

2010 TRAVERSE CITY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS CAMP



Interview Toolkit





What do we already know?

- 15 SECOND RULE
- TARGETED
- WORK OF ART
- NO TEMPLATE
- ACCOMPLISHMENTS+WORD CHOICE

YOUR SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
REFLECTED IN EMPLOYERS NEEDS

WHAT ABOUT THE WORDS.....

- CONTENT
- ACTION VERBS
- CONTACT INFO
- EMAIL
- POSSIBLE COMPONENTS:
 - OBJECTIVE
 - EDUCATION
 - PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE VERSUS WORK HISTORY
 - AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS
 - CIVIC ENGAGEMENT/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
 - PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
 - PUBLISHED WORK





What did you notice about the headers?

HEADERS ARE IMPORTANT!

- Word has a special spot for headers- gives you more room to keep it to one page
- Use the same header on all materials!
Consistent marketing- don't see Nike changing it up much. Resume, cover letter, references, thank you...



EDUCATION?

- You don't need to include your high school degree unless you have special circumstances
- Include any training, seminars, military training, on-the-job education, vocational school and college
- Recent comes first
- Include classes or interesting-helpful facts about attendance
- Give the date of completion, city and state
- Include certificate awarded or degree
- Target toward the position/organization



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN?

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Northwestern Michigan College Traverse City, MI 2009-Present

System and LAN Management

- Experience working with Cisco routers and Cisco, and Foundry, switches
- Installing and maintaining many different Microsoft Window Platforms
- LAN and WAN management
- Computer hardware, troubleshooting and repair
- Experience with computer and network security
- A+ certified
- Experience upgrading computers scheduled for replacement
- Imaging machines, and making sure they have the necessary software/hardware
- Excellent interpersonal skills (works well with others to meet deadlines)

WORK HISTORY

The Early Bird Restaurant Line Cook Leland, Michigan May 2002 to Present

RESUME QUICK CHECK

- **The format matters! Avoid overcrowding (use at least one-inch margins.) Your resume needs to be visually interesting and easily navigated.**
- **Make sure your font is readable (11-12 point and common fonts.)**
- **Use bold print or underlining in your headings.**
- **Be honest! Employers will verify information on resumes.**
- **Proofread and then do it again. Ask someone else to proofread your resume.**
- **Avoid big blocks of text, use bullets when possible.**
- **Avoid resume templates.**
- **Keep to one page unless more than 10 years experience.**
- **Don't include personal information (social security number, religion, age.)**



RESUME QUICK CHECK

- **Avoid logos, clip art, photos or fancy headers.**
- **No Staples.**
- **Use quality resume paper, avoid loud-colored paper. Your cover letter, references, and resume should all be on the same type of paper.**
- **Limit your resume to one page. If you have 10 years of work experience, a two page resume should be the limit.**
- **Watch out for spills, smudges or low quality printing.**
- **Don't include references (they go on a different document.)**
- **Be positive, brief and quantify results when possible.**
- **Use action verbs whenever possible! Verbs such as planned, developed and created tell precisely what you can do and what you have accomplished.**



How do I send my resume?

- You will need to find out which way the hiring team wants you to send your resume. There are three ways you can deliver your resume: 1) Mail; 2) Email Attachment; 3) in the text of an email.

Mail:

- Everything matters down to the envelope! So make sure that the entire package is professional. Make sure the writing on the envelope is neat and legible.
- Place the cover letter on top of the resume. All pieces of written communication should match (paper color and quality.)
- Don't send references unless specified in the job posting.

As an Email Attachment:

- You should create the resume in Word or another common word processing program. You should convert the word document into a pdf file unless the employer specifies otherwise.
- Send your resume to someone else to make sure that it is downloadable, and free of viruses.
- Make sure you save the resume under a specific name like "KristyMcDonaldresume.doc" so that it is easily identifiable to the employer.

