



**Be bold. Be a Viking.**

# RESUME & COVER LETTER *Guide*

## **Center for Careers and Employment**

Siek Campus Center 270 (2nd Floor)

Phone: 518-629-7326 Email: [cce@hvcc.edu](mailto:cce@hvcc.edu)

Web: [www.hvcc.edu/cce](http://www.hvcc.edu/cce)

## FACTS ABOUT RESUMES

- **Job searches almost always require the use of a resume.** Even entry level jobs that require applications will also encourage applicants to turn in a resume. A good resume will help toward getting a job interview, while a poor resume will likely end up in a “no” pile.  
*Fact: Some jobs will have over 100 applicants for only one position, so a good resume is important.*
- **Resumes are usually one page for new graduates or those seeking to transition into a new field but without a lot of experience in the new field.** Resumes for job seekers with extensive experience can be 1 or 2 pages. Resumes longer than 2 pages are generally considered too long.

## BASIC RESUME TIPS

- Write your resume with a focus on the job or career you wish to obtain (this will likely require creating more than one resume if you are applying for different fields).
- Check your resume for grammar, spelling, and factual errors. Make sure to have at least one person read it over, such as a counselor at the Center for Careers and Employment.
- Don't use photographs, clip art, fancy graphics, or borders. Text should be black.
- Don't list social security number, age, marital status, gender, or other personal information.
- Use an easy-to-read font such as Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri in an easy to read size (usually no smaller than 11, but no bigger than 13).
- Use white or off-white paper (can be cotton or linen blend) and avoid using colored paper.
- When sending your resume to employers, make sure it is either a Microsoft Word or a PDF document. Most employers can't read a Works or a Word Perfect document.
- Use a combination of **Bold** or *Italics* to help your information stand out. Use the **TAB** key instead of the space bar to perfectly line up information and use bullet points to present your information.

## STEP BY STEP: GETTING STARTED WITH THE RESUME

1. Open Microsoft Word and open a new document (avoid using templates)
2. Use the default font (Calibri) or change to Times New Roman or Arial, Size 12.

*Resumes can be in any font type or size that is clear, professional and easy to read. No size 9, and no Comic Sans, for example.*

3. Begin typing your resume.
4. Adjust your margins to fill the space.

## STEP BY STEP: RESUME CATEGORIES

**Create your header:** Include full name (avoid nicknames), mailing address, phone, and email (use professional-sounding email). This will be used on your resume, cover letter and reference sheet.

**Create your categories – these are some of the basics:**

### **OBJECTIVE:**

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This category is optional and can be used to give your resume a focus and state your immediate career/job goal

- For example – “entry level IT position” for a recent graduate is acceptable, but “entry level IT position to obtain promotion to senior IT administrator” is **not** acceptable.
- If your resume focus is clear or you are attending a job fair to apply for positions in various fields, omit this category.

### **EDUCATION:** (or Training)

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*Highest (or most related) education should be listed first. Recent graduates should list education at the top. If education is not recent/not related, it can be listed at the bottom.*

#### **What to include in Education:**

- Complete name of the degree received or working towards (list planned graduation date if a student)
- Dates attended or just the graduation date if a graduate
- G.P.A (not required, but may be listed if above 3.0)
- Honors or Awards (President’s List, Dean’s List, PTK, etc.)
- Relevant Coursework
- Relevant Projects
- Field Work, Internships, Placements, etc. may also be included here or may be a separate category

#### **Format Example:**

**Associates in Applied Science, Human Services**  
Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY **G.P.A. 3.7**  
**Honors:** President’s List and Dean’s List

**May 2013**

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

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- In a **Chronological Style resume**, jobs are typically listed in reverse chronological order – this means your most recent job is listed first.
- However, when the most recent job is NOT related experience, but less recent jobs are related, it is possible to use two categories – “related experience” and “other work experience.”

