



UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
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# Resume & Cover Letter Basics

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# What is a resume?

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- Summary of your professional history and qualifications
- Your opportunity to interest an employer, introduce yourself, and get an interview

# Purpose of a resume

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- Give a first impression!
- Companies will judge you by content, layout, language, grammar & tone
- 10-second review max!
- During an interview: resume is a discussion guide

# Resume Formats

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## •Chronological

- Employment history organized: most recent position first
- Highlights accomplishments within each position
- Recruiters and employers often prefer this format
- Recommended for undergraduate students!

# Resume Formats (continued)

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## •Functional

- Focuses on areas of skill
- Draws attention to accomplishments rather than job titles
- Good for career changers or gaps in employment history
- Often recommended for graduate students, but not always

# Targeted Resume

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- Prepared with a specific position or employer in mind
- Features most significant qualifications
- Grabs employer's attention
- Educates the employer about your background
- Illustrates the type of results you can produce

# Resume Writing Style

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- Use present tense for current job
- Use past tense for previous jobs
- Don't use pronouns: "I, We, They"
- Complete sentences and periods are not necessary
- Don't over-abbreviate names of associations, clubs, etc.

# Resume Appearance

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- One page preferred, except as dictated by industry
- Bonded paper (24-60 lbs.) in a professional color: white, cream, light gray
- Standard Fonts (Arial or Times New Roman) in 10-12.5-pt.
- Margins: use white space to frame (1" ideal)
- Emphasize points with bullets •, UPPERCASE, bold, *italics* (do not overuse, however)

# Resume Content Overview

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- Contact info: Name, address, telephone, and e-mail  
Include LinkedIn Profile in contact info (Twitter, Blog, Facebook if appropriate)
- Education
- Experience
- Activities
- Volunteer Experience
- Skills (computer, language, etc.)

# Education

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- Include expected graduation date, major, minor, etc.
- Can include GPA if over 3.5
- Can include study abroad experience and community college (reverse chronological)
- Can include special coursework, projects, honors & awards

# Experience

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- Include job title, name of company, location, dates, description of responsibilities & results produced
- Doesn't have to be paid experience
- Include information that supports job objective – be specific
- Create a “Relevant Experience” section if needed

# Experience (continued)

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- Use accomplishment statements:  
Action Verb + Object + Context + Results
- Past success is the best predictor of future success
- This is one of most important part of your resume!!!
- Did you:
  - Achieve same results with fewer resources?
  - Improve a task, function or process?
  - Initiate a new undertaking?
  - Surpass accepted standards?

# Experience (continued)

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- For complete information about accomplishment statements, please refer to our website and the Job & Internship Resource Guide or the “Resumes & Cover Letters” section, both under Quick Links
- **Sample Accomplishment Statements:**
  - “Achieved and maintained 30% annual sales growth over four-year period”
  - “Improved service efficiency and customer satisfaction by 20% by streamlining responses to customer requests”

# Skills

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- Languages: Specify language and degree of fluency (i.e. fluent, proficient, conversational, written, spoken)
- Computer: Name both hardware and software

# Activities

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- List involvement in student clubs, athletics, volunteer work

- Sample formatting:

“Member, Psi Chi (Psychology Honors Society) 09/11 –Present

“Volunteer, Project Open Hand, San Francisco 01/12 – Present

***or***

Beta Alpha Psi (Honors Business Fraternity)

- Treasurer 09/11 – Present

- Member 01/11 - Present

# Things to avoid

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- Personal information: social security number, marital status, height, weight, citizenship, health
- Hobbies (unless unusual or related to target job), political or religious affiliations
- References (use a separate page for these)
- Salary history

# Final Resume Pointers

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- Put your best foot forward - be proud of your accomplishments!
- Be honest – would former supervisors agree with what you've included?
- Ask a few people to review your resume: is it clear, specific, and to-the-point?
- Proofread, proofread, proofread! Don't assume employers won't catch little mistakes

# Cover Letters

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- Purpose of a cover letter is to:
  - Supplement and clarify your resume
  - Demonstrate how your experience fits the specific job description for this specific company
- Target, target, target!
- Exhibit your enthusiasm and knowledge of the company

# Cover Letters (continued)

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- Heading and Introduction:

Your address

Date

Name and address of the company

Dear Ms. Barbara Smith,

- Always use Ms. for a female
- Make an effort to find out the name of the hiring manager
- If not, start with Dear Hiring Manager,

# Cover Letters (continued)

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## •Paragraph One

- Name position you are applying for
- Tell where you saw the job posting
- If possible, choose two or three key qualities that are mentioned in the job description and name them.

# Cover Letters (continued)

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## •Paragraph Two

- Support the two or three qualities mentioned in the first paragraph with your past work experience and/or...
- State how your academic career has prepared you well for this position
- Research the company
  - Company website
  - News articles

# Cover Letters (continued)

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## •Paragraph Three

- Reiterate your interest in position
- Request an interview and thank them for their consideration
- Make your contact information (phone and email) easy to find
- Let them know when you will follow-up (if possible)

# Reference Sheet

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- Develop separate page of 3-5 academic or professional references
- Get their permission
- Let them know about your search
- Provide them with your updated resume
- Include their name, title, company address and daytime phone number
- Don't send references to employers unless asked (usually after at least one interview)

# Sample Reference

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## Reference for Ima Star :

Ms. Wanda Jones

Catering Manager, Hotels-R-Us

123 Riverside Drive

Wherever, CA 90000

(444) 111-5555

wjones@hotelsrus.com

\* *Former Manager*

# Wrap Up and Q & A

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- A-ha's learned
- Complete Evaluations
- Other ???