



# ***Starter Kit***

***Résumés and Cover Letters***



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**Career Services**

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## ***I*** ***Important considerations for ALL résumés***

- Your résumé should be absolutely ERROR FREE.** What an employer sees on paper often provides the first impression and is an indicator of the caliber of job you will do.
- Employers spend 15-20 seconds scanning each résumé. If you want yours to pass the skim test, make it clear, concise, well organized, easy to read and professional. It must have immediate impact.
- The purpose of a résumé is to obtain an interview. Keep in mind that it is a document of highlights, not a complete history. Think of a résumé as a marketing tool that sells your experience and qualifications to an employer.
- Put the information most relevant to the job at the beginning of your résumé. Prioritize categories as well as statements in each category.
- Omit personal information on a résumé — e.g., height, weight, marital status, health, gender, Social Security number, photograph.
- The résumés in this handout are intended as examples only. Don't copy sections or wording from sample résumés. Customize your résumé to feature your unique set of qualifications.
- You'll want to read ALL the sample résumés and accompanying comments for terrific ideas. There's great stuff here!
- Using spell check is not sufficient. Proofread, proofread, proofread!

# Résumé **1**: Without related work experience

If you are near graduation, include relevant coursework if:

- you have limited related work experience
- your coursework includes classes that are unusual for your major but related to your objective

Projects illustrate knowledge and skills related to your major or career goals.

Include entries which highlight skills employers find valuable, e.g., communication, interpersonal relations, presentation, organization, leadership, initiative, creativity, analytical thinking, problem-solving, second language skills.

Use action words to convey the skills you have to offer an employer.

See page 20 for a mini thesaurus of action words.

Try to use a different action word for each statement (e.g., "help" is used for the current job, "assisted" is an alternative for a previous job). Be consistent with verb tenses. Use present tense for current jobs; use past tense for previous positions.

Omit personal pronouns (such as I, we, they) and articles (a, the).

**MARK B. JONES**  
 7789 N. Main • Wichita, Kansas 67889  
 (316) 777-9090  
 mbjaero@yahoo.com

**OBJECTIVE**  
 A design engineering position within the aerospace industry

**EDUCATION**  
**Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering** May 20XX  
 Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas GPA 3.4/4.0

**RELEVANT COURSEWORK**

Introduction to Astronautics	Engineering Digital Computation	Statics
Aerodynamic Theory	Airfoils, Wings and Controls	Dynamics
Mechanics of Materials	Aerodynamics II, Fluids Aspects	CATIA I

**SENIOR PROJECT**  
**Airfoils Methods Systems Project**, Boeing Airplane Company Fall 20XX  
 Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

- Conducted research on closed-end airfoils
- Developed preliminary design for a hydrogen-driven airfoil
- Contacted vendors for performance characteristics and prices for airfoils
- Designed and constructed model closed-end airfoil
- Wrote report on findings and presented to company representatives

**WORK HISTORY**

**Sales Associate** 20XX-Present  
 Target West, Wichita, Kansas

- Help customers with purchases
- Handle customer questions and complaints, work to ensure complete customer satisfaction
- Run cash register
- Monitor security system


**Grounds Keeper** 20XX-20XX  
 Smithville Apartment Complex, Wichita, Kansas

- Assisted with general outdoor maintenance of apartment complex
- Worked as member of a team
- Scheduled maintenance repairs with tenants as needed


**COMPUTER SKILLS**  
 Mathcad, AutoCAD, Microsoft Office, WordPerfect

**HONORS & ACTIVITIES**

Dean's List, four semesters  
 Vice-President, Engineering Council 20XX-20XX  
 Volunteer, Literacy Program 20XX

 Take note • Take note

Using a word processing template can be restrictive — it will limit your options in content and spacing. If you like the way a template looks, use it only as an example as you create your own.

 Question • Question

**How many pages should my résumé be?**

General rule of thumb:

- Students or new graduates: one page
- Experienced candidates: no more than two pages

# Résumé **2**: With related work experience

## Sarah B. Thompson

1234 N. West Street • Wichita, KS 67234 • (316) 675-0099  
sthompson@wichita.edu

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	A communication position within a nonprofit organization
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Bachelor of Arts in Communication</b> , May 20XX Minors in Spanish and Psychology Wichita State University, Wichita, KS GPA 3.7/4.0
<b>RELEVANT COURSEWORK</b>	Magazine Production      Opinion Writing      Persuasion Communication Research      Editing for Print      Beat Reporting
<b>PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE</b>	Elderly Care of Wichita, Wichita, KS, Fall 20XX - Spring 20XX <b>Communication Specialist - Co-op Position</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped in development of all marketing pieces, including brochures and handouts</li> <li>• Wrote and edited employee newsletter</li> <li>• Researched planned giving project and developed materials for mass mailing</li> <li>• Published two articles in National "Elderly Care" Newsletter</li> </ul> Columbia Hospital, El Dorado, KS, Spring and Summer 20XX <b>Communication Assistant - Co-op Position</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped develop monthly in-house employee newsletter</li> <li>• Wrote articles and helped edit newsletter</li> <li>• Edited communication materials for staff of five</li> <li>• Assisted in writing new employee handbook and community resource book for Department of Social Work</li> </ul>
<b>ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE</b>	Greenleaf Apartments, Wichita, KS, 20XX-20XX <b>Assistant Manager</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervised and scheduled maintenance crew of ten</li> <li>• Assisted tenants with questions and concerns</li> <li>• Handled customer complaints in timely manner</li> </ul> <b>Maintenance Worker</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked as member of grounds crew in keeping property neat and orderly</li> </ul>
<b>COMPUTER SKILLS</b>	Microsoft Word, Access and PowerPoint; Adobe PageMaker, InDesign and Photoshop
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	Treasurer, Society of Women in Communication, 20XX-20XX Vice-President, Communication Club, 20XX-20XX <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served as chair of four-state regional student conference</li> <li>• Created monthly program series featuring local communications professionals</li> </ul>

