



Resume Development, Cover Letters

&

Interviewing Skills

For Young People



Resume Do's

- **Make it brief, using short phrases**
- **Use action verbs such as... *created, initiated, developed, organized, managed* (see following pages)**
- **Include internships, volunteer work and all employment (summer, part-time)**
- **Organize education and employment in reverse chronological order**
- **Have your resume critiqued for style, impact and spelling**

ACTION VERBS

Adapted, enlarged list inspired by Employment Development Department of Palo Alto, CA

Management skills	Communication skills	Clerical or detailed skills
administered analyzed assigned attained chaired contracted consolidated coordinated delegated developed directed evaluated executed improved increased organized oversaw planned prioritized produced recommended reviewed scheduled strengthened supervised	addressed arbitrated arranged authored corresponded developed directed drafted edited enlisted formulated influenced interpreted lectured mediated moderated motivated negotiated persuaded promoted publicized reconciled recruited spoke translated wrote	approved arranged catalogued classified collected compiled dispatched executed generated implemented inspected monitored operated organized prepared organized prepared processed purchased recorded retrieved screened specified systematized tabulated validated
Research skills	Technical skills	Teaching skills
clarified collected critiqued diagnosed evaluated examined extracted identified inspected interpreted interviewed investigated organized reviewed summarized surveyed systematized	assembled built calculated computed designed devised engineered fabricated maintained operated overhauled programmed remodeled repair solved trained upgraded	adapted advised clarified coached communicated coordinated developed enabled encouraged evaluated explained facilitated guided informed initiated instructed persuaded set goals stimulated
Financial skills	Creative skills	Helping skills
administered allocated analyzed appraised audited balanced budgeted calculated computed developed forecasted managed marketed planned projected researched	acted conceptualized created designed developed directed established fashioned founded illustrated instituted integrated introduced invented originated performed planned revitalized shaped	assessed assisted clarified coached counseled demonstrated diagnosed educated expedited facilitated familiarized guided referred rehabilitated represented

Jane Smith

111 Circle Avenue
Quincy, MA 02170
617-425-3346 jsmith@gmail.com

Education:

Quincy High School, Quincy, MA
Diploma received June, 2015 GPA 3.8

Skills:

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Knowledgeable in web design and programming languages such as HTML
- Bilingual English/Albanian

Work Experience:

Classic Tuxedo, Quincy, MA

September 2013- present

Retail Sales Associate

- Operate cash register
- Assist customers with tuxedo selections
- Organize and set up displays
- Provide first-rate customer service

Volunteer Experience:

Thomas Crane Public Library

September 2015-present

Children's Librarian Assistant

- Contributing editor for children's newsletter

1000 Southern Artery

Summer, 2014

Nurses' Aide

- Assisted nurses with care of elderly

Honors/Awards:

Recipient of "The John and Abigail Adams Scholarship"
National Honor Society, Grades 11-12

Activities:

Quincy Youth Soccer, Grades 9-10
Quincy High School Debate Team, Grades 9-12
Quincy High School Interact Club, Grades 10-12

Suzie Student

20 Cranch Avenue

Quincy, MA 02170

phone: 617-333-2525 email: suzie.student@gmail.com

Objective

To obtain an entry level position working with young children

Education

North Quincy High School, Quincy, MA

Anticipated graduation: June, 2017

Summary of Qualifications

- Early Education and Care licensure eligible
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel
- CPR certified
- Bilingual: English/Spanish

Experience

Project Home, Boston, MA

Summer, 2014

Camp Assistant

Organized and delivered youth activities

- Ensured safety of campers
- Taught camp curriculum in small group setting
- Maintained necessary paper work

Project Uplift, Quincy MA

September 2013-December 2015

Teacher Assistant

- Tutored first grade students in math/english
- Provided English language skills reinforcement to English Language Learners.