#### **What to include in Work Experience:**

- Job title, employer name, employer city and state (do not include zip codes, supervisor names, or phone numbers in this section)
- Dates of employment
- Bullet point statements highlighting your accomplishments/skills/responsibilities (see page 5 for action word examples (use 3 – 5 statements))
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## WORK EXPERIENCE (Continued)

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### Format Example:

**Wait Staff**, Carla's Diner, Troy, NY

Date – Present

#### Example:

- Trained new wait staff on menus and procedures
- Greeted diners, explained menu items and specials, and provided good customer service and follow up
- Assisted the manager by helping to cash out registers

### Other Names for Work Experience:

Related Experience  
Professional Experience  
Work History  
Employment Experience

**NOTE:** Alternatively, you may use a category called “Experience” which includes internships and volunteer experience in addition to “work” experience.

Save your resume as your name (ex: JohnSmith.docx) so that the employer will see this when it is attached.

**TIP: Always have at least one more person review your resume before sending it to an employer. HVCC Center for Careers and Employment counselors are available to review your resume.**

## STEP BY STEP: OTHER RESUME CATEGORIES

MILITARY EXPERIENCE  
LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE  
ATHLETICS  
CERTIFICATIONS  
SKILLS  
CERTIFICATIONS  
COMPUTER SKILLS

COMPUTER SKILLS  
STUDENT ACTIVITIES  
TRAININGS  
AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE  
LANGUAGES  
LICENSING  
INTERNSHIPS

### Additional Tips:

- It is not necessary to say “references available upon request”
- **Removing dates from employment and education** may raise red flags with the employer. If you are concerned of age discrimination, please speak with a career counselor.

**How you format your resume is important. It must look professional. Use bullet points, TAB, BOLD, and Italics to make sure your resume will stand out in a positive way. Visit the Computer Learning Center in the Marvin Library for help using Microsoft Word.**

## RESUME STYLES AND TIPS

### REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL

- This is the most common resume style. Jobs are listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first). However, you may use different categories (such as “related experience” and “other experience” to move the most related jobs closer to the top of the resume.

### FUNCTIONAL

- This style focuses on related skills, rather than job titles and employment dates. It can be a useful style for career changers. However, this style is less common and is disliked by some employers.

### COMBINATION

- This style combines elements of the chronological resume and the functional resume. Often, a highlighted skills category is included at the beginning and work experience, internships, projects, etc. are included below.

## COVER LETTERS

*Cover letters are business letters that accompany a resume. Letters may also be written as the body of an email if the resume is being sent this way.*

### COVER LETTER GUIDELINES:

- (Example on page 11). A business letter includes the date, name and contact information of the person you are sending the letter to, salutation, letter body, and signature. The body format is as follows:

#### PARAGRAPH 1:

- Job you are applying for (state the job title)
- One sentence about why you are qualified as a transition into the next paragraph.

#### PARAGRAPH 2:

- Using good writing skills (sentences must flow, don't start every sentence with “I,” spelling, punctuation, etc) write 3-5 sentences about how you are qualified for the position.
- Express enthusiasm/interest in the position to make sure that your letter sounds more personal and not like a form letter. Write a new letter for each job for which you apply (although only minor changes may be needed for similar positions).
- This paragraph may also address employment gaps.

#### PARAGRAPH 3:

- Thank the employer for their time and provide your contact information for follow up.

## STEP BY STEP: ACTION WORD EXAMPLES

**ANALYSIS:** Analyzed, Studied, Determined, Discovered, Calculated, Forecasted, Evaluated, Conducted, Identified, Interpreted, Investigated, Planned, Researched, Revised, Selected, Solved, Ascertained, Clarified, Integrated, Appraised, Assessed

**LEADERSHIP/SUPERVISION:** Explained, Governed, Guided, Presided, Scheduled, Trained, Recruited, Supervised, Managed, Administered, Appointed, Directed

**COORDINATION:** Coordinated, Directed, Maintained, Presided, Systematized, Shaped, Steered, Arranged, Assembled, Activated, Scheduled, Facilitated

**COMMUNICATION:** Negotiated, Explained, Clarified, Interacted, Persuaded, Motivated, Petitioned, Presented, Promoted, Wrote, Recommended, Consulted, Interpreted, Debated, Synthesized, Counseled, Translated, Addressed, Authored, Collaborated, Communicated, Composed, Contracted, Corresponded, Published, Moderated, Reported

**TRAINING:** Trained, Coached, Advised, Instructed, Educated, Oriented, Enhanced, Taught, Instilled, Briefed, Enlightened, Guided, Motivated, Counseled