### About the objective...

- An objective tells employers how to direct your résumé. For example, human resource professionals decide whether a résumé goes to engineering, finance or communications.
- Tailor your objective to the position. The résumé of a salesperson should emphasize different skills than the résumé of a financial analyst or social worker.
- The objective serves as a thesis statement for your résumé. Everything that follows should support your objective.
- Be specific about the kind of position you seek. Avoid general phrases like "challenging position with opportunity for growth and advancement."
- Focus on what you have to offer, not on what you want.

### Sample objectives

A social work position involving work with young children

A sales position which would utilize exceptional skills in building relationships and meeting customer needs

A staff nurse position in a family practice setting



### How can I make my qualifications stand out?

Think accomplishments.

How have you excelled at your job? How are you unique? What distinguishes the way you work from the way someone else might work in the same job?

Highlight related work experience by listing those positions first in a special category.

# Résumé **3** : Cooperative Education and internships

Use a professional email address (foxlady@msn.com or superdude@hotmail.com do not qualify). Use your Wichita State email or consider creating an email account specifically for use in your job search.

Relevant coursework tells an employer how far along you are in your studies. Some positions don't require previous experience; others require a specific level of knowledge.

Even a seemingly unrelated job can demonstrate skills that will be beneficial in a variety of work environments. Examples include organizational skills, problem-solving, analytical thinking, responsibility, detail orientation, customer relations, interpersonal skills, leadership and follow-through.

All information on a resume is fair game for interview questions. Include only items about which you can speak knowledgeably.



Note the use of spacing, indents, bold and italics. Each has a way of making your résumé easier to read, either by providing white space or by drawing attention to what is most important.

## Susan J. Brown

123 S. Main Street • Wichita, KS 67213  
(316) 976-0034 • sjbrown@wichita.edu

### Objective:

To obtain a cooperative education position within the field of Finance

### Education:

Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance May 20XX  
Wichita State University, Wichita, KS GPA 3.2/4.0

### Relevant Coursework:

Financial Management II	International Financial Modeling
Cases in Finance	Fixtures and Options Markets
Investments	Fixed Income Securities and Markets

### Work History:

#### *Student Assistant*

Cooperative Education Office, WSU, Wichita, KS August 20XX - Present

- Counsel 10 students weekly on enrollment and program policies
- Aid in development of marketing pieces, including brochures, handouts and materials for mass mailings
- Assist program coordinators with a variety of tasks, including computer data entry, coordinating students' paperwork and answering the telephone

#### *Cook*

Sonic Drive-In, Wichita, KS January 20XX - August 20XX

- Worked in a fast-paced environment preparing food
- Trained 5 new employees on food preparation techniques
- Opened and closed restaurant

#### *Lifeguard*

YMCA, Indianapolis, IN Summers 20XX-20XX

- Taught swim lessons to 8 children ages 4 to 12
- Tested the water hourly to maintain proper chemical balances
- Worked closely with other staff members to assure swimmer safety

### Computer Skills:

QuickBooks; Peachtree; Microsoft Excel, Access, PowerPoint

### Activities & Honors:

Member, Chi Phi Fraternity	Member, Golden Key International Honour Society
Student Ambassador, WSU	Recipient, Jane A. Smith Scholarship in Business
Dean's List, Spring, Summer 20XX	Volunteer, Habitat for Humanity, Spring 20XX
Pre-Calculus Tutor, Spring 20XX	Volunteer, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Fall 20XX



Listing activities and honors, such as volunteer for American Red Cross or member of National Honor Society, gives employers more information about you. Activities can demonstrate commitment to a career field or a willingness to give back to the community. If you held a leadership position, consider using bullet statements to accentuate your accomplishments.

# Résumé **4** : Clinical experience/rotations

**Jane E. Johnson**  
12099 N. Westlawn • Wichita, Kansas 67990 • (316) 722-8889 • jej@hotmail.com

**EDUCATION**  
*Master of Science: Physician Assistant, May 20XX*  
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas Overall GPA 3.5/4.0; GPA in major 3.8/4.0

*Bachelor of Science: Medical Technology, December 20XX*  
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

**PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENT CLINICAL EXPERIENCE, Fall 20XX/Spring 20XX**  
**St. Mary Medical Center, Wichita, Kansas**  
Drug and Alcohol Treatment Unit. Performed history and physicals, counseling and education for adolescents and adults

**Smithville Clinic, Smithville, Kansas**  
OB/GYN. Performed history and physicals, fetal monitoring, deliveries, suturing, C-section assists, routine GYN procedures and ER work

**Hays Hospital, Hays, Kansas**  
Surgery. First assist, history and physicals, admits, progress notes, discharge summaries, patient management

**Wichita VA Medical Center, Wichita, Kansas**  
Internal Medicine. Patient management, admission orders, history and physicals, progress notes

**Clay Center Hospital, Clay Center, Kansas**  
Family Practice/Primary Care/ER. Performed history and physicals, suturing, admits, minor emergencies and routine GYN

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**  
TGF Laboratory, Lawton, Oklahoma, 20XX-20XX  
Supervisor/Medical Technologist

Norton Medical Center, Lawton, Oklahoma, 20XX-20XX  
Medical Technologist

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**  
American Society of Clinical Pathologists  
American Academy of Physician Assistants

**CERTIFICATIONS / SCHOLARSHIPS / AWARDS**  
NCCPA Board examination to be taken October 20XX  
Regents Scholarship  
Health Care Scholarship (awarded to one health professions student each year)  
Vice President: PA Class of 20XX

List your education in reverse chronological order with the most recent degree first.

