



ESTRELLA MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*A Maricopa Community College*

## Resume Writing Preparation

Today's job market continues to be competitive. It is extremely important for job seekers to create an exceptional, first rate resume that speaks to employers. Think of it as your golden ticket to land the interview!



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**Career & Transfer Center**

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# Importance of Resume Writing

Today's job market continues to be competitive. It is important for the job seeker to know the "why's" and "how's" of getting the job they want. Part of that requirement is putting together an exceptional, first-rate resume to get a foot in the door for an interview and to create an image in the employer's mind that says "I want to meet you."

The resume serves several purposes:

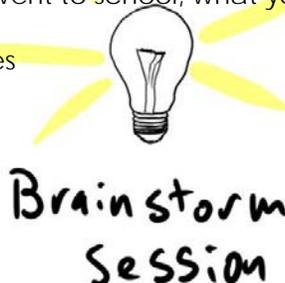
- It is an essential part of every job search campaign.
- It is a written summary that gives an employer a preliminary impression of you (education, work experiences, special skills and talent).
- It is a demonstration of how you communicate.
- It answers an employer's questions of: what can you do for me and what are you like?
- It is used by employers as a reference source for recalling and /or further evaluating your strengths and abilities, and comparing you to other candidates.
- Serves as an assessment of YOU and by putting it together it gives you an opportunity to see who you are in writing.
- Finally, the purpose is to secure an interview!

Resume → Interview → Job

## Getting Started

Resume writing can feel overwhelming at times. If you are not sure where to begin, brainstorming is always a great start. Don't worry about formatting at this point. Just jot down information on paper so that you have information to work with. Things that you should start listing:

- Job History: List all jobs (paid/unpaid), volunteer work and internships. Include Job title, Company, Dates of employments, what you did, accomplished or results.
- Education: Where you went to school, what you studies, certificates
- Honors/Awards/Activities



TIP



Don't forget to include work achievements. Some people get so hung up on job duties that they forget to mention accomplishments that they have had at work. If you worked on special projects, received recognition, improved quality of services, talk about it! Employers love to see results!

# Resume Standards

Do's	Don'ts
Present information that is accurate and positive	Have errors on your resume! Spell check cannot catch everything.
Use actions verbs to convey work experience	Use personal pronouns such as: I, me or my
Make it readable. Use bullets when listing duties or accomplishments. This will make your resume easier to read and scan.	Lie! Do not misrepresent your responsibilities or accomplishments because employers will check with previous employers and they will find out!
Highlight your work and accomplishments rather than just work duties. Instead of "sold televisions," try something like, "Built customer relationships and sold more than 20 televisions per month."	Provide personal information such as marital status, age, weight, social security, etc.
List most recent work history (last 10 years). This could include volunteer experience-especially if it is relevant to the job you want, or if you do not have a lot of paid work experience.	Include salary information, information about why you left your previous job or employers address and contact information.
Have a professional sounding email. First and last name will suffice. No teddybear123@yahoo.com...not professional!	Include high school information-unless it is your highest level of education. If you have an Associates or higher, you do not need to include high school.
Quantify whenever possible. Rather than "Raised money for fundraising event" try something like "Raised over 2,000 dollars for fundraising event"	Use acronyms or abbreviations. Do not assume the reader know the technical terms or meanings.
Try to keep your resume no more than 2 pages.	Include photos, clip art, or fancy fonts
Include only relevant information and target your resume to the company/job	Use paragraphs in your resume
Maintain consistency in formatting through the entire document	Write a vague or generic objective statement. If you use an objective be specific and concise.
Have at least two others review your resume	Include exact dates, You do want to show dates of employment but all you need to include is month/year

## Save resume in several formats:

Format	Use	How
Electronic version (.doc)	Attachment to email application or networking email (some companies' firewalls may not accept); upload to some online job applications	Create in Microsoft Word and save as a Word document
Graphic version (.pdf)	Attachment to email application or networking email (most email systems will accept); upload to some online job applications	Create in Microsoft Word and save as a .pdf
Text only (.txt or .rtf)	Paste into online job application; paste into body of email application	Create in Microsoft Word and save as a text only document with no formatting, replaces bullet points with – or *
Printed paper	Job fairs and in-person recruiting events; networking events; interviews	Print on white or beige 8.5" x 11" paper

# Basic Components of a Resume

## Header/Contact Information

Contact information should be clearly presented and updated. Include your name, address, zip code, email address and telephone number. Your name should be in a larger font size, and can be bold, but not so large and bold that it is too distracting (no more than 4 font sizes larger in size than your text is a good rule of thumb).