**ORGANIZATION:** Organized, Collected, Arranged, Collated, Catalogued, Indexed, Revised, Scheduled, Systematized, Classified, Itemized, Specified

**SALES:** Sold, Marketed, Distributed, Obtained, Promoted, Generated, Recruited, Energized

**MANAGEMENT:** Planned, Administered, Fostered, Promoted, Consulted, Organized, Directed, Conferred, Discussed, Formulated, Contracted, Facilitated, Supervised, Trained, Prepared, Arranged, Coordinated, Marketed, Maintained, Analyzed, Recommended, Reviewed, Handled, Prescribed, Participated, Accomplished, Determined, Approved, Contributed, Established

**CREATION:** Animated, Created, Initiated, Originated, Authored, Wrote, Designed, Composed, Conceived, Conceptualized, Formulated, Pioneered, Developed, Defined, Invented, Engineered, Fashioned, Founded, Illustrated, Mapped, Reproduced, Visualized

**GROWTH:** Gained, Increased, Augmented, Amplified, Accumulated, Advanced, Heightened, Intensified, Strengthened, Maximized, Enhanced, Enlarged, Expanded, Broadened, Doubled, Reinforced, Concentrated, Condensed, Consolidated, Saved

**REDUCTION:** Decreased, Diminished, Reduced, Lowered, Minimized, Alleviated, Declined, Divided, Simplified

**DEVELOPMENT:** Developed, Converted, Designed, Devised, Refined, Established, Improved, Improvised, Installed, Planned, Cultivated, Evaluated, Engineered, Explored, Examined, Researched, Analyzed, Upgraded, Updated

**EFFICIENCY:** Streamlined, Facilitated, Expedited, Simplified, Combined, Converted, Eased, Mobilized, Remodeled, Reorganized, Repaired, Reshaped, Restored, Revitalized

**SUPPORT:** Assisted, Participated, Augmented, Relieved, Boosted, Strengthened, Represented

**ACHIEVEMENT:** Achieved, Awarded, Elected, Earned, Mastered, Maintained, Performed, Saved, Salvaged, Solved, Started, Succeeded, Utilized, and Volunteered

## Jason King

123 Main Street, Troy, NY 12180  
518-555-2546 – j-king53@hvcc.edu

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**OBJECTIVE:** A part-time job in retail customer service

**EDUCATION:**

**Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY** **Fall 2012 – Present**  
Current Student in Associates in Arts: Individual Studies

**Albany High School, Albany, NY** **June 2012**  
Regents Diploma

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND LEADERSHIP:**

**Albany High Football Team**

Player (2008 – 2012) Captain (2011-2012)

- Assisted with leading the team to place second in division
- Made All Stars
- Motivated team to help cheerleaders in annual car wash

**Student Community Service Club**

Member (2009-2012) Vice President (2010-2012)

- Encouraged students to join the community service club, including getting the involvement of most of the football team and talking to the coaches to help get players on other teams to help
- Talked to the principal about getting a school bus so that students could help at the regional food bank on a Saturday
- Helped make posters advertising the club to students
- Set up community service at the regional food bank, a street cleanup, and painted the entrance to a local soup kitchen

**Awarded the Maria Smith Scholarship for Community Service**

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:**

**Youth Leader**

New England Baptist Ministry

**2011 - Present**

- Assist in teaching bible study to children ages 5 – 12 by helping them read stories, sing, and create craft projects.

**Albany Senior Center, Albany NY**

**2010 - Present**

- Serve meals to senior citizens twice a month

**COMPUTER SKILLS:**

Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Internet, Email

**Sarah Jane Smith**

55 2st Street – Troy, NY 12180  
518-555-2566 – s-smith364@hvcc.edu

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**EDUCATION AND TRAINING:**

**Associates in Applied Science, Computer Information Systems** May 2012  
Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY **GPA:** 3.47

**HONORS:**

**Presidents List:** Fall 2010, Spring 2011 **Dean's List:** Fall 2011, Spring 2012  
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

**Operating Systems:** Linux, Microsoft Windows XP, Enterprise, and 7  
**Software:** Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint, Oracle Database System  
**Programming Languages:** JAVA, HTML, SQL, C/C++, COBOL, PERL, CCNA, CCNP

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**RELATED EXPERIENCE:**

- Intern,** Jazz Business Solutions, Menands, NY Spring 2012
- Updated company website, including reformatting the layout and uploading photographs, and writing content advertising new services
  - Helped develop a database for a client
  - Observed meetings with clients and helped prepare client proposals
  - Attended Chamber of Commerce event and networked with local business leaders in technology
- Summer Student Worker,** Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY Summer 2011
- Retrieved and swapped out PCs in campus classrooms and offices with new computers and other hardware; made sure computers were installed correctly and booted up.