Listing clinical rotations as shown will demonstrate your experience base. To make it even stronger:

- Emphasize areas in which you have special interest.
- Highlight elements that distinguish you from others doing similar rotations. Did you excel in particular aspects of your work? Examples include establishing rapport with patients, meticulous attention to detail in suturing, or responding well in crisis situations.

Use at least 1" margins all around. Utilize white space (e.g., indents, spaces between sections) throughout to make your résumé easier to read.



### What about my GPA?

If your GPA is 3.0 or higher, it should be included. There are a variety of ways it can be listed:

**GPA 3.1/4.0**  
The 4.0 indicates that your GPA is based on a 4.0 grading scale; some schools use a 5.0 scale.

**Overall GPA 3.0/4.0; GPA in major 3.6/4.0**  
This shows not only that you have done well overall academically, but that you are particularly strong in your major coursework.

**Overall GPA 2.9/4.0; GPA for final 60 credit hours 3.5/4.0**  
Sometimes students have difficulty – or a lot of fun – their first year or two of college and then excel academically in their final years.

# Résumé **5** : Many years of experience

A summary statement can provide a quick synthesis of qualifications. This can be particularly helpful for people with an extensive work history.

This format is one way to show progressive movement within the same organization.

Education moves down the page as you gain professional experience.

**GRANT J. ADAMS**  
3546 South Street • Wichita, Kansas 67231  
(316) 756-9090  
gjadams@msn.com

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**SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

15 years progressive experience in Human Resource Development  
Presented in excess of 1000 hours of training programs  
Experienced program developer

**EXPERIENCE**

Wallace and Company, Wichita, Kansas, 20XX-Present

**Management Development Administrator**

- Create and administer management training courses for Fortune 500 company
- Develop programs in Total Quality Management, Performance Review Methods, How to Handle Upset Customers, Team Building and various management courses
- Train and supervise 16 staff trainers
- Administer a training budget in excess of \$750,000
- Work directly with individual department managers to develop training programs for employees

**Customer Service Trainer**

- Presented customer service skills training program to over 5000 employees
- Helped in the development of training materials, including manuals, handouts, PowerPoint and web-based presentations
- Worked individually with employees experiencing on-the-job difficulties

**Training Advisor**

- Worked individually with employees to develop training programs
- Scheduled classes and helped prepare roster
- Administered tests to measure mastery of course material
- Recorded all training courses in employee files

**COMPUTER SKILLS**

WordPerfect, Word, Photoshop, PowerPoint, Dreamweaver

**EDUCATION**

**MBA / Human Resource Development**  
Wichita State University, May 20XX

**BA / Psychology**  
Wichita State University, 20XX

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

American Society for Training and Development

**The final version**

- Printing your résumé on white paper is the safest option. The employer may choose to fax or photocopy it, and dark paper or paper with flecks does not reproduce as a clean copy.
- Use a laser printer. Be aware that inkjet printer ink will smear if it becomes wet (think recruiter coffee spills here).



**Great idea • Great idea**

Quantify to show scope of your responsibilities, e.g., number of staff supervised, dollar savings, budgetary responsibility.



**Question • Question**

**How many years should I go back on my résumé?**

The general rule of thumb is no more than ten years. High school information is not included.



# Résumé **6** : Returning to work

*Tammy Smith*

230 N. Spruce • Wichita, KS 67890 • (316) 734-5678  
tasmith@wichita.edu

### OBJECTIVE

An administrative assistant position for an organization that would benefit from excellent communication, organizational and budgeting skills.

### COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Researched, compiled and edited news stories for small in-house publication
- Taught time management and budgeting skills to adults
- Recruited volunteers for numerous nonprofit organizations by speaking at local associations and clubs
- Helped write all marketing pieces and worked with local printers to develop brochures for nonprofit organizations
- Interviewed potential volunteers for positions within nonprofit organizations

### ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

- Helped coordinate grand opening events for a nonprofit educational program
- Arranged for vendors and concession personnel for large family fun night
- Worked as co-chairperson for a large fund-raising campaign, which produced \$100,000 capital for a nonprofit organization
- Recruited, trained and scheduled 45 volunteers for fund-raising campaign
- Organized all follow-up correspondence to donors

### BUDGETING SKILLS

- Managed a budget of \$10,000 for a large capital campaign
- Helped with purchase orders and payment schedules for vendors and concession personnel
- Acted as budget secretary for local church's board of directors
- Worked in a thrift shop as a volunteer bookkeeper
- Helped with budget and paperwork for church craft fair

### COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Excel and Word; PageMaker; Quicken

### EXPERIENCE

Junior League of Wichita	Member	20XX-Present
American Cancer Society	Volunteer Budget Officer	20XX-Present
Children's Theater	Volunteer	20XX-20XX
Grace United Methodist Church	Volunteer	20XX-20XX

### EDUCATION

BBA in Business Administration  
Wichita State University, Wichita, KS

A functional résumé focuses on skills rather than on a chronological sequence of jobs.

Headings should correspond to skills sought by the employer. Look for required and preferred skills in the position listing.