**Tip:** Email addresses should be professional. If you are looking for work, it is important that you present yourself professionally. Do not use an email that will prove otherwise. Open a new email account (yahoo, hotmail, Gmail, etc) with just your name.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Objective vs. Summary of Skills/Highlights of Qualifications

Traditionally, resume's started with objectives. In today's job market, especially if you have a cover letter, you will be better off including your objective in your cover letter and utilizing the top of your resume to provide information that will show the employer instantly that you are qualified for the position. No matter which you decide to use, you always want to make sure that you use the space on resume in the best possible way and that you target your resume for the position you are applying to.

### Objective

The placement of objectives in a resume comes right after the Header/Contact Information. If you decide to use an objective, it must be specific and targeted to the position you are applying to.

Objectives such as "To obtain a challenging position with a company where I can utilize my knowledge and experience that will allow me to advance professionally" is too wordy, not specific and only focuses on what you want to get out of the position. Remember, it needs to be targeted to the position and focus on the needs of the employer- not you.

The following is a better example of an objective that can work better in today's job market: "Seeking a position as a Math Tutor at Estrella Mountain Community College utilizing my subject expertise to assist and enhance learning for the student."

### Summary of Skills/Highlight of Qualifications

Just like the objective, the placement of the Summary of Skills/Highlights of Qualifications comes right after the Header/Contact Information. This section is intended summarize the skills and experience you have that are applicable to the positions and to let the reader know right off the bat what makes you qualified for the positions. This section is a great way to customize your resume for the specific job you are applying for. Typically, many job postings list job duties, required skill or desired/minimum qualification. If you see that, you need to make sure to utilize this section to list your related skills. Typically you can have around three to six bullets. For example an actual job posting for an Administrative Assistant list these minimum qualifications: (1) Advanced secretarial or office assistance experience, (2) Knowledge of, and experience using Microsoft Office Suite software, and (3) Experience working with internal and external customers. If you are applying for this job, Your Summary of Qualifications could include:

- Over 5 years' experience as an Administrative Assistant
- College Coursework in, and proficiency in using Microsoft Office Suite software
- Skilled in developing and maintaining positive internal and external customer relationships  
(Include a combination of skills, experience and personal traits)

# Education

List your education in reverse chronological order (starting with your most recent first) including: degree, major, school, graduation date (month/year). This is also a good place to list any certificates or minors you have received. If your graduation date is over one month in the future, indicate that the date is “anticipated” or “projected.” Do not list your high school unless it is your highest level of education. GPA may be listed only if it is above 3.0.

Tip: You may also want to list coursework you have taken or academic projects if they are relevant to the position you are applying for. You can list them under a “Relevant Coursework” or “Academic Projects” section.

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Location (City, State): \_\_\_\_\_

Degree or certificate seeking: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Coursework: (remember to list only those that apply. Not your entire class schedule)

- Name of Course \_\_\_\_\_

# Academic Projects

(Can also be included to elaborate and highlight skills that you have learned in your academics) Academic projects can be listed on a resume so long as it is relevant to the position or internship. If a project was large, you can follow the format below and create bullet statements to describe the work. If you have had many, you can create one bullet statement for each project addressing the problem/objective, your role, the tasks/actions performed and result for each omitting the course, semester, etc.

Title of Work or Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates or Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

- Explanation of project \_\_\_\_\_
- Explanation of project \_\_\_\_\_
- Explanation of project \_\_\_\_\_

# Work Experience

When listing your work experience, be sure to include your job title, the name of your employer (company), city and state, followed by dates of employment (month/year). Next, describe your contribution to the company and/or responsibility assumed. Remember not to forget to include work achievements. Some people get so hung up on job duties that they forget to mention accomplishments that they have had at work. If you worked on special projects, received recognition, improved quality of services, talk about it! Employers love to see results! If you do not have much work experience, you can also include volunteer experience or internships. If you do so, title the sections “Experience” instead of “Work Experience.”

