

## Topic: Resume and Cover Letters

### Objective:

When you complete these activities, your student should be able to:

- Write an effective resume that highlights his or her experience and skills.
- Translate the resume into an electronic format if needed.
- Write and tailor a cover letter for a given job.

### Resources Needed:

- Computer and Microsoft Word

### Resume:

- A good resume helps the job seeker progress to the next step in the hiring process – an interview.
- If it's been a while since you've created or updated your resume, refresh your knowledge with the following links:
  - [Resume Writing](#), source: Goodwill LearnFree.org (depending on the English skills of your student, you may wish to share this link with him or her)
  - [Ten Ways to Get your Resume Tossed](#), source: Career Builder
- Use the tip sheet that follows, plus samples, and work with your student to create/review each part of his or her resume.
- The resume can be printed out, and a hard copy mailed or brought to the job interview. Or it can be attached to an email and sent to contacts in the student's network.

### Creating an Internet Resume:

- If the student is applying via a website like monster.com or directly to a company's website, there may be the option to upload an electronic version of the resume. In this case, the resume will need to be formatted properly. You can read more about this here:
  - [Guide to Internet Resumes](#), source: job-hunt

### Cover Letters:

- Effective resumes need great cover letters. They allow job seekers to introduce themselves and why they are a good fit for the job. It also allows the hiring manager to decide whether they want to read further.
- Some people ask whether a cover letter is still needed given that many jobs require online applications. Yes – most jobs are obtained through networking, so a good cover letter should be used to introduce yourself to your contacts and why you are such a good fit for the job.
- Use the tip sheet and sample that follow and work with your student to create/review a cover letter.
- Depending on the situation, the cover letter and resume may be sent via email. Follow any employer instructions on whether those should be attached to the email or pasted into the body of the email. Make sure the position you are applying for is listed in the subject line of the email.
- For additional background about cover letters, check out these links:
  - [Cover Letters](#), source: Goodwill LearnFree.org (Depending on the English skills of your student, you may wish to share this link with him or her.)
  - [Top Ten Cover Letter Tips](#), source: fastweb

**Name**  
Street Address  
City, State and Zip Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address

**SUMMARY (Or OBJECTIVE if job seeker lacks experience or is making a career change)**

Include 2-3 sentences that highlight your skills and accomplishments that will bring value to an employer. Summarize who you are, what you have done, and what you can do. Focus on the needs of the employer. Use phrases and words in the job posting.

- Use action verbs to highlight your qualifications relevant to the job.
- List specific computer skills or language skills relevant to the job.
- Use Action-Benefit format: Action taken and Benefit to the company.
- Focus on how you can help increase profits, reduce expenses, or improve efficiency for the employer. Use numbers and data as they relate to dollars or customer counts. Use metrics to support your accomplishments.

**PROFESSIONAL / WORK EXPERIENCE (in reverse chronological order)**

**Job Title**, Company Name, City, State (or Country if not USA) Start Date - Present

- Briefly describe your role and job responsibilities.
- Highlight a few significant accomplishments. Use data to support your claims.
- Use Action-Benefit statements.

**Job Title**, Company Name, City, State (or Country if not USA) Start Date – End Date

- Continue listing your role and job responsibilities. Do not go back more than 10-15 years unless it relates to the job you are applying for.
- Pay attention to formatting. Use bullet points. Start with an action verb (for example: managed, increased, streamlined, etc.). End each bullet point with a period.
- Demonstrate professional growth and increased responsibilities in your career.

**EDUCATION**

School, City, State (or Country, if not USA) Graduation Date (if recent)

**Degree or Credential** – Academic Focus

- List your highest educational degree first and the remaining in reverse order. Do not abbreviate your degrees. List outstanding academic achievements, awards, recognitions, licenses, and other industry-specific credentials.
- List your graduation date if within last five years. Otherwise, leave it off.
- List your expected graduation date if your degree is not complete.
- List your high school education if you are not a college graduate. If you do not have a high school diploma or GED, record the years you attended high school without mentioning a diploma. Or do not include this section.
- List any adult education classes or training programs you have attended.

**ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND INFORMATION**

List your professional development training, honors/awards, professional affiliations, and/or volunteer experience.

Your resume should be 1-2 pages long on letter-size paper (white or off-white). Use a common font, such as Arial or Times New Roman. Use a font size between 10 and 12 pts. Use margins of .5-1 inch. All formatting should be uniform (headings, bullets, margins, font size/type/format, line spacing and dates). Don't crowd your information; ensure there is white space. The document should be visually appealing and easy to read.

**Proofread, proofread, proofread!** Have two other people proofread it for you. There should be absolutely no errors or typos.

**John Smith**  
111 Main Street  
Saint Charles, IL 60174  
(630) 555-1212  
Jsmith\_1529@example.com

## SUMMARY

Reliable and dedicated OSHA-certified forklift operator with over five years of experience. Focus on efficiency and accuracy. Operate under tight deadlines with minimal supervision. Recognized for efforts to create a safe working environment.

## PROFESSIONAL / WORK EXPERIENCE

**Forklift Operator**, XYZ Company, Chicago, IL 2013- Present

- Loaded and unloaded trucks and completed packaging quality checks on material.
- Reviewed packing slips for inbound loads and completed all necessary paperwork and system updates for inbound and outbound loads.
- Completed damage reports as required.
- Ensured proper safe loading and unloading procedures were followed.
- Maintained clean and safe work environment in warehouse and parking lot areas.
- Accurately completed daily log sheet and logged and distributed courier packages.
- Completed daily cycle counts and pallet inventory counts when required.