Even though a functional résumé focuses on skills, also include a brief work or experience history.



## When should I use a functional résumé?

- **When returning to the work force after an extended time away**  
Volunteer experience demonstrates numerous skills transferable to traditional employment.
- **When changing careers**  
Focus on newly-developed skills which will be beneficial in your new career, and de-emphasize previous experience which is no longer directly applicable.
- **Use with caution**  
Although a functional résumé can be beneficial for some people, it may be looked upon somewhat less favorably by employers. If you have questions about what might be best for you, talk with one of the Career Services professional staff.

# Résumé **7** : Changing career fields

Email is an excellent tool in a job search. Check your email daily and respond to messages from employers within 24 hours.

Note how experience gained through class projects can help support your new career objective.

## Douglas Schmidt

123 N. Main • Wichita, KS 67859 • (316) 756-9090  
schmidt212@yahoo.com

### Objective

A position in private accounting

### Education

Wichita State University, Wichita, KS

**Bachelor of Business Administration/Accounting** GPA 3.8/4.0 May 20XX

**Bachelor of Science/Mechanical Engineering** May 20XX

### Relevant Course Work

Financial Accounting Taxation	Managerial Accounting Principles of Auditing	Intro to Federal Income Tax Taxation of Business Entities
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### Class Projects

#### **Financial analysis of not-for-profit and profit organizations**

Wichita State University, Wichita, KS Spring 20XX - Fall 20XX

#### **Auditing**

- Performed audits and helped develop financial statements
- Helped conduct audits of nonprofit organizations
- Wrote audit reports for companies
- Followed auditing standards and procedures
- Evaluated accounting systems and internal controls

#### **Cost accounting**

- Assisted in the development of a major cost-control system that helped cut overhead by 10%
- Made recommendations for cost reductions
- Worked on a program to help establish complete integrated accounting package for small nonprofit organization

#### **Financial accounting**

- Communicated financial information about business enterprises
- Helped with mock bookkeeping activities
- Assisted with the measurement of income and financial positions and wrote reports to evaluate companies' financial progress
- Wrote reports and presented findings to the class

### Computer Skills

Peachtree, Excel, QuickBooks, Quicken, Access, Word

### Work History

Stress Engineer Boeing Aircraft Company, Wichita, KS 20XX-20XX



Formating a résumé is not an exact science. Tailor your résumé to highlight your unique background and qualifications.

# Résumé **8** : Scannable

LEE WILLIAMS  
9876 West 10th  
Wichita, KS 67212  
(316) 777-7777  
lee.williams@msn.com

**OBJECTIVE**  
Management information systems position utilizing computer and communication skills

**EDUCATION**  
BBA, Management Information Systems  
Wichita State University, Wichita, KS - August 20XX  
GPA 3.1/4.0

**INTERNSHIP**  
Summer Intern  
TransData Corporation, Sandusky, OH - Summer 20XX  
Worked as member of cross-functional team to analyze current employee tracking database  
Created expanded report which synthesized information from finance and purchasing areas  
Presented findings to division chairs

**COMPUTER SKILLS**  
Operating systems: UNIX; Windows ME, 2000, XP; Windows NT; Linux  
Programming languages: Visual C/C++, Visual Basic, Visual JAVA++  
Applications: WordPerfect, Word, Access, Excel, QuarkXpress, Illustrator

**WORK EXPERIENCE**  
Floor Manager/Server  
Macaroni Grill, Wichita, KS - December 200X to present  
Assist in the development and implementation of new staff training program  
Instruct trainees on proper serving techniques  
Supervise entire serving staff of 18  
Effectively handle various customer complaints

**ACTIVITIES**  
Student Ambassador Society, Vice President  
Caldwell Elementary, volunteer reader  
Omicron Delta Kappa  
Organized team for Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl-a-Thon  
Edited organization newsletter

Put each element of your heading on its own line.

Align all text on the left.

Remove all formatting — tabs, bold, italics, underlining, bullets, lines, graphics and shading.

When sending a scannable résumé:

- Use white paper, black type and a laser printer.
- Do not staple pages of a résumé together.
- Do not fold your résumé. Creases can cause errors in optical scanning.
- Send originals; photocopies or faxed copies cause degraded text when scanned.



Take two kinds of résumés to career fairs and interviews: traditional and scannable.



**A scannable résumé is not the same as an electronic résumé.** For guidelines regarding creating and sending résumés electronically, see pages 16-18.

**Formatting:**

- Create a consistent look by using the header from your résumé.
- Use the same font on your résumé and reference page.

Always ask the people you'd like to list whether they are willing to serve as references for you.

Select references who can speak positively about your ability to do the job for which you are applying. Those who have seen you working in a similar environment are ideal. When possible, use current or recent references.

Ask your references how they would like to be contacted by employers (e.g., email, daytime phone number).

If you left a position under less-than-desirable circumstances and have questions about using references from the organization, talk with a Career Services professional staff member.



**How many references should I include?**

Three to five professional references are typical. Follow any instructions given in the position listing.



Send a list of references with your résumé only if requested to do so by the employer. Otherwise bring it to the interview.



Give a copy of the position listing and your résumé to your references so they can speak knowledgeably about your qualifications.

