

**WRITING  
YOUR  
RESUME**

**ACC  
Placement Office  
Alamance Community College  
P.O. Box 8000  
Graham, NC 27253  
(336) 506-4146**

## DO I REALLY NEED A RESUME?

1. **YES!** One of the most important functions of a resume is to help you collect your thoughts about your goals, education, and past experiences and put them in terms that employers can understand. This process will help you present your strengths during the interview.
2. **THE RESUME CAN HELP YOU GET AN INTERVIEW, SOMETIMES.** Resumes can be sent with a cover letter to apply for an advertised opening. This strategy works best when you know a lot about the employer, the specific skills needed to perform the job, and where you fit in the organization.
3. **HOW YOU ORGANIZE YOUR RESUME IS IMPORTANT.** Categories should be listed in order of importance. Generally, skills, work experience, and education are near the top.
4. **PEOPLE DON'T READ RESUMES,** they skim them. Thus, you want to draw the reader's attention to the words you want him/her to see most. **THE MORE SPACE THAT YOU DEVOTE TO AN ITEM,** the more important it should be. Conversely, don't give more than a line or two to something less essential.

**FORGET YOUR BEST PROSE.** Use short phrases that concentrate on the most important points. **BE SPECIFIC AND USE DETAILS.**

- No need for pronouns
- No need for complete sentences
- Use **ACTION VERBS** such as:

planned	managed	improved	executed	directed
expanded	wrote	supervised	determined	increased
sold	presented	established	simplified	developed
gathered	led	started	catalogued	raised
boosted	created	coordinated	ordered	calculated

Examples:

- Use quick Books Pro to complete monthly financial reports for 29 churches in the Piedmont area.
- Directed summer recreation program for 20 children, age 7-12. Organized and supervised four activities each day.
- Responsible for typing, filing, scheduling appointments, and handling customer service over the phone.

LENGTH OF RESUME is usually one page.

# GENERAL FORMAT FOR A RESUME

NAME  
ADDRESS  
PHONE, E-MAIL

## OBJECTIVE

## SKILLS

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## EDUCATION

Degree, Major, School, City, Month, Year  
Areas of emphasis (optional)  
GPA (optional), Honors (If applicable)

## RELATED EXPERIENCE

Include paid and unpaid jobs, volunteer work, internships, summer jobs, and cooperative education experiences.

**JOB TITLE**, Name of Organization, City, State, and Dates  
(List responsibilities using action verbs in short phrases)

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## OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

(Less important work, summer jobs, and part-time work)

**JOB TITLE**, Name of Organization, City, State, and Dates

Include information that relates to the particular job for which you are applying.

## OPTIONAL CATEGORIES

## REFERENCES

Upon Request

**NOTE:** The career services director will also meet with individual students, by appointment, to critique rough drafts and/or resume updates.

## SECTIONS OF A RESUME

**Name, Address, Phone, E-mail:**

**Objective:** This is really the topic of your resume. As clearly as possible state what it is you are seeking in a job. All that follows should then establish your qualifications to meet this objective. If you are qualified and interested in more than one “employment area,” you may need several resumes. Sometimes just changing the OBJECTIVE is enough. Other times you will need to write a completely different resume for each job area.

**Skills:** You may want to list information which may or may not be included in your education or experience sections. Computer skills, office skills (typing speed, bookkeeping, medical or legal terminology, etc.), technical skills, particular machines or procedures, lab skills, and leadership skills are good examples.

**Education:** This can be placed before EXPERIENCE or after it if you want to emphasize your work. Include degree (AAS), major area (Business Administration), name of school (Alamance Community College), and date of graduation (May, 2009). You may want to mention G.P.A (if 3.0 or above) or honors (President’s List). You may want to include a list of relevant courses following this information.

**Experience (Related/Other Work):** Include paid jobs, volunteer work, internships, summer jobs, and cooperative education experience. List responsibilities using action verbs and short phrases, as described earlier. Usually, your experience will be listed in chronological order, with the most recent first. This format can show consistent development in your career field.

**Optional Categories:** May include military experience, hobbies, interests, community activities, personal information (age, marital status, relocation status), and professional memberships.

**References:** Do not assume that people are willing to serve as references for you. Always talk with them beforehand to verify they are comfortable in supporting you and your work. Once you have identified these references, be prepared to list them on a job application. On the resume simply state, “UPON REQUEST.”

## **RESUME POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- #1) DO NOT INCLUDE pictures, height, weight, salary desired, social security number, or the word RESUME at the top of your sheet.
- #2) NEVER SAY ANYTHING NEGATIVE on your resume. For example, do not give reasons for leaving former employers.
- #3) PROOFREAD YOUR RESUME CAREFULLY be sure there are no errors. You can have your resume prepared by most print companies for a fee, or you can prepare it yourself.

## **COVER LETTERS COUNT**

If a resume is mailed, it should always be sent with a COVER LETTER. If possible the cover letter should be addressed to a particular individual, not TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Cover letters should be printed and personally signed by you. If you have included enclosures (like your resume), note this in the letter.

Keep a cover letter to THREE OR FOUR short, well-written paragraphs. Don't ramble on, and use the word "I" in the letter as little as possible.

## Guideline for Cover or Application Letter

221 Popular Street  
Burlington, NC 27215  
January 10, 2009

Mr. John P. Johnson, Vice President  
Ajax Accounting Company  
555 Tamarack Drive  
Burlington, NC 27215

Dear Mr. Johnson,

**First Paragraph.** In your initial paragraph, state the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and indicate from which source (placement office, news media, web site, friend, employment service) you learned of the opening.

**Second Paragraph.** Be sure to emphasize how your background fits the vacancy for which you are applying. If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you've had some practical work experience, point out any specific achievements or unique qualifications. Try to summarize the information the reader will find in the resume.

**Final Paragraph.** In the final paragraph, indicate your desire for a personal interview.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas L. Smith

