



Resumes, Cover Letters & Applications

Developing Your Resume

Resumes are important to have available when looking for a job. A resume puts all of your skills and experience on one form that makes it easier for a potential employer to review. Since it is often the first thing a potential employer sees about you, a resume should be professionally presented in order to make a good impression.

Here's an example of a basic resume:

Christine Person 1234 Hope Road • Suburb, MD 23456 • 301.555.0101

SUMMARY of QUALIFICATIONS

- Positive work attitude
- Learn best when shown visually how to perform a task
- Friendly and a good team member

WORK EXPERIENCES

Office Assistant
Corporate International; Baltimore, MD
Sept. 2011–Present

- Collect, clean and redistribute computer & technical equipment
- Collate and package materials as specified
- Alphabetize and sort documents
- Sort and deliver office mail

Dining Room Assistant
Chicken Out; Towson, MD
Sept. 2010–June 2011

- Cleaned and rolled silverware
- Bussed tables during dining hours

Office Assistant
Rebuilding Together; Baltimore, MD
Summer 2010

- Collated and stamped mail
- Prepared projects for bulk mailing

Floral Assistant
Flowers World Wide; Baltimore, MD
Fall 2009–Spring 2010

- Watered, cut and arranged flower bouquets
- Made bows for arrangements
- Light cleaning of shop

Activities Assistant
Hebrew Home; Baltimore, MD
Summer 2009

- Assisted residents during recreational activities

JOB TRIAL EXPERIENCES

Office Clerk: *Weichert Realty*; Towson, MD

Retail Worker: *DSW*; Baltimore, MD

EDUCATION

Currently a full-time student in a trade tech program

County Community College in Townville, MD

There are online tools that can help you build your resume:

■ [Job Tips: Resumes and Cover Letters](#)

■ [Career One Stop](#)





Personal Perspective – “Building a Resume – One Accomplishment at a Time” Michelle Rubin, Founder, Autism After 21

Building a resume for a young adult with autism can seem a bit difficult, but I began building a resume for my son Scott when he entered high school. He is now 20 years old and has used his resume to enter a post high school transition program. There is a wonderful online tool called [Naviance Family Connection](#) that helped me do this.

When my son had any accomplishment during his high school years, I visited www.naviance.com where I had set up “Family Connection” page for him. On this page you can use the “About Me” tab to chronicle everything from classes, sports, Special Olympics, awards, work training, and even computer programs he knew how to use. After four years, this program had organized all this information into a professional resume format and it was so easy to keep up a bit at a time.

A big part of the Naviance page speaks to college planning – my son with autism is not college-bound. However, on this portion of the page I learned about how building a resume works for everyone! It also can give your son or daughter a sense of accomplishment by entering their information on their own or with your help.

I found using this online tool helped me as a parent not to have to remember five years of high school (yes, my son stayed in high school five years), and it gave us some confidence when we began exploring other programs that he really had accomplished quite a bit during those years besides receiving his special diploma. For families of students still in high school, start a resume now. And for students ready to graduate, you can still benefit from putting together a professional resume.

***Note:** Naviance is a web-based service provided for parents and students by some school counseling departments. Your school must have a Naviance account in order to use these tools. Nevertheless, the tips included above can be achieved without access to an online service. Start tracking accomplishments and experiences for your resume while you are still in high school. This activity can be incorporated into your transition plan.*

Additional tips:

Create a Portfolio: In addition to your resume, you can put together a portfolio of your work – or pictures or videos of your work – for future employers to see.

Prepare a List of References: As you are preparing information for your resume, create a separate list of your references to share with potential employers once you secure a job interview.





Start creating your own resume today! Use the following template for help:

[Street Address], [City, ST ZIP Code] [phone] [e-mail]

[Your Name]

OBJECTIVE

[Describe your career goal or ideal job.]

EXPERIENCE

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

[Job Title]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

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

[Job Title]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

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

[Job Title]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

[Job responsibility/achievement]

EDUCATION

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

[Degree Obtained]

[Special award/accomplishment or degree minor]

REFERENCES

References are available on request.

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Cover Letter

When distributing your resume to a potential employer, you should always include a cover letter. Here are some useful suggestions from **JobTIPS** about writing an effective cover letter:



WHAT is a cover letter?

A cover letter is a brief letter that you write to your potential employer expressing your interest in the job and stating why you are applying. In this letter, you should briefly describe your strengths and skills and how they match the job of interest. When you send a cover letter, you should always send a copy of your resume with it.

WHY write a cover letter?

You write a cover letter to send along with your resume. In other words, your cover letter serves as an introduction to your resume. Sending just a resume in an envelope does not look as professional as sending a cover letter with your resume.

HOW to write a cover letter:

- Like a resume, a cover letter is a formal document and needs to look professional.
- Your cover letter should be no longer than one page.
- It should be typed in a business-letter format, which contains the following information in this order:
 - Your name and contact information
 - The name and address of the person you are writing
 - The date (including the day, month, and year)
 - The greeting or salutation (Example: Dear _____,)
 - The body of the letter (2 short paragraphs)
 - The closing phrase (Examples: "Sincerely" or "Thank you")
 - Your signature
 - Your typed full name





SAMPLE cover letter:

Christine Person
1234 Hope Road
Suburb, MD 23456
(301) 555-0101
cperson@gmail.com

Mrs. Anne Darcy
Windham Publishers, Inc.
101 Willow Drive
Nashville, TN 12345

January 7, 2013

Dear Mrs. Darcy,

I am writing to express my interest in the editorial assistant position at Windham Publishers. I am a very detail-oriented person, which is important when fact-checking and editing manuscripts for grammatical errors. Grammar and the English language have always been a strong interest of mine, and I have excelled in related courses throughout my education. In addition to being detail-oriented, I am a hard worker and consider myself responsible and dependable. I am confident that I would be a valued employee at your publishing company.