**Susan J. Brown**

123 S. Main Street • Wichita, KS 67213  
(316) 976-0034 • sjbrown@wichita.edu

**Mary Jones**

Principal  
Northwest High School  
123 North Main  
Wichita, KS 67212  
(316) 876-2424  
mary.jones@internet.com

**Roger Smith**

Superintendent of Schools  
USD #259  
123 North Francis  
Wichita, KS 67212  
(316) 689-8732

**Virginia Wolfe**

Cooperating Teacher  
Adams Elementary  
897 Oliver  
Wichita, KS 67208  
(316) 833-2640  
vwolfe@techline.com

**Susan Pratt**

Field Experience Coordinator  
Lincoln Elementary School  
602 Lincoln  
Wichita, KS 67209  
(316) 686-1234



# Sample cover letter

**JOHN A. ENGEL**

13579 E. Washington • Wichita, KS 67222 • 316.111.5555 • jengle@wichita.edu

February 27, 20XX

Jordan Sekelsky  
Supervisor, Secondary Research Group  
Lyra Research, Inc.  
320 Nevada St.  
Newtonville, MA 02460

Dear Ms. Sekelsky:

Please accept this letter and resume for the position of Research Assistant as posted on Monster.com. The position description matches my experience, strengths, education and interests extremely well.

My current position as a student research assistant for Dr. Samuel, chair of the economics department at Wichita State, involves gathering extensive baseline information about outsourcing trends in the information technology sector. I utilize a variety of information sources, including the internet, email surveys, professional publications and telephone interviews. Through journalism classes I learned how to ask appropriate and productive interview questions, analyze and distill information for the most pertinent elements, and summarize what I learned in a clear and concise manner. I would be happy to provide writing samples for you. In addition, I have experience in each of the software programs listed in your advertisement.

I am excited about Lyra Research and the position you have available and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in an interview. I will follow up with you by telephone during the week of March 8. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*John A. Engel*

John A. Engel

Enclosure

Using your résumé header will provide a consistent look among your documents. If you prefer, however, you may type your return address above the date instead. See the letter on page 13 as an example.

Address your cover letter to an individual, never "To whom it may concern." Call the employer to verify spelling, title, gender and appropriate salutation.

In your opening paragraph, state the reason for your letter, including the position and how you learned about it. If you found out about the position by referral, mention the person's name (with their permission, of course).

The second paragraph is your opportunity to "connect the dots" for the employer. Tell how your education, experience and interests combine to meet the requirements of the position. Focus on what you have to offer the employer.

In the closing paragraph, express your desire for an interview. If you indicate that you will follow up, be sure to do so.



Begin your second paragraph with something other than "I will be graduating in May from Wichita State University with a degree in..." Most graduating students use this wording and you want to distinguish yourself with a different approach. Research the organization, the department and the position. Incorporate the information into your second paragraph and you will exhibit good research and communication skills.



Your cover letter must be completely error free. Use spell check. Ask someone with good proofreading skills to take a look at it. Career Services professional staff members would be happy to do so.

A thank-you letter should be sent as soon as possible, no later than the day following your interview.

Refer to the position for which you interviewed and to the name of the organization.

Mention any aspect of the organization which you found particularly interesting or appealing.

Re-emphasize how your qualifications would benefit the organization, with particular focus on key issues, problems or needs mentioned in the interview.

Express sincere appreciation for the interviewer's time, efforts and interest in you.

**Sending a thank you: is a typed letter, handwritten note or email best?**  
See page 14 for email guidelines.

**Great idea • Great idea**

Ask for the business card of your interviewer so that you have the correct spelling, title, and mailing address.

13579 E. Washington  
Wichita, KS 67222

April 13, 20XX

Jordan Sekelsky  
Supervisor, Secondary Research Group  
Lyra Research, Inc.  
320 Nevada St.  
Newtonville, MA 02460

Dear Ms. Sekelsky:

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you and your staff on April 12 regarding the Research Assistant position. The interview and facility tour provided an excellent overview of a career at Lyra Research. I continue to be excited about the possibility of working as a member of your team.

I was particularly impressed with your state-of-the-art computer systems and how they enhance the information available to customers. As Mr. Peters noted, my software experience would provide a solid foundation for learning and utilizing those systems. In addition, my research, writing and analytical skills are a strong match for the requirements we discussed.

Thank you again for your hospitality during my visit and for all your efforts to arrange meetings with team members. You may contact me by telephone or email as listed above should you have additional questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
*John A. Engel*  
John A. Engel



**Why is a thank-you letter important?**

- It is an important courtesy which demonstrates good manners.
- It ensures that you stay fresh in the interviewer's mind after the interview.
- It allows you to reiterate your qualifications and express continued interest in the position.
- It gives you an opportunity to mention information that wasn't covered in the interview.
- It shows your attention to detail, follow-through and correspondence skills.
- It will positively distinguish you from the majority of candidates who do not take the time to send one!

# Email guidelines

## **When should I use email in my job search?**

Email is a common means of communication in the hiring process, but there is considerable variance of use among employers. Email is an acceptable approach to use:

- If an employer specifically invites or instructs you to do so either through website instructions or in conversation
- If the employer initiates contact via email

## **There is a difference: employers versus friends**

Email communication is an informal, convenient and easy way to keep in touch with family and friends. When communicating with prospective employers, however, the tone should always be professional and courteous. Treat it as you would a business letter in both style and brevity.

## **Every communication is important**

Each correspondence creates an impression. Even if you're simply following up with a telephone number or scheduling a time for a phone interview, your email should convey a polished, professional image.

## **Before you send attachments**

Verify that an employer can accept attachments; many cannot because of the potential spread of computer viruses. If it is not clear from the position listing whether attachments are acceptable, call the employer to confirm. If they are allowed:

- Ask the employer if there is a preferred format (e.g., Microsoft Word, rich text, plain text, .pdf).
- Name your document "YourName-resume." Listing your name first instead of "resume" will allow the employer to file and search easily.
- Scan your documents for viruses before sending.

