

## RESUME AND COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

### RESUME BASICS

#### Format

- **Font:** 10-12 point size except for your name which should be 14-16 point; use an easy-to-read font such as Cambria, Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, Garamond, Tahoma, or Times New Roman. Use one font for the resume.
- **Length:** usually one page unless very experienced
- **Margins:** 1 inch borders down to .5 inch, but no smaller.
- **Style:** Use Bold OR italics OR underline OR capital letters on headings and/or job titles and organization to set them apart. Pick one style and use throughout entire document. Don't over use formatting. Even if your resume is crowded, try to have a balance of blank spaces to text.
- **Order of entries:** Everything on the resume should be listed in reverse chronological order (ie. whatever you are doing now, then backwards in time). The only exception is for the experience section. See below.

#### Resume Sections

- **TIP:** Change your resume! For each position you apply for, you should evaluate what the employer wants and adjust your resume experiences and/or descriptions to clearly indicate you have those skills.
- **Objective or Profile:** Either is optional. An objective is one sentence stating what type of work and in what industry you are seeking a position. A profile is longer, listing 3 to 5 relevant skills/qualifications that highlight your relevance to the position.
- **Education:** Don't forget to add Los Medanos College, Pittsburg, CA. List education as the degree/certification/etc. that you received, even if it is still in progress. High school graduates can list high school for 2-3 years after graduation. Other information in this section: List awards, scholarships and Dean's List; relevant courses to the job applying for; GPA if it is 3.0 and above.
- **Experience:** Include paid and unpaid jobs, internships, campus student groups/projects, volunteer work, athletics, and community service. Make sure to list your title, employer/organization, city and state, and dates (month and year). Describe your experiences as accomplishments starting with action verbs (not with "I" – see below for example), preferably with bullets or dashes starting each new line. See next page for list of action verbs. If your most relevant experiences are spread out over time or you have other "filler" jobs that detract from the skills you are trying to emphasize, you can break your Experience section into two to three separation sections (ie. Related Experience and Other Experience; Customer Service Experience, Management Experience, and Other Experience). Target the skill labeled experience areas to the job you are trying to obtain.
- **Additional Information:** In this section you can list computer skills (programs or technical experience), lab or shop skills (especially for science and technology students), and language skills (qualifying if you are bilingual, fluent, or conversational). Listing professional certifications, association memberships, hobbies and interests can also go in this section.

#### Experiences - Before

9/XX - present **Tutor**, Los Medanos, Math Dept., Pittsburg, CA

- I assisted lots of students in math.

**LMC Experience**, Writer, Pittsburg, CA

4/XX – 8/XX

- I wrote articles for the school newspaper.

#### Experiences - After

9/XX- present **Tutor**, Los Medanos, Math Dept., Pittsburg, CA

- Taught small groups of students and individuals regarding statistics, and pre-calculus.
- Utilized communication and problem solving skills to assist students who needed help.

**LMC Experience**, Writer, Pittsburg, CA

4/XX – 8/XX

- Utilized persuasive communication skills in connecting with story leads.
- Wrote over 10 articles on topics such as student government, transferring, and sports.

# Action Verbs / Skills for Your Resume

<u>Communication Skills</u>	<u>Detail Skills</u>	<u>Financial Skills</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Sales Skills</u>
Addressed	Approved	Administered	Analyzed	Achieved
Arbitrated	Arranged	Allocated	Assessed	Analyzed
Arranged	Audited	Analyzed	Compared	Closed
Authored	Classified	Appraised	Consolidated	Coordinated
Clarified	Collated	Assessed	Coordinated	Decreased
Communicated	Collected	Audited	Corrected	Developed
Corresponded	Compared	Balanced	Delegated	Doubled
Created	Compiled	Bookkeeping	Delivered	Earned
Defined	Counted	Budgeted	Determined	Exceeded
Drafted	Dispatched	Calculated	Developed	Expanded
Edited	Documented	Computed	Displayed	Explained
Enlisted	Edit	Decreased	Eliminated	Forecasted
Influenced	Estimated	Developed	Examined	Generated
Informed	Evaluated	Eliminated	Expedited	Increased
Inspired	Formatted	Established	Identified (problem)	Listened
Interpreted	Generated	Forecasted	Implemented	Maintained
Mediated	Implemented	Formulated	Inspected	Marketed
Motivated	Inspected	Identified (problem)	Investigated	Merchandised
Negotiated	Monitored	Improved	Lead	Monitored
Obtained	Operated	Managed (\$)	Modified	Negotiated
Persuaded	Organized	Planned	Organized	Persuaded
Presented	Prepared	Prepared	Participated	Presented
Read	Prioritized	Presented	Planned	Promoted
Reasoned	Processed	Reconciled	Prioritized	Projected
Reconciled	Proofread	Researched	Reduced	Publicized
Sold	Recorded	Reviewed	Reviewed	Represented
Summarized	Retrieved	Solved	Revised	Sold
Translated	Specified	Streamlined	Updated	Strategized
Wrote	Tabulated	Structured	Upgraded	Targeted