Activities

NQHS Red Cross Club

NQHS Lacrosse Team

Thomas Jefferson Forum

NQHS Early Childhood Club

Michael White

123 Washington Street, Quincy MA 02169

617-254-6652

michael_white@gmail.com

Summary of Qualifications

- Motivated, responsible, hard worker
- Excellent communication and organizational skills
- Initiative-taker and problem-solver
- Team player with strong customer service skills

Education

Quincy High School

GPA 3.6

Anticipated graduation: June, 2018

Training

September 2014-present

Quincy High School Culinary Arts Program

- Learn the basics of food safety, preparation, and kitchen management
- Work on a team to prepare and serve food to the public in school café
- Adapt to rotating job assignments and complete all assigned tasks

Experience

Faith Covenant Dinner Program

June 2014- present

Kitchen Crew Volunteer

- Help to plan and prepare nutritious dinners for people in need
- Maintain a clean working environment: wash dishes and mop floors as needed
- Serve meals and provide excellent customer service

Certification

Earned ServSafe Certificate

January 2015

Earned OSHA Certificate

April 2015

Other

Bilingual English/French

Eagle Scout

What Is a Cover Letter?

Whenever you send a resume in the mail or via e-mail to a potential employer, it should ALWAYS be accompanied by a cover letter. A cover letter explains the following to the reader:

Why you are sending your resume to that person. This is an excellent opportunity to state your job objective, tailored to that specific job opening.

Where you learned of the job opening. If you are responding to an ad you saw online or in a newspaper, state the name of the website or the paper and the date that you saw the ad. If a person referred you, mention the name of that person.

What you can do. Explain some of your skills that would benefit the employer. Emphasize certain portions of your resume when appropriate. If you are responding to an ad, *make sure that you address how you meet the specific needs that are indicated.*

Who you are. Explain your current status. Examples are “will be graduating in June” or “recently graduated from high school”.

How you can be reached should the reader wish to contact you for more information.

Tips for Writing Cover Letters

- Address the cover letter to the person (name and title) as instructed in the job posting.
- Show that you know a little bit about the company.
- Express your interest and enthusiasm.
- Project warmth and friendliness while still being professional.
- Be specific about what you are asking for and what you are offering.
- Support, but don't repeat what is on your resume.
- Keep it focused on your job qualifications and the hiring criteria in the ad.
- Take the initiative about the next step whenever possible and be specific.
- Keep it brief- no more than 3 paragraphs on one page.
- Each cover letter should be unique to the position you are applying for.
- Make sure all of your spelling is correct!
- Sign your letter in black or blue ink. Proofread your cover letter twice!

Sample Cover Letter

February 24, 2016

Mary Crowley
Hiring Manager
The Boot Store
114 High Street
Quincy, MA 02149

Dear Ms. Crowley:

I am interested in the summer position at The Boot Store which I saw advertised on Craigslist.org.

My past experience as a volunteer at Holbrook Hospital made it necessary for me to focus on providing quality customer service, and also enabled me to work with all types of people. I have excellent communication skills and an aptitude for engaging with customers which will translate well to a sales position. I am also a footwear aficionado, so I have a passion for the products which you are selling. I believe that my experience, along with my communication skills and positive work ethic would make me an asset to your store. Enclosed is a copy of my resume.

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached at firstlastname@gmail.com or 222-222-2222. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Typed Name

Enclosure

The Five Parts of an Interview

The interview is the final hurdle that people have to cross before getting a job. Even some colleges and scholarship committees require an interview. Being chosen for an interview means that someone is interested in your skills, knowledge and experience. A great application or resume means little, though, if you do not come across well in an interview. You now must be a salesperson. The interviewer is the buyer. Sell yourself!

The interview is your opportunity to tell the employer or admissions representative about your strengths, skills, education and work experience. Know yourself so that you can positively present your strong points. See examples of different types of interview questions you might be asked on page 11.