## **Common mistakes**

- Errors such as misspelling, phonetic spelling (ur instead of you are), poor grammar, no capitalization
- Unusual fonts, wallpaper or colored backgrounds
- Emoticons or email slang (e.g., :- ) or LOL)
- Language that is too informal
- All capital letters for emphasis (resume headings are an exception)

## **Additional guidelines**

- Choose an email address that sounds professional from an employer's perspective. Your wichita.edu email address would work well.
- If you are responding to an email, include the original message in the reply so the receiver can put your email in context.
- Follow the directions in the job posting — you would be amazed at the number of people who don't. For example, if the posting specifies that a job number be provided in the subject line of your email, you appear unobservant or clueless if you omit it. You may be eliminated from consideration regardless of your qualifications.
- Retain a copy of every email you send.
- Don't use your work email address or equipment for conducting a job search.

## **Sending a thank you: typed letter, handwritten note or email?**

Employers tell us that sending a thank-you note is crucial; the format is up to you. Here are tips to help:

- Use organizational culture as a guide.
- Because of the formal and traditional nature, hard copy letters are the safest option, especially for conservative organizations. Use a business-style letter similar to a cover letter in format. As with all written communication, it should be concise, professional and error-free.
- Handwritten notes offer a personal touch. Use conservative stationery or note cards. Write your message in ink, not pencil, and start over if you make a mistake. Print if your handwriting is difficult to read. If your printing is also difficult to read, use a different method!
- Email is appropriate if that has been your means of communication with the person you want to thank, or if the interviewer has expressed a preference for email. Format your email letter with the same formalities as a traditional thank-you letter. If a hiring decision is to be made soon after your interview, consider following up an email thank-you with a typed letter.
- Do not use e-cards from greeting card websites for your thank you.

If you interview with several people, send a thank-you to each one. Individualize each letter in case recipients compare notes. Or you may send a note to the person who coordinated your visit and ask him or her to convey your appreciation to other members involved in the interview process.



# Sample email cover letter and résumé

Complete the "To:" field last. That will save the embarrassment of accidentally clicking "Send" before your information is complete, error-free and professional.

Send a copy to yourself by typing your own email address in the "bcc" field or by making sure a copy goes to your "Sent Mail" folder.

Choose an appropriate and meaningful subject line. Remember that employers often receive hundreds of emails a week, so "Resume" is not sufficient. The job posting may specify a preferred subject line.

For guidelines of when and how to use email in your job search, see page 14.  
For guidelines on the content of cover letters, see page 12.  
For specific instructions on formatting materials to be submitted electronically, see pages 16-18.

If a résumé attachment is acceptable, use a full signature block for your closing. Include your name, mailing address, phone number and return email address.

To: michael.yost@brightside.org

cc:

bcc: cpreston@wichita.edu

Subject: Promotions Assistant internship - Position BSI-PM1-0604 - Preston resume

Dear Mr. Yost:

Please consider this letter and resume as my application materials for the intern position of Promotions Assistant which was listed in the Office of Cooperative Education and Work-Based Learning at Wichita State University.

I have a long-standing interest in causes related to children. I initiated an after-school tutoring program and worked several summers at a camp for children battling cancer. In addition to my love of children, I am known for my upbeat, creative communication style, both in writing and in person. I also bring outstanding organizational skills, a teamwork focus and a strong work ethic to all I do.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in an interview and would gladly travel to Kansas City to do so. I would also be happy to provide project samples from my portfolio. I can be reached by phone at 316.555.1515 or by email at cpreston@wichita.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Preston

(A fully-formatted copy of this resume is available upon request.)

- - - - -

CAITLIN PRESTON  
1357 Pike Drive  
Wichita, KS 67222  
(316) 555-1515  
cpreston@wichita.edu

OBJECTIVE  
To obtain a summer internship which will utilize my creativity, communication and organizational skills

EDUCATION  
B.A. in Communications and B.A. in Psychology double major - May 20XX  
Wichita State University, Wichita, KS  
GPA 3.2/4.0

RELATED COURSE WORK  
Writing for the Mass Audience  
Speaking in Business and the Professions  
Marketing for Service and Nonprofit Organizations  
Developmental Psychology

COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT  
Conducted research to assess marketing needs of local nonprofit organization  
Served as chair of team that designed and created informational brochure  
Presented research results and brochure design to Board of Directors; brochure was adopted for use the following year

(résumé sample truncated)

# Résumés and cover letters for electronic submission

As technology expands and changes, so do the rules for an effective job search. It is increasingly important to develop at least two résumés: one for computerized storage and retrieval (i.e., an electronic version), and one designed to please the human eye. Samples of both are included. Terms and guidelines for creating documents to submit electronically are addressed below.

## Terminology

**ASCII plain text or text only résumé** = a résumé saved in a format that can be read by all web browsers and email programs. It can be identified by the .txt file extension.

**Keyword résumé** = a résumé centered around nouns or noun phrases designed to produce hits, i.e., when your skills match the keywords or phrases designated by an employer.

**Scannable résumé** = a paper résumé scanned by optical scanning equipment which transforms the information into electronic data for entry into an automated résumé tracking system.

## Creating a résumé using keywords

Electronic systems scan résumés for keywords and phrases, ranking them according to the employer's predetermined priority list. If your résumé does not include keywords, it may never make it to a recruiter's desk regardless of how qualified you are. Also, the more "hits" (matches), the better. For example, twenty-five hits may result in an interview; twenty may not.