## **Action Verbs /Skills for Your Resume** (continued)

<b><u>Analytical</u></b>	<b><u>Creative Skills</u></b>	<b><u>Helping Skills</u></b>	<b><u>Management/ Leadership</u></b>	<b><u>Research Skills</u></b>
Arranged	Abstracted	Adjusted	Authorized	Clarified
Administered	Conceptualized	Advised	Directed	Collected
Allocated	Created	Advocated	Evaluated	Critiqued
Appraised	Demonstrated	Appraised	Executed	Diagnosed
Assessed	Designed	Assisted	Evaluated	Evaluated
Audited	Developed	Attended	Fired	Examined
Compared	Devised	Cared	Headed	Extracted
Critiqued	Directed	Coached	Hired	Extrapolated
Collected	Discovered	Collaborated	Led	Gathered
Determined	Displayed	Counseled	Managed	Identified
Examined	Experimented	Directed	Mediated	Inspected
Extrapolated	Illustrated	Encouraged	Mentored	Interpreted
Identified	Imagined	Enlightened	Motivated	Interviewed
Inspected	Innovated	Facilitated	Predicted	Investigated
Interpreted	Integrated	Guided	Recruited	Retrieved
Maintained	Intuited	Intuited	Resolved	Reviewed
Prepared	Originated	Listened	Scheduled	Summarized
Processed	Performed	Mentored	Supervised	Surveyed
Reasoned	Played	Modeled	Trained	Synthesized
Recognized	Predicted	Perceived	Trouble Shoot	Tested
Recorded	Synthesized	Referred	Wrote	
Reviewed	Visualized	Rehabilitated		

<b><u>Retail</u></b>	<b><u>Teaching Skills</u></b>
Assisted	Adapted
Analyzed	Advised
Designed	Clarified
Evaluated	Developed
Monitored	Educated
Mediated	Encouraged
Merchandised	Enlightened
Resolved	Explained
Provided	Facilitated
Trained	Guided
Reconciled	Influenced
Sold	Informed
Increased (sales)	Intuited
Persuaded	
Taught	
Tutored	

## SAMPLE "BULLET POINTS" FOR RESUMES

### **Accounting / Finance**

- Reconciled corporate accounts, allocated accounts payable, and accounts receivable
- Computed and prepared payment of bills and reports
- Maintained and processed records for agents
- Reconciled monthly income sheets with 100% accuracy and acted as manager-in-charge in absence of owner/manager
- Performed general bookkeeping duties and tracked money flow of office

### **Administrative Assistant**

- Maintained advertising calendar of events for promotion activities, reserved facilities and oversaw event implementation
- Maintained patient records by updating file copies; oversaw updating of files
- Scheduled appointments via phone and greeted patients

### **Business**

- Acted as liaison between clients and merchandisers with attention to detail and regard to customers' needs
- Assisted director in organizing and managing office
- Conducted data-entry and spreadsheet preparation for dialysis laboratory
- Created and maintained database of (list numbers)

### **Child Care Provider / Teacher Assistant**

- Coordinated and supervised activities of 45 children
- Entrusted with children's safety and well-being
- Motivated children to learn reading skills and various crafts
- Supervised and monitored two girls, ages five and seven, in after-school, and evening activities
- Supervised social and academic activities for 13-year-old
- Tutored children in reading and math

### **Coach / Camp Counselor**

- Promoted fair play and positive attitude
- Served as coach of youth team
- Responsible for the physical and emotional well-being of 10-30 juvenile campers for six to eight hours daily
- Planned, coordinated, and presented day camp activities for campers
- Instructed girls aged 6-17 in basic softball skills