I am interested in learning more about this position, as it seems like a great match for my skill set. I am enclosing a copy of my resume for your consideration and am happy to provide you with references if necessary. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

{Signature}

Christine Person



Write a cover letter and ask a trusted friend, family member or counselor to read it.





How to Send Your Resume and Cover Letter

Spelling and grammar are important and could make the difference in getting a job interview. Make sure your resume and cover letter are proofread by a friend or family member.

By Mail:

Make sure it's clean: If you are mailing your resume and cover letter, it should be printed on clean, white paper with no tears or wrinkles.

By Email:

File Format: You'll be sending your resume as an attachment to your email, so use a format that most businesses can open. Microsoft Word is the most common professional word processing program.

File Name: Name your resume document appropriately. Using your name as the document's name will help an employer find the file on his/her computer. Using the example provided on the first page of this section, the resume document should be named **ChristinePersonResume.doc** or **ChristinePerson.doc**.

Don't Forget Your Cover Letter: If sending by email, you still need to send a cover letter. You can include your cover letter document as an attachment or you can write the cover letter in the body of the email you are sending.

Send from a Professional Email Address: Some of us have email addresses that we use every day that might be too informal from which to send a resume (e.g. aspie373@yahoo.com). As you continue on your job search, consider setting up a professional email to use. For example, cperson@gmail.com or christineperson@aol.com might be good email addresses to use.

Applications

Every employer will require you to complete an application. This is a document that will provide the company with some basic information about you, such as your name, where they can contact you, where you went to school, your Social Security number so they can pay you, and other items. So it is very important to fill it out neatly and accurately. [JobTIPS](#) provides an excellent overview of the application process.

There are three possible ways to complete a job application:

1. Write on the paper application, and then return it to the place of business.
2. Type your responses onto a downloaded version of the application, then print it out or email it to the employer.
3. Complete the online application and submit it electronically.





Where do I find applications?

First, you can try finding the company's job application online. If you don't know the company's website, try searching for it on Google, Bing or Yahoo. Once you are on the employer's homepage, you will have to look carefully to find the jobs link. On some homepages, the jobs section is very easy to find, while on other home pages, you will have to look very carefully to locate it. It might be on the sidebar, at the very bottom of the page, or at the top of page. Some terms to look for are:

- "Careers"
- "Employment opportunities"
- "Job opportunities"
- "Join our team"
- "Corporate info"
- "Open positions"
- "Job openings"

Once you find the right page, look for the job application. You might be able to download it and save it to your computer, or you may have to complete it directly online. It can sometimes be confusing – don't be frustrated! You can always ask for help.

You will sometimes be able to obtain a paper application in the actual place of business, such as in a store or a restaurant. If that is what you'd like to do, make sure you are dressed in neat, clean clothes and that you have showered and combed your hair. You want to try to make a good first impression.

When you walk into the place of business, find an employee and wait until they are not too busy to talk. Then walk up to him/her and say something like, *"Excuse me, I would like to pick up a job application. Can you please give me two copies, or can I please see your manager?"* You should request two copies because if you make a mistake on the first copy, you will still have a second one to use. Make sure you say *"Thank you"* before you leave with the applications. You can take them home with you or somewhere else that is quiet where you can concentrate.

How do I fill out the application?

JobTIPS provides a thorough step-by-step guide to filling out job applications, including an [application worksheet](#) and an [application checklist](#) that will list all of the information you'll need to have with you when it comes time to complete your application.

After you complete and submit your resume, cover letter and application, you'll probably need to wait patiently. The company may not respond to you right away, but that does not necessarily mean that you won't get the job. If you have not gotten confirmation that your application was received, wait at least three days and then you can call or email them. You could say, *"Hello. My name is _____. I recently applied for a position at your company. I am very excited about this job opportunity and was wondering what the status of my application is?"*

After that, you will need to wait to hear from them. That is why it's often a good idea to apply for several different jobs at once – you can always decline other offers once you've been hired!





Pre-Employment Screening Assessments

Some companies require you to take their Pre-Employment Screening Assessment before you can be called in for an interview and hired. These assessments are online or paper tests that ask you to read questions and choose the best response. They also require you to read questions and rate your response using a scale (between 1 and 5, for example). Most of these assessments are not like the math or history tests you may have taken in school. These ask questions to determine your work-related attitude, personality, productivity, social judgment skills, and reliability. There's not much you can do to prepare or "study" for them and many of these types of questions do not have clear right or wrong answers. So just try to stay calm and answer as best you can!

Here is an example of a multiple choice question:

You have noticed that many of your co-workers come to work late and leave early. The supervisor does not seem to be aware of this problem. For two days in a row, you decide to come to work late because you are tired. Your supervisor asks to meet with you, and she is obviously frustrated by your behavior. How should you handle this?

- A. Apologize to your supervisor, but also inform her that your co-workers are not following these rules either.
- B. Apologize to your supervisor, and tell her that it will not happen again.
- C. Ask your supervisor to meet with the entire staff.
- D. Quit your job because this situation is not fair at all.

Many of these tests also require you to use a rating scale to answer a question. Here is an example:

Rude customers should be avoided.

(5) Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly Disagree.

For more information about these Pre-Employment Screening Assessments, visit JobTIPS [here](#).