**Forklift Operator / Machine Operator**, ABC Company Name, Chicago, IL 2010 - 2013

- Transferred material to and from production areas using forklift.
- Monitored and adjusted various aspects of the production process to ensure customer requirements were met.
- Maintained expected production rates and performed product inspections.
- Investigated and resolved quality issues.
- Helped reorganize production area to create a cleaner and more efficient work area; reduced wasted effort and improved safety.
- Performed daily equipment safety inspections.

## EDUCATION

High School Diploma, Saint Charles East High School, Saint Charles, IL 2010  
OSHA Forklift Certificate Course, Elgin Community College, Elgin, IL 2010

## ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND INFORMATION

- Received individual and team recognition: ABC Employee of the Month and ABC Team Safety Award for 1,000 days without a safety incident.

**Miguel Rodriguez**  
999 Main Street  
Saint Charles, IL 60174  
(630) 555-1212  
maria\_r\_9999@example.com

## SUMMARY

Friendly, honest, hardworking professional with over 15 years of customer service and security experience. Able to quickly learn new procedures and work in a fast paced environment with customer interaction. Strong communication and team work skills.

- State certified Permanent Employee Registration Card (PERC).
- Fluent in multiple languages: Spanish, English, and French.

## PROFESSIONAL / WORK EXPERIENCE

**Guest Service Agent**, Marriott, Chicago, IL

July 2005 to Present

- Provide welcoming, helpful and exceptional service, in order to uphold the hotel's high standards of excellence and ensure quality guest service. Received the Exceptional Service Team award three times.
- Fulfill guest requests and making deliveries to the guest rooms in a timely manner.
- Serve as a translator for guests speaking Spanish and French.
- Offer information pertaining to available services and facilities of hotel. Explained features of room, such as operation of radio, television, telephone and nigh-lock.
- Coach less experienced guest service agents on providing excellent customer service.

**Security Officer**, Pro Security Company, Chicago, IL

May 1999 to June 2005

- Executed daily operations of protecting Metra property and passengers.
- Studied federal security regulations and restrictions relative to company operations.
- Supervised and managed Metra train station and assisted passengers with all inquiries and safety matters.
- Successfully managed large crowds of people during special events, like movie filmings at the station.

## EDUCATION

Pro Security Company

**Advanced Certification Training 2 & 3 – Certified Security Officer**

Chicago, IL

November 2000

Pinkerton's Center for Professional Development

**Advanced Certification Training 1 – Certified Security Officer**

Chicago, IL

November 1999

Oaxaca Preparatoria

**High School Diploma**

Oaxaca, Mexico

When should a job seeker use an **OBJECTIVE** instead of a SUMMARY?

- When making a career change
- When new to the job market or lacking experience
- When targeting a very specific job or position

### **What is a resume objective?**

A resume objective is a short statement that outlines the job seekers career objectives, while positioning himself as the ideal candidate who meets the employer's needs. The objective will be different for each position applied for.

### **Mistakes to avoid when writing an objective:**

- Using the same objective for each position applied for.
- Listing all of the things the job seeker wants.
- Being too vague.
- Too long – keep it to 2 -3 sentences.

### **When writing an objective:**

- Be specific to the company and position you are applying to.
- Highlight how the job seeker will be beneficial to the company.
- Keep it concise.

## Cover Letter Template and Tips

[Month] [Day], [Year]

[Your First and Last Name]

[Your Street Address]

[City], [ST] [Zip Code]

[Hiring Manager First and Last Name]

[Hiring Manager Business Address]

[City], [ST] [Zip Code]

[Dear] [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] [Hiring Manager Last Name],

[The first paragraph should introduce you and tell the hiring manager for which position you are submitting your resume. Explain how you found out about the position. If you have a personal or business connection to the company, you may want to mention it here. Also, if you have done any research about the company, try to work in a fact or two to demonstrate your knowledge.]

[The second paragraph should really “sell” you as the best candidate for the position. Use this paragraph to highlight your accomplishments or qualifications that show you are an expert in the industry or position. The focus of this paragraph should be what you can do for them. You may want to use a bulleted list or bold text to draw attention to your key points.]

[The third paragraph should tell the hiring manager when and where you can be reached. Include a phone number or email address, if you want. Make sure you ask them to contact you or tell them when you will contact them (if you are able to) in order to set up an interview. Don’t forget to thank the hiring manager for his or her time and consideration. You may also restate your desire to work for the company.]

[Close],

[Your Signature]

[Your Name (typed)]

[A way to contact you]

**Miguel Rodriguez**

999 Main Street

Saint Charles, IL 60174

(630) 555-1212

miguel\_r\_9999@example.com

February 1, 2015

Dear Mr. Smith,

Working as a guest service agent has shown me the impact I can have on a customer and the business overall. I would like the opportunity to do the same for Hyatt. I was excited to hear from your employee Jane Doe that you have an opening at your Chicago location for Guest Service Team Lead. I have long admired Hyatt's commitment to customer service, and would like the opportunity to be a part of that.

My co-workers call me the business traveler whisperer because I have a knack for communicating with weary and frustrated business travelers. In fact, I have been working in the hotel industry for over ten years and have won several awards for excellent customer service that keeps customers returning to our location. In that time, I have also taken on leadership responsibilities and coached more junior agents on providing excellent service.

It would be a pleasure to interview for a Guest Service Team Lead position with Hyatt. I can be reached at (630) 555-1212 to set up a time to meet. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature* (hard copy letter)

Miguel Rodriguez