RESUME & COVER LETTER WRITING WORKSHOP

TEACHERS COLLEGE CAREER SERVICES (TCCS)

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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www.facebook.com/TCCareerServices

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AGENDA

- **Resumes & Cover Letters - The Basics**
- **Resumes 101**
- **Accomplishment Statements/Action + Result**
- **Cover Letters**
- **Final Thoughts**
- **TCCS Resources**

RESUMES & COVER LETTERS – THE BASICS

- **Include information that is relevant to the needs of the potential employer! Introduction of your experiences, skills & accomplishments**
- **All correspondence must be professionally produced and easy to read!**
- **Always submit both documents – unless otherwise notes**
- **Be honest – never lie or stretch the truth**
- **Do not include any personal information**

RESUMES 101

- **Self-marketing tool**
- **Generate interest in 10-15 seconds**
- **Design it to make the reader want to meet you in person – Land an Interview!**
- **Script for your job interview**

RESUME 101 – RESUME FORMATTING

- **Be conscious of white space for readability purposes**
- **Margins should be between .5 and 1 inch on all sides**
- **Font style must be consistent & should be 10-12 point size**
- **Bold,** Underline**,** *Italicize***, or** CAPTITALIZE **headings**
- **If you have multiple pages, list your full name, email address, phone #, and page number in the header on subsequent pages**
- **Your resume does not HAVE to fit onto one page, unless you are applying for corporate positions**

RESUME 101 –RESUME TYPES

- **Chronological- achievements from employment history are listed in reverse chronological order**
- **Functional - achievements drawn from education, work experience and volunteer positions are listed according to groupings of skills**
- **Combination - emphasis is on skill groupings, but achievements are listed under each position in reverse chronological order**

Use chronological or combination unless it absolutely works against you!

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE

- **Identification:** Include name, address, telephone #, and email address
- **Education:** Include institution, location, degree, and graduation date
- **Certification/License:** Include any certification – (out of state reciprocity)
- **Honors/Awards:** Can be a separate category or included under Education section
- **Language:** If bilingual; (includes sign language)
- **Related Course Work**: Relevant to the job and ONLY if you have NO related experience
- **Professional Development**: Continuing Education, Conferences, Training, Workshops, and/or Program Development
- **Experience:** Clinical, Research, Teaching, Related, Professional, Leadership, and/or Volunteer. Include the name of the organization, title, and dates of employment (month & year). Relevant & transferable to the job being considered. Use bullets to highlight accomplishments written in the action + result format.
- **Volunteer Experience:** As a separate heading ~ Include the name of the organization, city/state, and dates.
- **Presentations/Publications (if published):** Related to field of work
- **Professional Organizations:** List your status (member, President, etc…), related to job you seek
- **Activities:** Related to position/industry of interest
- **Skills:** Computer, Language (if not bilingual), and/or Interests

HOW TO WRITE ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

- **Use bullet points. Focus on accomplishments, not responsibilities!**
- **Quantify! Use an exact figure whenever you can**
- **List statements in descending order of relevancy**
- **Write current positions in present tense and former positions in past tense**
- **Include 4-5 bullets for recent and relevant positions & 2-3 bullets for older positions**
- **Write in the "action + result" format**

ACTION + RESULT FORMAT

- **The action word + result format tells employers not only WHAT you did at a certain job, but also WHY or HOW you did it**

- **You can use the words "to" or "by" to indicate you are transitioning from the action to the result**

ACTION + RESULT FORMAT

- **Your Action: Created curriculum focused on writing skills**
  - **Specifics: Focused on persuasive essay writing, short stories, poetry, creative writing and grammar; 11th Grade**
    - **Action + Result Statement: Created curriculum for 11th graders designed to enhance writing skills**

- **Your action: Analyze impact on education**
  - **Specifics: Nomadic tribes, conduct interviews with community leaders, school officials, students, and parents**
    - **Action + Results Statement: Analyze the impact on education within nomadic tribes by conducting interviews with a variety of affected groups**