## List Employment History:

Title of Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of employment (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Location (City, State) \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Resume Writing: Structuring achievement statements as bullet points for your work

No matter what format you choose, Traditional or Skills based, you are going to have to write bullet statements explaining what you have done, accomplished, or how you have obtained a certain skill. How you will organize it, whether bullets under job title, or bullets under a skills, will depend in the format, but the writing should always remain the same. Quantify your accomplishments whenever possible and use action verbs to begin your statements. Ask yourself how many? Who? What? When? How long? Rather than a list of vague responsibilities, be specific and [use quantitative figures](#) to back it up. Examples of areas to quantify-Possible Measurements:

Money	Time	Amounts	Situation	Scope or Scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Made</li><li>•Saved</li><li>•\$Amount</li><li>•%</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Saved</li><li>•Efficiencies</li><li>•Deadlines met or beat</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sales</li><li>•Customers</li><li>•Patients</li><li>•Students</li><li>•Calls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Fast-paced</li><li>•Difficult Economy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Showing the dimensions of your impact</li></ul>



**Tip:** Start each bullet with an action verb. Do not include the personal pronouns “I” or “me” or “my” in this section or any other part of your resume. For example, instead of, “I developed a training manual for all the new employees,” simply say, “Developed a training manual for all new employees”.

Here are some formulas that may be helpful:

- Action verb+ what you did+ why is that important
- Action verb+ what you did+ what did you accomplish
- Action verb+ what you did+ what skill did you use or develop

Good:

“Achieved an increase in sales by providing excellent customer service”

Better:

“Achieved a 25% increase in sales within three months by providing exceptional customer service to new and existing clients within a difficult economy”

Good:

“Answered phones and provide customer service”

Better:

“Resolved customer complaint issues with patience and documented incidents with accuracy, resulting in 40% decrease in escalated complaints”

# Resume Formats

**Traditional Resume:** On a traditional resume, work experience and employment history are listed under one section. They should appear in reverse chronological order with the most recent experience first. The chronological resume should be a synopsis of your work history and should demonstrate progress with regard to your skill development.

*Basic components:*

- Contact Information/Header
- Specific Objective and/or Summary of Qualifications
- Education
- Employment History

*It is advantageous to use a chronological resume when:*

- People have demonstrated growth in a profession
- You are making a lateral or upward move within your same career field
- People have little to no gaps in their employment history

*It may not be advantageous to use a chronological resume when:*

- You are entering a new career field and have limited relevant experience in that field
- You have an inconsistent job history and/or you have changed jobs frequently
- You have voluntarily taken a break from the world-of-work or you have an unwanted gap in your employment history due to work termination

**Combination Resume:** The combination resume is simply a way to blend both the styles of the chronological and functional resumes. In essence, it is the best of both worlds! It is a quick synopsis of your professional skills (functional style) followed by your employment history (the chronological format). What is highlighted is not an 'employment history' section, but a 'summary of skills' section. Highlight your skills that relate to the position and that shows off your transferrable skill sets, and write some bullets about it!

*Basic Components:*

- Contact Information/Header
- Career objective, very specific, that corresponds with the skill areas that follow
- Sections of skill area (usually at least three)
- Employment history with no job description
- Education history

*Advantages*

- If your former jobs are varied with regard to their job descriptions, this format will focus attention on your skills, abilities, credentials, qualifications, and/or accomplishments.
- People entering the workforce with no experience or people returning to work after a long absence.
- This style tailors your skills to match the needs of the employer. Employers also like to see the work history so it will please them by offering both!
- It is a good format for students, career changers, and military personnel transferring into civilian work, someone nearing retirement or perhaps someone who is re-entering the world of work

**Functional Resume:** The functional format emphasizes your skills, abilities, and credentials at the forefront of the resume but does not correlate them to specific employers. In its strictest form, employment history information is left out. The lack of this information makes the format least preferred by employers.