**WORK EXPERIENCE:**

- Shift Leader,** McDonalds, Troy, NY 1/2011 – Present
- Promoted to shift leader after nine months
  - Supervise and train new employees
  - Operate a cash register, cash out registers, and assist with customer service
  - Make sure that restaurant is kept clean
- Work Study Position,** Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY Fall 2010
- Answered phones during staff lunch breaks and helped answer questions and took messages for faculty
  - Filed and photocopied as needed
  - Created flyers and display boards



## Roberta Davies

89 River Drive • East Greenbush, NY 12018 • Phone: (518) 555-9494 • E-mail: DaviesR@hvcc.edu

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### OBJECTIVE:

A full-time position as a Registered Nurse utilizing my experience and skill in working with people.

### EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION:

**Associates in Applied Science, Nursing** May 2013  
Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY

CPR Certification, American Heart Association, September, 2012

First Aid Certification, American Red Cross, January 2013

**Licensure:** Preparing to take New York State Licensing Exam for Registered Nurses,  
Summer 2013

### CLINICAL ROTATION EXPERIENCE

Fall 2011 – Spring 2012

#### Medical/Surgical Nursing

*Albany Medical Center, St. Peter's Hospital, St. Claire's Hospital, Memorial Hospital*

- Provided condition-specific care to each patient.
- Performed patient assessments, medication administration, wound care, and provided patient education.

#### The Family: Labor and Delivery, Pediatrics, Postpartum

*St. Claire's Hospital*

- Provided patients with individualized nursing care, assisting children with care tailored to developmental stage.
- Performed care during labor, delivery, and postpartum. Educated families and explained medical terminology.

#### Psychiatric

*Ellis Hospital*

- Shadowed registered nurses on duty in psychiatric wing.
- Interviewed patients, observed various manifestation of mental health diseases, assisted with patient education.

#### Intensive Care

*Albany Medical Center*

- Assisted patients requiring extensive life support.

### RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Residential Assistant

*Center for Disability Services, Clifton Park, NY*

July 2009 – Present

- Provided a caring, nurturing environment to assist individuals with disability in a residential care facility.
- Administered varying levels of care to clients, including assistance with daily living activities such as bathing, dressing, and feeding.

**Jennifer Richards**

8 Partridge Road – Clifton Park, NY 12065

518-555-7586 - RichardsM@nycap.rr.com

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- Associates Degree in Human Services with extensive experience in customer service: skilled at listening to questions and helping provide solutions to inquiries.
- Coursework in psychology, social services systems, and diversity.
- Participated in the National Coalition Building Institute Understanding Diversity and Three Day Train the Trainer workshops.
- Experienced in report writing, filing, adhering to office policies, and in working with a great deal of attention to detail and organization.

**Internships**

**The ARC of Rensselaer County, Troy, NY**

Spring 2013

- Provide a positive environment for individuals with disability by having good listening skills, patience, and empathy.
- Mentor high school students who are preparing to graduate
- Planned a job search workshop for students by inviting Human Services professionals to present on a panel and provide mock interview practice

**St. Catherine's Center for Children, Albany, NY**

Fall 2012

- Help with intake of families into the shelter by assisting them with paperwork.
- Observe counselors as they work with families to help them feel comfortable in the shelter environment.

**Work Experience**

**Administrative Assistant, New York State Office for the Aging**  
Albany, NY

1990 – 2009

- Provided administrative support, including managing filing systems, copying, and writing correspondence for an office of four.
- Answered phones and directed callers to appropriate departments and services, often having to listen carefully to the caller's needs, and being patient when speaking with individuals who did not speak English as a first language.
- Conducted data entry and kept up to date a database of service providers, including following up with them by telephone in the event of inaccurate information.
- Managed bulk mailings that were sent to hundreds of service providers in New York State.