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JANE DOE
525 West 120th Street, Apt. 1234 ~ New York, NY 10025
(212) 555-1212 ~ careerservices@tc.columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY
Master of Arts in English Education, Expected May 2011

Abc University, City, State
Bachelor of Arts in English, May 2006

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

School Name, City, State
English Teacher Month Year – Month Year

- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format
- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format
- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format
- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format

School Name , City, State Month Year – Month Year
Student Teacher

- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format
- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format
- Use bullet and write accomplishment in the action + result format

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Member, The National Association for English Educators, 2007 – Present

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in MS Office

COVER LETTERS

- Letter of introduction
- Make it personal
- Customize it for each employer
- State why you are interested in the company, what you have to offer, and how you can contribute
- You will be judged by the quality of your letters
- Length: one page MAX, unless otherwise specified
- Format, font, and margins

COVER LETTERS (CONT.)

- **Format (3 paragraphs)**
  - **Opening Paragraph**
    - **Job you are applying for**
    - **How you learned about the organization and position**
    - **Degree, graduate school, license/certification**
  - **2nd Paragraph (several short sentences)**
    - **Introduce your overall areas of expertise**
    - **State your qualifications - provide examples that relate to the position you seek**
  - **3rd Paragraph**
    - **Two or three skills and how the population will benefit**
    - **Thank the employer for his/her time**
    - **Provide contact information**
    - **Available for questions**

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2 spaces
Date

4 spaces
Name
Title
Organization
Street Address or PO Box #
City, State, Zip Code
1 space
Dear Mr./Ms_____:
1 space
1st Paragraph: State why you are writing by identify the position, field or general area of your inquiry. Tell how you heard of the opening or organization. Be specific: tell them that the job was listed on TCCS LINK. If you were referred by someone, include that persons first and last name. Let the employer know the degree you will receive or received, the graduate school you attend or attended, the type of license/certification you will be eligible for or have, and that your resume is attached.

2nd Paragraph: Include a sentence that introduces your overall areas of expertise which illustrates that you are qualified for this position (this sentence can also be included as the closing sentence of your first paragraph). Indicate why you are particularly suited for this company and this job by looking at the job description. Highlight your relevant achievements and qualifications. Elaborate on key points from your resume without repeating your resume word-for-word. Be specific by providing examples from your current and/or past experience, volunteer experience, academic, or training. Avoid “I feel" and "I believe” phrases.

3rd Paragraph: Include two or three of your skills that relate to the position and how the population will benefit from these skills. Let the employer know that you are available for questions about your background and experience. Thank the employer for his/her consideration. Include your phone number and email address (same contact information listed on your resume)

2 spaces
Sincerely,

3 spaces
Your Name Typed

FINAL THOUGHTS

- All correspondence must be accomplishment oriented and relevant to the reader
- How to send your resume and cover letter as a PDF
- Always remember that this is a business correspondence
- Get feedback from others
- Print on standard size, high quality bond paper
- Do not staple, use a paperclip
- Keep copies of all correspondence
- Questions??

TCCS RESOURCES

- TCCS LINK (Register today on My TC Portal!!)
  - Resource Library
  - Personal Events Calendar
  - Alumni Mentoring & Career Networking Program
  - Announcements
- TCCS Weekly & Alumni Listserv & Teacher Prep Listserv
- TCCS on My TC Portal
  - Vault, Wetfeet, & Going Global
  - Online Career Development Resources
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae/Cover Letter Review Service
- Career Counseling (Call 212.678.3140 to set up an appointment)
- Online Workshops (located on the Resource Library on TCCS LINK)
- Walk-ins
- TCCS Website Resource Section
  - Career Development Resources (Identify Career Goals, Job Search, Interview & Salary Tips)
  - Resume/Curriculum Vitae/Cover Letter Guides & Samples
  - Social Media Guides (LinkedIn, Facebook & Twitter)
  - Resources by Industry & Interest Group
  - TCCS Library
  - TCCS Brochure
- TCCS Library
- Mock Interviews
- Interfolio, Inc