### **Manager/ Supervisor**

- Managed 5 employee work schedules, payroll, and policy enforcement
- Recruited and trained new employees
- Coordinated and supervised numerous recreational activities and events for 16 employees

### **Peer Advisor**

- Initiated, planned, and organized educational programs
- Served on departmental and staff committees
- Delivered more than 12 hour-long presentations to various student groups
- Compiled presentation materials on service-oriented topics for numerous SMC student groups and organizations
- Worked cooperatively in a team of eight to publicize Career Center job fairs and workshops

**Retail - Customer Service**

- Assisted customers with questions and concerns
- Utilized communication skills to understand customer needs and promoted appropriate sales
- Answered phones, processed orders, assisted customers, and handled shipments
- Designed event invitations and created store displays
- Led sales in clothing for the months of July and August
- Monitored phone inquiries and developed customer relations
- Courteously handled customer complaints and took appropriate action
- Provided customer service for members through telephone calls, e-mails, and letters
- Provided hospitality to prospective customers
- Responsible for opening and closing store, calculating nightly balance sheets and making deposits
- Trained employees in computer operations, sales, daily transactions, and customer relations

**Sports**

- Instructed girls ages 6-17 in basic softball skills
- Served as a role model and develop sportsmanship among youth teams
- Met and conferred with staff and athletes regarding facilities, scholarships, etc.
- Taught fundamental athletic skills to middle and high school students
- Gathered and compiled information to create school athletic record book

**Tutor/Instructor**

- Collaborated with a team of instructors to create a positive, fun, and lively learning atmosphere
- Coordinated and counseled summer rider camp sessions
- Instructed students of all ages in cheerleading, gymnastics, and dance
- Organized annual school show for adult and youth students
- Taught study techniques for children aged 7 and 9
- Tutored 13 & 15-year-old in English and science

**Waitress / Hostess**

- Assisted customers with their orders, prepared food and beverages
- Responsible for giving customers quality service at upscale restaurant
- Interacted with over 500 people daily while serving food to students, faculty and staff in university dining facility
- Trained new employees in working routine of restaurant, customer relations, and computer use
- Created an environment for guests that ensured privacy, comfort and the utmost in hospitality
- Inspected guest accommodations regularly to ensure that establishment provided the highest quality amenities
- Provided guests with estate, local and regional information pertinent to their stay

**Volunteer Service**

- Assessed needs of children and encouraged activity and participation in various events
- Collected, organized, and delivered clothes, food, and toys to needy families
- Helped children to have fun during their hospital stay
- Played with cancer patients in isolation rooms in children's ward
- Interviewed 58 homeless and low-income individuals for general assessment

# RESUME TEMPLATE – New Professional Emphasizing Education

## Name

Street/Mailing Address

(925) 555-5555 \* name@somedomain.com \* LinkedIn or Professional website

### OBJECTIVE (optional)

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An internship/job in the field of \_\_\_\_\_, utilizing my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ skills.

### EDUCATION

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Associate of Art/Science/Transfer in \_\_\_\_\_, Los Medanos College, Pittsburg, CA Expected 5/XX

Coursework: Statistics, Intro to \_\_\_\_\_, Computer Science GPA: (if it is 3.0 and above)

### COURSE PROJECTS/PAPERS (optional)

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Project or Paper Title, Course Name, School Mo/Yr. – Present

- Example: Researched and wrote 6 page paper on U.S. healthcare system.
- Example: Led group project on exploring careers in marketing; received “A” on final presentation.

### RELATED EXPERIENCE (Does not have to be paid! Can be clubs, sports, community service, etc.)

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Title, Company/Activity, City, State Mo/Yr. – Present

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Focus on your accomplishments more than job duties.
- Target description of accomplishment to job applying for.
- Example: Led group meetings on student government initiatives, communicating with faculty/staff.

Title, Company/Activity, City, State Mo/Yr. – Mo/Yr.

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Focus on your accomplishments more than job duties.
- Example: Created an organized system in the stock room so all employees could easily find and retrieve merchandise for customers.

Title, Company/Activity, City, State Mo/Yr. – Mo/Yr.

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Example: Utilized strong customer services and communication skills

### OTHER EXPERIENCE (optional, can also just have one longer Experience section)

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Title, Company/Activity, City, State Mo/Yr. – Present

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for.