**Education and Training**

**Associates in Science in Human Services**  
Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY **GPA: 3.6**

May 2013

**Certificate, Microsoft Office Essentials**  
Albany Office Training Professionals, Albany, NY

June 1999

**CPR and First Aid Certified**  
American Red Cross, Albany, NY

April 2013

**Jennifer Richards**

8 Partridge Road – Clifton Park, NY 12065  
518-555-7586 - RichardsJ@nycap.rr.com

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**REFERENCES**

**NAME**

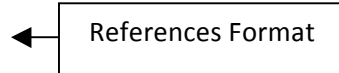
*Title*

Address

City, State Zip

Phone:

E-mail:



**JENNIFER CONNELLY**

*Manager*

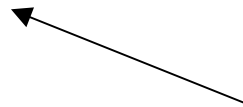
Old Navy

155 Crossgates Mall

Albany, NY 12218

Phone: 518-555-1234

E-mail: connellyj@nycap.rr.com



**ROBERT JONES**

*Associate Professor of Business*

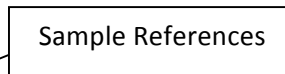
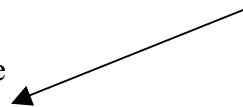
Hudson Valley Community College

80 Vandenberg Ave.

Troy, NY 12180

Phone: 518-629-5555

E-mail: jonesrobert@hvcc.edu



- The Header on your reference page should be the same as the one on top of your resume.
- Use the same font as your resume
- You should always have at least 3 professional references
- References may be supervisors, college professors, co-workers
- Try to avoid family members (especially immediately family) as references

## COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

### JUDITH SMITH

160 Smith Road - Troy, NY 12180  
(518) 555-9954- [smith@verizon.net](mailto:smith@verizon.net)

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Use a business letter format, the same font as your resume, and copy and paste the header from your resume at the top

July 25, 2012

Mr. Frank Jones  
Director of Human Resources  
Esteemed Marketing  
80 Wolf Road  
Albany, NY 12203

It is best to address the letter to the hiring manager by name if possible.

Dear Mr. Jones:

Please accept the enclosed resume as application for the position of Marketing Assistant. I believe that I have the sales experience, creativity, and enthusiasm for this position.

I am graduating from Hudson Valley Community College in December with a degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. My coursework has included marketing and advertising principles, business communications, and an elective course in web site design. I am currently in an internship for Excelsior Marketing where I assist with social media marketing (writing updates in Twitter and Facebook), assist in developing proposals for clients, update the website, and participate in meetings with clients. In addition, my part time job as a shift leader at McDonalds, has given me extensive experience in working as part of a team, being organized, and in helping customers have a good customer service experience. What I most enjoy about the field of marketing is the ability to be creative and help promote a company and its vision.

I would be happy to speak with you about the position further and may be reached at (518) 555-4356 or [smith@verizon.net](mailto:smith@verizon.net). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leave Space to Sign Your Name if Printing and Mailing

Judith P. Smith

Paragraph #1: Tells employer the job you want

Paragraph #2 (add a 3<sup>rd</sup> if needed): Tells the employer about your qualifications and reasons for applying for this job. Letters should be re-written for each job you apply.

Paragraph #3 (or 4): Thank the employer for their time, provide your contact information.

**Good spelling and grammar is VERY important.**

# **The Center for Careers and Employment**

The Center for Careers and Employment is committed to assisting students and graduates with career planning and employment search.

## **Services Provided**

### **Career Counseling**

Get help choosing a major or career path

### **Job and Internship Search**

One-on-one help with resume writing, interview skills, searching for jobs, and addressing unique circumstances such as employment gaps, disability, career change, etc.

### **Job Fairs, Campus Recruitment, and Events**

The Center hosts on campus job fairs and employer presentations – bringing job opportunities right to students.

### **Website Resources – [www.hvcc.edu/cce](http://www.hvcc.edu/cce)**

Online employment database and guides for writing resumes, cover letters, preparing for job interviews, and more.

**Siek Campus Center 270** (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

Phone: 518-629-7326 - Email: [cce@hvcc.edu](mailto:cce@hvcc.edu) - [www.hvcc.edu/cce](http://www.hvcc.edu/cce)