1. Before the Interview

- Do your homework: Learn as much as you can about the company or college before the interview.
- Do some research ahead of time: Ask people who work there; research the organization on the Internet and ask your school counselors for information. This research will help you find out what services/products the company provides, how long they have been in business, whether the company is growing or downsizing, the company's reputation, etc.
- Know where you are going. Take the T, walk or drive by the site of the interview a day or two in advance. Figure out how much time you will need to get there.
- Arrive 5-10 minutes early.
- Be prepared when you go to the interview. Bring extra copies of your resume, a notepad with some questions prepared for the interviewer and a pen.
- Dress for success! Hair should be clean and combed. Fingernails must be clean with no neon or other bright nail polish. Keep perfume, cologne and aftershave to a minimum. Brush your teeth and don't forget deodorant. Remove any facial piercings and cover your tattoos.
- Women: Wear a dress or a skirt whose hem is not more than two inches above your knees, or dress pants (not yoga pants) with a blouse or jacket that drops no lower than three inches below your collarbone. Do not wear big or noisy jewelry and keep heels to no more than 3 inches.
- Men: Wear pants (not jeans!) that fit on your waist, collared shirt, tie, sport coat and shoes. A suit is not always necessary.

2. The Start of the Interview

- Enter the office area where you will be interviewed. Inform the receptionist that you have an interview, with whom it is and the time of the interview.
- When you meet the interviewer, look straight into his/her eyes, shake hands firmly, introduce yourself, smile, be confident and wait until you are offered a seat.
- Be positive in your communication and be ready to express, through examples, why you will be a good person for them to hire. Let the interviewer lead the interview. Express that you are happy to have the opportunity to meet with him/her.
- When all else fails: SMILE!

Don't:

- Smoke (including the hour before your interview. The smell lingers on your clothes)
- Chew gum
- Curse
- Slouch
- Place your hands on items on the interviewer's desk
- Fidget with rings, ties, change or other things within your reach

3. The Interview

- Always face the interviewer with good posture and body language.
- Let the interviewer know about the skills, knowledge and experience that makes you a qualified candidate.
- Know your resume well and be prepared to answer questions about it.
- Don't be a know-it-all. Express your willingness to learn.
- Be honest with all answers. Experienced interviewers can see right through "little white lies."
- Never answer with just a "yes" or "no". Always provide explanations and examples.
- If you don't understand the question ask the interviewer to explain.
- Pay close attention to what the interviewer is saying.

- Organize your thoughts before speaking. Feel free to think for a moment about tough questions. Silence is not a bad thing as long as you do not take an excessive amount of time.
- Watch for illegal questions, such as information about your age, religion, race, ethnicity or marital status. (See chart on page 16)

Don't:

- Emphasize your weaknesses- focus on the strengths and skills you do possess.
- Draw attention to negative attributes such as poor attendance, grades, being fired, etc.
- Criticize former employers, co-workers or school personnel.
- Discuss personal issues, good or bad, which are irrelevant.
- Discuss salary or benefits unless the interviewer brings it up first.

Remember that you represent a risk to the employer. A hiring mistake can be expensive. Show that you are highly motivated, energetic and ready to learn.

4. **The End of the Interview**

- Ask the job-related questions you prepared for the interview if you haven't had a chance to ask them already in your discussion. (see below)
- You may be offered the job immediately. In that case you should ask about specific salary, benefits and work hours. You do not have to give an immediate answer. Ask for a day to think about it.
- If you are told that you will be contacted, ask about how long it will be. Offer to call in a few days to find out the decision. This shows your continued interest.
- Ask for the interviewer's business card so that you have complete contact information.
- Thank the person for the interview.
- Shake hands firmly on the way out.

Questions YOU Might Ask Your Interviewer:

- How would I spend my time in a typical day?
- What skills would an ideal candidate have?
- To whom would I report?
- How will my performance be evaluated?
- What would be my greatest challenge?
- What is the next step in this process?

5. The Follow Up

- Send the interviewer a thank you letter soon after the interview (preferably within 24 hours). Even if you send an e-mail, send a snail mail version as well.
- Call about a week after the interview to see if they have made a decision. If not, find out when they expect to have a decision.

Why People Aren't Hired

- Poor or inappropriate personal appearance
- Inability to communicate clearly (bad grammar, mumbling)
- Lack of enthusiasm and confidence
- Condemning past employers
- Failure to look interviewer in the eye
- Limp handshake
- Late to the interview
- Does not thank interviewer for his/her time
- Asks no questions
- Lack of knowledge about business or position

How are you Rated During the Interview?