Title, Company/Activity, City, State Mo/Yr. – Mo/Yr.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional – modify to fit your skills and the job)

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- **Computer Skills:** MS Word, Excel, Photoshop
- **Language Skills:** Bilingual English/Spanish
- **Hobbies/Activities:** Reading, Community Service

# RESUME TEMPLATE – Experienced Professionals Seeking Career Change

## NAME

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip

(925) 555-5555

name@somedomain.com

LinkedIn or Professional website (as applicable)

## PROFILE (optional)

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- A quality that makes you perfect for the job such as number of years experience
- A quality that makes you perfect for the job such as “exceptional \_\_\_\_\_ (computer, customer service, management, etc.) skills”.
- A quality that makes you perfect such as “Reputation for... (Dependability, honesty, dedication, etc.)”.

## EXPERIENCE

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**Mo/Yr. – Present    COMPANY NAME, CITY, CA**

### Job Title

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Focus on your accomplishments more than job duties
- Example: Answered six telephone lines and courteously assisted customers within high-volume, deadline-driven office. Earned a reputation for rapidly and calmly resolving customer complaints.

**Mo/Yr. – Mo/Yr.    COMPANY NAME, CITY, CA**

### Job Title

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Focus on your accomplishments more than job duties
- Example: Took the initiative to create an organized system in the stock room so all employees could easily find and retrieve merchandise for customers.

**Mo/Yr. – Mo/Yr.    COMPANY NAME, CITY, CA**

### Job Title

- Personal achievement on the job or job responsibility that is relevant to job you are applying for
- Focus on your accomplishments more than job duties
- Example: Took the initiative to create an organized system in the stock room so all employees could easily find and retrieve merchandise for customers.

## EDUCATION

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**Expected 5/XX    LOS MEDANOS COLLEGE, PITTSBURG, CA**

**Associate of Art/Science/Transfer in \_\_\_\_\_    GPA: (if it is 3.0 and above)**

- Relevant Coursework: Statistics, Intro to \_\_\_\_\_, etc.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional – modify to your skills and job)

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- Computer Skills: MS Word, Excel, Photoshop
- Language Skills: Bilingual English/Spanish
- Hobbies/Activities: Reading, Community Service

# COVER LETTER BASICS

## Format & Content

- Just start writing! It doesn't have to be perfect for the first draft. Let it cool off overnight, and then rewrite if necessary.
- Use a strong closing, e.g., "After you have had an opportunity to review this letter, I will call you..." Avoid weak endings such as "I look forward to your reply" or "Please call me at your earliest convenience."
- Limit your letter to one page; a letter is an opportunity to sell, so say something about you, while also focusing on the needs of the employer. It should be well worded and concise, using the pronoun "I".
- While a general cover letter can be used, best results come from personalizing each letter to fit the specific circumstances, position, or organization.
- Ask for opinions, advice, and feedback from friends, a counselor, or someone in the profession. Check spelling and grammar.
- Don't use someone else's letter. If you are using the same letter for several companies, remember to change the name in the body of your letter.
- Follow up, follow up. People will call you, but you'll improve your odds dramatically if you follow up your letters with a phone call.

## Sample Format

### YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

It should be identical to your resume letterhead.

Date  
Name of Contact Person  
Title (if known)  
Company Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear Mr. /Mrs. /Ms., \_\_\_\_\_, (or Dear Hiring Manager if you absolutely can't find the name of the person you are sending it to)

**First paragraph:** State the position for which you are applying and how you learned about the opening (friend, career services, monster, etc.). *If you have a personal contact, this is the place to name drop.* Indicate why you are interested in the company, the position, its products or services. What is it about the organization that makes you want to work for them? This is where you show the company you have done your research, i.e. "Why do you want to work here?" Provide an overall statement as to how your skills and education fit with the opportunity.

**Second/Third paragraph(s):** Expand on key skills and qualifications you have that relate to the position. Provide examples of skills used from your \*top\* experiences (academic classes, jobs, activities). Target these paragraphs to speak to the idea "if you know nothing else about me, know this"...

**Third paragraph:** Continuation of second paragraph, if necessary.

**Final paragraph:** In the closing paragraph, be assertive by indicating that you "look forward talking with them in the near future about this opportunity" and mention our availability to work (especially if seeking part-time work). Thank them for "their time and consideration".

Sincerely,

(Your Name)