDA

- Remember AIDA? (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)
- This rule applies well to cover letters because with cover letters (and resumes) we are advertising...we are advertising ourselves
- **Attention**: the opening paragraph should get the reader's attention by doing two things: 1. Clearly stating your reason for writing and 2. Giving the reader a reason to keep reading

AIDA

- Interest: The middle section of the letter will build interest by clearly explaining why you would be great for the position. It might be your current role; a very relevant qualification; some special skills or perhaps valuable experience.
- Desire: You want them to desire to meet you. As you address the selection criteria you have the opportunity to reveal your personality and values (which should, of course, match the job and company)

AIDA

- Action: At the end of the letter tell them you are available for interview at a time convenient to them. Don't list restricted days and times you are available.
- At the top of your letter will be you mobile phone number and email contact

Unsolicited Cover Letters

- This is where you contact a company (or recruitment agency) to see if they do have any upcoming positions. You are not responding to an advertisement
- At least 50% of all jobs are filled before they are advertised
- If you want to work for specific companies then the unsolicited letter might get you in the door

Rules for Unsolicited Cover Letters

- Show how your skills would benefit the organization
- Show a strong understanding about the company (culture, values, products, services, history, future plans)
- If you know a good current employee, mention their name
- Refer to company activities, achievements, good story in press
- Offer to drop by for an informal meet

Sample: Email cover letter

Bcc...

Subject: Editorial Assistant Position - Susan Sharp

Attachments:

Normal Arial 10 B I U

Dear Hiring Manager,

I would like to express my interest in a position as editorial assistant for your publishing company. As a recent graduate with writing, editing, and administrative experience, I believe I am a strong candidate for a position at the 123 Publishing Company.

You specify that you are looking for someone with strong writing skills. As an English major, a writing tutor, and an editorial intern for both a government magazine and a college marketing office, I have become a skilled writer with a variety of experience.

Although I am a recent college graduate, my maturity, practical experience, and eagerness to enter the publishing business will make me an excellent editorial assistant. I would love to begin my career with your company, and am confident that I would be a beneficial addition to the 123 Publishing Company.

I have attached my resume. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Sharp

Susan Sharp
123 Main Street
XYZ Town, NY 11111
Email: susan_sharp@mail.com
Cell: 555-555-5555

Sample: Email cover letter

CC...
Bcc...
Subject: Introduction - Susan Sharp
Attachments:
Normal Arial 10 B I U

Dear Mr. Paulin,

Independent schools such as Greenwood Elementary require a hardworking, organized administrative staff to ensure that the school runs successfully and efficiently. My administrative experience and organizational skills would help contribute to the long history of success at Greenwood School.

I have extensive administrative experience in an academic setting. For the past two years I have worked at the Early Childhood Center at XYZ College, where I alternated between running activities for the children and answering phones, scheduling parent-teacher meetings, and performing other organizational tasks.

I have attached my resume, and would love to speak with you regarding how I could make a significant contribution to Greenwood School's daily operations. I will call you within the next week to discuss arranging an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Sharp

Susan Sharp
123 Main Street
XYZ Town, NY 11111
Email: susan_sharp@mail.com
Cell: 555-555-5555

Unsolicited Email cover letter

Subject: Introduction - Susan Sharp

Dear Ms. Rowe,

I am a friend of Emily Little and she encouraged me to forward my resume to you. I know Emily through a local children's theater, for which I was a lighting assistant this semester. I also see her at college music performances, as I am in the orchestra.

I'm interested in getting a job or paid internship, as well as a place to stay, in the Boston area for the summer. I would appreciate any recommendations you can offer regarding this job search and looking for apartments.

Attached is my resume. Most of my theatrical experience is in lighting and TD; however, I have done everything, from props to state management.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Susan Sharp

Susan Sharp
123 Main Street
XYZ Town, NY 11111
Cell: 555-555-5555
Email: susan.sharp@gmail.com

Practice

- Look at the cover letter I have handed out (it's also on the L Drive in "Class Activities" folder).
- Does the letter follow the AIDA approach?
Underline key words/phrases that follow AIDA.
- Write the cover letter for the job on the back of this handout