### What exactly are keywords?

Keywords are **nouns or noun phrases** related to your technical and professional areas of expertise. They can be industry-related jargon, projects or other aspects of your work experience. As a refresher, nouns are words that represent a person, place or thing. "Assistant" and "manager" are nouns. "Administrative assistant" and "marketing manager" are noun phrases.

### What keywords should I use?

Use only keywords that reflect your experience. The number of hits won't matter if you don't have the qualifications to discuss in an interview.

### Sources of keywords

- Gather keywords from the responsibilities and requirements section of the position listing and add them to your résumé.
- Refer to O\*NET (<http://online.onetcenter.org/find/>). Search by job title or job family for relevant keywords.
- Search job posting websites (e.g., [www.monster.trak.com](http://www.monster.trak.com), [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)) for additional keywords in position listings similar to those you are seeking.



### How do I list keywords in my résumé?

Include them in sections of your résumé which focus on your qualifications, e.g., work experience, summary of qualifications, skills.

## Sample keywords

### Applicable to many fields

ability to (implement, plan, analyze, communicate, solve problems, etc.), analytical skills, problem-solving skills, assertiveness, accuracy, customer relations, flexibility, creativity, communication, public speaking, presentation skills, detail orientation, relocation, results, innovation, leadership, management, support, initiative, oral communication, organizational skills, self-motivation, analysis, priorities, team leader, team player, willing to travel, Spanish, French, German, Chinese

### Specific to particular career fields

**Accounting:** CPA, C.P.A., Certified Public Accountant (include all three so your résumé will be selected regardless of how the recruiter lists this qualification), accounts payable, accounts receivable, financial statement, financial reporting, financial analysis, Excel

**Computer:** C++, UNIX, Java, Oracle, database, system analysis, analyst, prototype, design, code development, methodology, real time, experiment design, problem solving skills, software design, testing, database administration, network modeling, programmer analyst, debugging, local area networks

**Engineering:** ASME, American Society for Mechanical Engineers, problem solving, team member, team leader, quality, processes, analysis, creativity, improvement, efficiency, effectiveness, design, evaluation, research, investigation, investigator, test, computers, simulation, structures, collaboration, collaborator, monitor

**Management:** budget, recruiting, hiring, training, organizational development, objectives, goals, risk management, expansion, mergers, acquisitions, planning, strategic, policy, business plan, profit and loss, team player, financial skills, analytical skills, analysis, assets, trend analysis

### Creating and transmitting documents electronically

Submitting your résumé and cover letter correctly is important because it makes less work for the employer. Anything you can do to make his or her life easier is a good thing. It also ensures that your materials won't be discarded because you don't know how to play the game.

Use an electronic résumé to:

- Submit your résumé via email.
- Apply for jobs via company web pages.

### Step by step: creating a plain text or text only document

1. Create your résumé or cover letter in a word processing program.
2. Align everything at the left margin (not centered, justified or flush right).
3. Put each element of your heading (name, address, city/state/zip, phone number and email address) on individual lines.
4. Omit all formatting (e.g., no bold, italics, underlines, bullets, lines, graphics, shading or tabs).
5. Save each document as a .txt file
  - Go to File → Save.
  - Select a file name (e.g., YourName-ResumeTextOnly).
  - Under the box in which you typed the file name is another box (Save as type) with a pull-down menu option. Click on the arrow and scroll down; select Plain Text (may be called Text Only in some versions of Word).
  - Click on Save.
  - In File Conversion box, select Other Encoding → US-ASCII. There will be a warning box indicating that text marked in red will not save correctly; that text (if any) will be shown in the Preview window.
  - Click on OK.
  - Continue with Save? Click Yes.
6. Close the document but do not close Microsoft Word.
7. Open Microsoft Notepad.
  - Start menu → All programs → Accessories → Notepad
8. When the Untitled Notepad window opens, click on File and select Open.
9. Open the text document you just created.
10. Look for unintended characters or symbols (for example, long dashes, apostrophes and quotation marks in Word translate in ASCII to question marks). Read your entire document carefully; make changes and be sure to save.
  - If the words extend beyond the viewing screen, go to → Format Word Wrap for easier proofreading.
11. Limit the line length. This will assure that your résumé will appear correctly regardless of the email program the recipient uses.
  - Return to Microsoft Word. Go to File → Open.
  - Open the text document.
  - Go to Edit → Select All.
  - Select Courier or Courier New as your font and select a font size of 12.
  - File → Page Setup. Make your left margin 1" and your right margin 1.75" (if you use Yahoo email, set your right margin at 2.5").
  - File → Save As
  - Under the file name, Save as type → Plain Text (or Text Only).
  - Click on Save.
  - This time, in the File Conversion box, select Windows and click on the box that says Insert Line Breaks
  - Close the document.



In a keyword résumé, include EVERY related license or certification you have earned, ALL software, hardware, etc. that you are familiar with, and EVERY relevant professional group or association to which you belong. You may use abbreviations (e.g., MBA and M.B.A.) but spell them out as well (Master of Business Administration).



A common mistake among job seekers is to send résumés and cover letters as attachments. Many organizations do not allow incoming attachments because of the danger of computer viruses. If in doubt, check with the employer. The appropriate alternative is to create an electronic résumé and cover letter, save them as plain text, and paste them into the body of an email. See sample on page 15.