Appearance	25%	Attitude	40%
Communication Skills	25%	Job qualifications	10%

Typical Interview Questions

(adapted from *Workwise*)

1. Can you tell me a little something about yourself?

This is the time to refer the information that is on your resume and talk about it in a way that is relevant to the job you are applying for. This information may include past work experience, school clubs and organizations to which you belong; work; career goals; hobbies and interests. Keep the conversation professional, though. This is not the time to talk about how much you like to play video games (unless, of course, you are applying for a position where you will be paid to play video games).

2. Have you ever done this type of work before?

Each position has its own special features so you will not have done the exact job before. You may have done similar work, though. Don't say you have never done this type of work. Instead talk about experiences that you have had that relate in some way to the position you are seeking. Mention your ability to learn quickly.

3. Why should I hire you?

Go into the interview having identified your positive personal traits and characteristics. You know yourself and must be able to tell the employer that you are reliable, dependable and able to get along with others. This is the time for you to speak positively about the skills that have been part of your home and school education. Don't brag, but make sure to mention all of your positive traits.

4. Why do you want to work for me? Why do you want to work here?

Any answer here must be an honest one. The employer wants to know if you are serious about the position or whether you are using it as a stepping-stone to something else. Mention the reputation that the company has and how you want to be associated with that. Mention that you think this position will give you something that you can do well and enjoy. Think of what the advantages are and why you wanted the job in the first place.

5. Why did you leave your last job?

The employer is looking to see if you had any difficulties in your last position that could occur again in this job. If you were fired, discuss what you learned from the experience so that it will not happen again. Do not criticize your former employer! This might make the current employer worry that you will do the same thing in his position. You may have had a good reason to leave; the job was temporary or seasonal, the company downsized or you had a scheduling conflict with school that could not be resolved.

6. We will be calling your previous employer. What will they tell me about your performance?

Again, focus on the positive. If there were problems, allude to them but only briefly. You could say “We struggled at first with scheduling issues, but resolved our concerns pretty quickly. I was always punctual and present when scheduled” or “ In the end, the time demands of the employer were too much for my school schedule, but I am sure that she will attest to the fact that I was very focused and hard working.”

7. Considering this job and its expectations, what do you think are your greatest strengths?

You must know enough about the company to be able to discuss how your talents and abilities relate to the job description. An applicant who demonstrates familiarity with the work site and its reputation is held in high esteem by the interviewer.

8. When would you be available for work?

It is okay to answer this question with a question. Ask the interviewer when you would be needed so that you can make plans to be available. If you currently have a job, let them know that you would need to give two weeks notice to your current employer. Otherwise it is okay to let them know that you are readily available.

9. Tell me about a problem that you had to deal with in your last job (or at school)?

The interviewer wants to find out about your ability to solve problems. If the answer you give shows that you were not proactive in solving the problem, then the interviewer might worry that you don't have initiative and will not speak up when confronted with a similar problem. If your answer shows that you are a mature, diplomatic and creative thinker then the interviewer will be impressed.

References

Employers will usually ask applicants to provide a few references. These are people that the employer will call to get their impression of the applicant.

An applicant should provide the contact information of people who:

- Are not family members.
- Can comment positively about the applicants work ethic, commitment to tasks, or specific skills.
- Have given permission to use their name.

Use this area below to keep track of the contact information for your references.

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Job Interview Thank You Letters

Writing a thank you letter after a job interview is a must!

Plan to send out your thank you email and letter the day after your interview.

What you say and how you say it are even more important than the manner in which you send it. A standard thank you note should accomplish several things:

- Thank the person for the opportunity to interview with the company.
- Recap some of the conversational highlights relevant to the job.
- Clarify any information you needed to check on for the interviewer.
- And most importantly, plug your skills. Use the last paragraph as a chance to state, "The job is a good fit for me because of XYZ and my past experience in XYZ."

Interviewers have short memories. Your thank you communication, both electronic and on paper, is your final chance to make yourself stand apart from all of the others who want the same position.

See an example of a thank you letter on the next page.