In the text of an email:


- The cover letter should come before the resume.
- You can cut and paste your resume into the body of the email.
- Avoid italics, underlining, graphics or bolding. Use UPPERCASE for the heading and * for bullets.
- Align all text along the left side margin.
- Make sure to send it to a few people with different email programs to see how it works.
- *If the employer asks for a scannable resume this means they have software that will read your resume and collects important data about you. It is best to use keywords that state specific skills related to the job opening (Office Manager, Excel knowledge, Spanish), use words right from the job description (Leadership, Product Management).*



COVER LETTER

Cover Letter Guidelines

You should use your cover letter to show you have **researched the organization** in which you are applying, describe **why you fill the organization's need**, illuminate your significant skills and achievements that **match** the particular job.



“Your cover letter should show the employer why you fit their organization and their needs. Remember, the resume is all about you and your accomplishments but the cover letter needs to prove to the employer that you are the perfect fit for THEM!”



Do

- Make sure your letter is written to the specific employer in response to a specific open position.
- Use the job description to guide your letter. Pick three or four skills that the employer wants and then give those examples of your related accomplishments.
- Proofread and have someone else proofread.
- Sign your name in blue or black ink (or type it if you are sending electronically.)
- Use the header from your resume or make sure you include your contact information.
- Use the same paper as your resume/envelope.
- Address the letter to a specific person (call the company and ask for the name, spelling and correct title). If you can't find a name use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Selection Committee".
- Keep the letter to one page (three to four paragraphs.)
- Make sure you mention the reason why you want to work for their organization- and why you are qualified for the position.
- Use action verbs.
- Attractive and easy to read.
- Be honest and positive.
- Generate interest by starting with a creative opening.
- Keep your letter simple and straightforward but let your personality shine through.

Don't

- Send a letter that starts "To Whom it May Concern".
- Overuse the pronoun "I".
- Give a summary of your life story.
- Repeat the same information that is in your resume.
- Explain why you have a shady work history.
- Include any salary talk (even if it states to include salary requirements it still might not be a great idea.)
- Don't exaggerate.
- Say anything negative about past employers or employees.
- State you will take any job they have to offer.
- Forget to ask for an interview.
- Staple your cover letter to your resume.



REFERENCE SHEET

- Your reference sheet should be prepared before you go to your interview. It is common for employers to ask for them during the interview.
- Don't forget to tell your references that you are going for an interview and that they might be receiving a call. Send a thank you card.
- It is helpful if you give your references a copy of your up to date resume.
- Your reference sheet should have three to four professional references (not your friends and family). Try to incorporate references from school, work, and volunteer positions that reflect the desired position.

Example

Same header as your resume and cover letter

Name (include title, Dr. Ms.)

Company Title (Northwestern Michigan College)

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

Email

How you are connected to them (Advisor, Former employer)

BACK TO OUR TOOL KITS...

- **Five copies of your resume**
- **Five copies of your reference sheet**
- **Calendar**
- **Paper and pen**
- **Photocopies of any professional certifications related to your field**
- **Letters of recommendation**
- **Work samples (only if this applies to you (photos for a photographer-marketing materials for a marketer))**
- **Business card (free online at businesscardland.com or vistaprint.com) Create a professional card to leave with your interviewers. Your name, a brief tagline under your name (e.g., “Skilled communicator with office management experience”), your contact information, and on the back three to four bullets summarizing your skills or accomplishments**





WHAT ELSE GOES IN MY TOOL KIT?

- “I am the one for the job” worksheet
- Five questions everyone should know- most important professional story
- A summary of the employer (a paragraph that states the employer mission, services, culture and future plans)

You should be able to use this to tell the employer why you want to work for them- not just why you want a job! You can find this information on the website, networking, articles, the human resource office or even just a web search.

- A list of questions/reflections
- Professional folder packets/ thank you card



Thank you and good luck.

Let me know if I can help.

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