## **Résumés and cover letters for electronic submission**

### **How to email plain text cover letters and résumés**

1. Open Microsoft Notepad.
  - Start menu → All programs → Accessories → Notepad
2. Open your plain text cover letter.
  - When the Untitled Notepad window opens, click on File and select Open.
3. Highlight the cover letter from top to bottom. Right-click on the highlighted text. Choose Copy.
4. Open a new email message.
5. Position your cursor inside the email message area.
6. Right-click. Choose Paste.
7. Check spacing and make any needed corrections.
8. Space down several lines.
9. Repeat Steps 1-6 for your plain text résumé.
10. Perform a test run by sending a copy to yourself and to a friend who uses a different email program.



#### **Use a plain text résumé to apply via company web pages**

Many organizations allow you to create an online résumé or profile. For convenience, you may cut and paste appropriate sections from your plain text résumé.

### **Additional tips**

- For scannable and print résumés, use white paper, black type and a laser printer. Inkjet printer ink will run if it gets wet (think recruiter coffee spills...).
- Do not staple pages of a résumé together.
- Do not fold your résumé. Creases can cause errors in optical scanning.
- Choose a file name that includes your name and the word résumé (e.g., MarySmith-resume.txt).
- Do not be concerned about sending your résumé in Courier if that is not your preferred font. Regardless of what you send, the employer's email software will convert it to the font set on his or her email system.
- Rules of business correspondence apply to materials submitted electronically. Be sure the content is professional, rules of grammar and punctuation are followed, and the résumé is error free.



A great résumé starts with a foundation of strong content. First create a résumé that highlights your unique combination of education and experience, then make sure it is in a format that will transmit appropriately.

## Applicant tracking systems

### What is an applicant tracking system?

An applicant tracking system (ATS) is a software application designed to help organizations recruit more efficiently, which includes managing the immense number of résumés they receive. According to searchCIO.com, it is estimated that roughly 50 percent of all mid-sized companies and almost all large corporations use some type of applicant tracking system.

### How do I know whether an organization uses an ATS?

There may be information on the company's website about how to submit materials. When in doubt, contact the company to ask.

### Do I apply differently if a company uses an applicant tracking system?

Yes.

If an employer uses an ATS, materials need to be formatted specifically for electronic submission (see pages 16-18).

If you are submitting an electronic résumé to an employment database (e.g., Monster, CareerBuilder, HotJobs), don't include a cover letter.

If you are responding to a job posting, include a cover letter, but make it briefer than a conventional one (like the sample found on 12). For example:

To:   
cc:   
bcc:   
Subject:

Dear Mr. Bell:

I saw the position of financial analyst with Aurora Manufacturing advertised on careerbuilder.com (ref #135791). My two summer internships have provided an excellent foundation for an entry-level position such as this. Attached please find my resume.

I look forward to the possibility of talking with you in an interview.

Sincerely,

Brenda Peters

(résumé immediately below)



### How do I know if my materials have been received?

It depends on the employer. Some organizations send an automatic reply when materials are received. Others give no indication of materials received. Applicants can send a follow-up email message to the HR contact listed on the website if they do not receive a verification that their résumé has been received. Phone calls are not recommended.



### In a bigger perspective

Because of the volume of résumés some organizations receive, the chance of finding a job through online job boards may be remote unless you have specific or extensive qualifications. Know the rules for applying electronically. Put your job search eggs in multiple baskets, not just the electronic one. You may want to talk with a Career Services professional staff member about additional job search techniques.



Some company websites offer guidelines for application submission. Some specify preferred formatting (e.g., font style, font size). Read all instructions on the site before submitting application materials.



## **Résumé action words**

Use the following words to describe your skills. Place them at the beginning of the bullet statements outlining your experience. Avoid the phrase "responsibilities included."

achieved	demonstrated	installed	raised
acted	designed	instituted	recommended
adapted	detailed	instructed	reconciled
addressed	determined	integrated	recorded
adjusted	developed	interpreted	recruited
administered	devised	interviewed	reduced
advertised	directed	invented	referred
advised	dispensed	inventoried	rehabilitated
analyzed	displayed	investigated	related
anticipated	distributed	judged	rendered
applied	diverted	lead	repaired
arranged	eliminated	learned	replaced
ascertained	enforced	listened	reported
assembled	established	located	represented
assessed	estimated	logged	researched
assigned	evaluated	maintained	resolved
assisted	examined	managed	responded
attained	exchanged	manipulated	restored
audited	executed	marketed	retrieved
authored	expanded	mediated	reviewed
budgeted	expedited	memorized	revised
built	experimented	mentored	rewrote
calculated	explained	merchandised	saved
catalogued	extracted	modeled	scheduled
chaired	facilitated	modified	selected
changed	fielded	monitored	served
clarified	figured	motivated	shaped
classified	filed	negotiated	sold
coached	financed	observed	solved
collaborated	fixed	obtained	sorted
collected	forecasted	operated	standardized
communicated	formulated	ordered	straightened
compared	forwarded	organized	stimulated
competed	founded	originated	suggested
compiled	gathered	participated	summarized
composed	generated	performed	supervised
computed	guided	persuaded	supplied
conceived	handled	planned	surveyed
conceptualized	headed	predicted	synthesized
conducted	helped	prepared	systematized
conserved	hired	prescribed	tabulated
consolidated	identified	presided	taught
constructed	influenced	processed	tended
consulted	illustrated	produced	tested
controlled	implemented	programmed	trained
coordinated	improved	projected	transcribed
counseled	improvised	promoted	translated
created	increased	proposed	transmitted
decided	influenced	provided	treated
defined	informed	publicized	updated
delegated	initiated	published	utilized
delivered	innovated	purchased	wrote