# Resume Examples

## Traditional Resume

### **Your Name**

3000 N. Dysart Rd.  
Avondale, AZ 85392  
623-935-5555  
your.name@maricopa.edu

### **Summary of Qualifications:**

- Microsoft Word/PowerPoint and ability to adapt to new software
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills; Bilingual in English and Spanish
- Proven customer service satisfaction
- Experience with product knowledge and up selling
- Ability to work in a fast paced working environment with a diverse population

### **Education:**

Pursuing Associate in Arts June 2011-Present  
Major: Public Speaking/Communications  
Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale, AZ

High School Diploma May 2004  
Westview High School, Avondale, AZ

### **Employment History**

**Automotive Technician/Customer Service** October 2009 - March 2011  
Earnhardt Avondale Hyundai-Avondale, AZ

- Demonstrated product knowledge in order to sell and up sell products and services to customers
- Resolved customer complaints and issues while delivering fantastic customer service from start to finish
- Displayed excellent communications skills by explaining and interpreting prognosis
- Performed work efficiently and accurately in order to build member loyalty

### **Customer Service Associate**

JC's Daycare-Tolleson, AZ March 2009 - March 2010

- Adapted communication style in order to ensure students understood material and content
- Worked collaboratively in a team in order to prepare daily activities and meals
- Handled incoming and outgoing calls to prospective customers
- Engaged with parents and explained daily behaviors and performances

### **Lube Technician- Customer Service**

Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC-Peoria, AZ March 2009 – October 2009

- Performed moderate level vehicle repairs and deliver outstanding customer service
- Utilized interpersonal skills in order to engage with customers with high level customer service satisfaction
- Supported and worked collaboratively with internal team during higher than normal busy times

## **Your Name**

3000 N. Dysart Rd.  
Avondale, AZ 85392  
623-395-5555  
your.name@yahoo.com

### **Summary of Qualifications**

- Variety of experience working in the human resource field including HR issues, training and paperwork
- Possession of excellent writing skills for business correspondence, report writing and grant writing
- Ability to deliver consistently high levels of customer satisfaction
- Effective in building strong community relations and client relations
- Proficient in Microsoft Office, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher and Constant Contact

### **Education**

Regis University, Henderson, Nevada  
Pursuing Bachelors in Liberal Arts, Communications  
GPA: 4.0/4.0 Dean's List: 2010, 2011  
Relevant Coursework:

- Global Business Issues
- Public Relations
- Advertising and Media

Anticipated Graduation: Summer 2012

Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale, AZ  
GPA: 3.98/4.0, Honors Program: 2012

Concurrent Enrollment: Present

### **Summary of Skills**

#### **Human Resources**

- Hired, trained and supervised staff of up to 50 employees and volunteers
- Conferred with management to develop or implement personnel policies and procedures
- Hired employees and processed hiring-related paperwork
- Arranged for advertising or posting of job vacancies, and notified eligible workers of position availability
- Interviewed potential students for college and implemented curriculum and training guides for staff

#### **Marketing**

- Supervised and budgeted events and programs for catering department
- Created and designed visual and written content for company marketing materials and brochures
- Designed and facilitated the development of social and educational programs and workshops for schools, campus, senior centers and corporations

#### **Organization**

- Executed administrative functions of budget preparation, committee development and fund raising
- Excellent multiple projects management and organizational skills
- Facilitated service to guests which required mandatory customer service training

### **Experience**

**Program Director**, Temple Beth, Las Vegas, Nevada, 2007-2008

**College Recruiter**, DeVry University, Henderson, Nevada, 2006-2007

**Assistant Director High School Admissions**, Le Cordon Bleu College Las Vegas, Nevada 2004-2006

# Customize your Resume

In today's job market, many companies are utilizing scanning technology as a screening tool for resumes. This is one way for employers to weed out candidates that are not qualified and match candidates for the position who are. These scanners read, screen and identify keywords or phrases that match the job description on a resume based on criteria established by the employer.

*Keywords* are the link to the most important qualities and qualifications an employer is looking for. It's no secret. All the information you need is right in their employment ad....

When applying for a job, print out the job posting. Look for all the important points and underline these *keywords*. The 'important points' could be about the culture of the company, qualities they are looking for and qualifications required.