Sample Thank You Letter

717 Virginia Terrace
Quincy, MA 02343

February 24, 2015

Ms. Judith Smith
President
The Smith Agency
186 Lincoln Street
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Ms. Smith:

It was a pleasure to speak with you today about the clerical position at the Smith Agency. The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I will bring to the position strong writing skills assertiveness, and the ability to encourage others to work cooperatively with the department.

I understand your need for administrative support and feel confident that my organizational skills will help to free you to deal with larger issues. I neglected to mention during my interview that I worked for two summers as a temporary office worker. This experience helped me to develop my secretarial and clerical skills.

I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Armstrong

Jennifer Armstrong

Handling Illegal Questions

Various federal, state and local laws regulate the questions a prospective employer can ask you, the job candidate. An employer's questions-whether on the job application, in the interview or during a testing process-must be related to the job you are seeking. For the employer, the focus must be "What do I need to know to decide whether this person can perform the functions of this job?"

If asked an illegal question, you have three options:

- You can answer if you wish. However, if you choose to answer an illegal question, remember that you are giving information that isn't related to the job; in fact, you might be giving the "wrong" answer, which could harm your chances of getting the job.
- You can refuse to answer the question, which is well within your rights. Unfortunately, depending on how you phrase your refusal, you run the risk of appearing uncooperative and confrontational- hardly words an employer would use to describe the "ideal" candidate.
- You might examine the question for its intent and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For example, if the employer asks "Are you a U.S. citizen?" or "What country are you from?" you've been asked an illegal question. You could respond, however, with "I am authorized to work in the United States." Similarly, if the interviewer asks "Who is going to take care of your children when you have to travel for the job?" You might answer "I can meet the travel and work schedule that this job requires".

On the following page are examples of some illegal questions and their legal counterparts.

Illegal & Legal Questions

Inquiry Area	Illegal Questions	Legal Questions
National Origin/ Citizenship	Are you as U.S. citizen? Where were you /your parents born? What is your “native tongue?”	Are you authorized to work in the U.S.? What language do you read/write fluently? (This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)
Age	How old are you? When did you graduate? What is your birth date?	Are you over the age of 18?
Marital/ Family Status	What is your marital status? With whom do you live? Do you plan to have a family? When? What are your child care arrangements?	Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Would you be able and willing to travel for the job? Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary?
Affiliations	What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?	List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.
Personal	How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are unacceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job.)	Are you able to lift a 50 pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as this is part of the job?
Disabilities	Do you have any disabilities? Have you had any recent or past illnesses? How is your family’s health? When did you lose your eyesight? How? Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This can be asked after a job offer has been made.)	Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.) Can you demonstrate how you would perform these job related functions? As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made you will be required to undergo a medical exam.
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?	Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named must be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.
Military	If you have been in the military, were you honorably discharged?	In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? What type of training did you receive in the military?

Resources for Job Preparation and Career Exploration

Internet Sources:

Massachusetts Career Information System

<http://www.masscis.intocareers.org/>

Description: The MassCIS High School/Middle School version provides comprehensive career information and includes tools that encourage self-assessment, exploration, goal setting and decision-making.

My Next Move

<http://www.mynextmove.org/>

Description: My Next Move is created for the U.S. Department of Labor, by the National Center for O*NET Development. It has an interest profiler and detailed descriptions of the world of work. Learn about different occupations and specific jobs.

Occupational Outlook Handbook

<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/>

For hundreds of different types of jobs—such as teacher, lawyer, and nurse—the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* tells you: the training and education needed, earnings, expected job prospects, what workers do on the job, working conditions

In addition, the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* gives you job search tips, and links to information about the job market in each State.

Books:

Teen Guide Job Search: Ten Easy Steps to Your Future by Donald L. Wilkes, Viola Hamilton-Wilkes

What Color Is Your Parachute? For Teens, 2nd Edition: Discovering Yourself, Defining Your Future by Richard Nelson Bolles, Carol Christen, Jean M. Blomquist

Deborah LaFavre
Youth Employment Specialist
152 Parkingway
Quincy, MA 02169

Telephone: (617) 745-4052
E-Mail: dlafavre@pqcc.org
<http://southshorecareercenters.org/>

As of 7/18/17