## Cover Letter

A cover letter introduces both you and your resume to potential employers. It is the very first document that the employer will read, so it is often the first impression that you will make. Because of this, it is very important that you take the time to write and create a well crafted document. This is your opportunity to state why you are writing, what makes you qualified and why you believe you are a good match to not only the positions, but the organization as well. In a cover letter you will:

- Explain and highlight. The resume is often brief and to the point, whereas your cover letter will allow you explain and highlight your experiences, credentials, skills and qualifications in a story-like format. All that important experiences or skills that are related to the job requirements.
- Show the employer that you are invested. Rather than creating a generic cover letter, show the employer that you are customizing your cover letter to the very same position you are applying to.
- Showcase and provide an example of your written communication skills.
- Motivate the reader to read your resume and call you in for an interview.

### Cover Letter Tips:

- Highlight your most relevant qualifications
- Conduct company research. When you are applying for a job make sure to conduct some research before you create a cover letter. Check the website for their "About Us" section, read and try to understand what and who they are all about, what their mission is and learn about what they do or what they sell. Other mediums that you can review are the company's social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. More often than not, companies post up to date information regarding their company, news or products through these medias. Do not be afraid to incorporate this information into your cover letter, but also relate it back to ...employers love this!

### Formatting Tips:

- Keep your cover letter to one page and keep your cover letter single spaced
- Leave one space between each section of a cover letter, including between each paragraph. You may have three spaces after your closing "Sincerely" or "Best regards" and your name. This will allow you space sign your name with ink.
- Align all paragraphs to the left of the page. No need to indent first line of each paragraph.

Below is a sample format for a cover letter. Remember that this cover letter is about you and your qualifications, so let it reflect that. Use this format as a guide, not as a hard rule.

**Full Name**

Address

City, State Zip

Phone number

Email

Company Name

Address

City, State Zip

Date

Dear Hiring Professional,

The opening paragraph should state why you are writing and why you became attracted to the position or the company. You should include your objective, job title and the company for which you are applying. If you were referred, you can include that information here.

The second paragraph should highlight your qualifications, educational background and skills that make you qualified for the position. Include specific examples to show those qualifications. If you held a particular job and have experiences that directly relate to the position, highlight it! This will also be a great opportunity to highlight and emphasize specific information and your interest in working for this specific company.

The third paragraph is your closing paragraph. Indicate your desire to further discuss your qualifications and interest in an interview. Quickly reiterate or remind them why you are an excellent candidate for the job and the company. Thank the person for reading your material and consideration.

Best regards,

Your Name Typed

Below is an example cover letter. Remember cover letters are about *you and your qualifications*, so let it reflect that. Also tailor your resume for the position you are applying for.

### **Mountain Lion**

3000 N Dysart Rd  
Avondale, AZ 85392  
623-935-8000  
mountain.lion@maricopa.edu

Information Commons  
Estrella Mountain Community College  
3000 N Dysart Rd  
Avondale, AZ 85392

January 1, 2012

Dear Hiring Manager,

Please accept this letter as an application for the Library/Information Resources Student Worker position at Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) website. I believe my experiences and exceptional capabilities greatly match the qualifications for this position.

I gained the familiarity of working in the library setting from volunteering at a local library. As a volunteer, I was responsible for re-shelving books, organizing, and maintaining cleanliness of the bookshelves. I also helped community members use the computer system to search for books and obtain any additional library materials. In addition, in my previous job as a Peer Mentor on campus enhanced my knowledge of the EMCC library and information commons resources as I recommended them to my mentees often. I have become proficient in navigating Microsoft Office and various library databases such as EBSCOhost and ebrary. Aside from my technical abilities, working with the public over the past two years has significantly improved my customer service, communication and problem solving skills.

The success that I have obtained in my work and academics prove that I am a hard worker, highly motivated and determined to succeed. I look forward to discussing my qualifications for this position further. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Mountain Lion

#### References:

South Mountain Community College, Career Services Resume Packet, <http://students.southmountaincc.edu/NR/rdonlyres/730A6C3D-E8E5-481E-AD6E-F4B89BB5DA04/3231/ResumePacket.pdf>  
Purdue Online Writing Lab, Cover Letters, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/549/1/>

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