



Career Services Center

Resume Writing Guide

(Includes sample cover and thank you letters)

Please visit the Career Services Center with any questions

Location: Room A254

careers@mchenry.edu

815-455-8566

GUIDE TO RESUME WRITING

The purpose of your resume is to **get an interview**. How can you create a marketing document that sells your skills and accomplishments, makes you stand out above the rest and gets the employer to call you? This guide will give you the basics of resume writing.

Resume Basics:

- There is no one correct way to write a resume
- It must look good
- It must be RELEVANT

Resume organization:

While there are other styles of resumes, the Society of Human Resource Professionals confirms that over 90% of employers prefer reverse chronological resumes. This type of resume is organized into different sections to make it easier for the employer to find the information that is relevant to them. Generally, these sections fall into six categories:

- Contact information
- Summary or Profile
- Education
- Experience
- Activities
- Additional skills/Honors/Awards/Volunteer or other relevant information

Each section is shown on the sample resume on the next page.

Resume Writing Do's and Don'ts

DO	DON'T
Sharply focus on employer needs	Stress about length-2 pages are fine if it's relevant to the employer
Use action verbs to focus on accomplishment and skills developed	Write complete sentences-bullet points on resumes are sentence fragments
Sweat the small stuff! Word choice, punctuation and grammar count	Use personal pronouns like I, me, or my
Quantify and qualify your experience	Use pictures or borders
Be consistent in formatting, margins and bullets	Include personal information
Make it look good! This is an image of you	Include irrelevant information such as hobbies or outside interests
Chose to use periods or not - chose one and stick with it	List references - those go on another sheet
Know yourself-you can't sell what you can't verbalize	Use quirky emails! Create a professional email specifically for your resume and job search
Proofread often - spellcheck is not enough	Include more than 10-15 years' experience
Use a sans serif font like Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, Lucida Sans, Century Gothic or Trebuchet in no less than 11pt for readability	Write "References Available Upon Request"
Have it critiqued by Career Services	Send it out without asking "SO WHAT?"

Guide to Resume Writing – Sample Resume

Contact Info: Name, City, State, Zip, Phone, E-mail address & LinkedIn Profile location (if applicable)

Henry M. Scot

Crystal Lake, IL 60012

Insert link address for LinkedIn profile

815-456-7890

h.scots@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE (Optional)

Optional: Summary Statement or Objective: BRIEF

Brief 1 – 2 sentences summarizing your experience or what type of employment you are seeking

Education: Degree, School Name, City, State, Date of Completion (or expected date), Degree courses (if within a year or so of completion) If over 2 years no courses necessary

EDUCATION

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE, Crystal Lake, IL May 2018
Associates in Applied Science in Digital Media GPA: X.X/4.0 *

Or

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE, Crystal Lake, IL
Certificate in Manufacturing Processes

May 2018
GPA: X.X/4.0 *

Skills: List language and high-level computer skills**

EXPERIENCE

Work Experience: List in REVERSE chronological order with job title, company, company location & dates (positions within last 10 years only unless applicable to job seeking)

Job Title March 2011 – Present
EMPLOYER, City, State

- Use action word to begin each bullet.
- Describe job duties, responsibilities and skills used or developed in this position.
- Include accomplishments, with quantitative detail if possible.

Work Experience: Use bullet points to quantify & qualify your accomplishments using ACTION words.

Lead Cashier December 2009 – April 2011
WINDMILL ICE CREAM SHOPPE, Woodstock, IL

- Developed weekly work schedule for 6 cashier staff.
- Adjusted standard shift times to maintain customer service levels and reduce payroll costs by 12 hours per week.
- Trained 3 new associates to take orders and document inventory.

NOTE: Education & Work Experience sections may be reversed based on your strengths/experience

ACTIVITIES

Volunteer

Hometown Animal Shelter, Huntley, IL

- Clean cages and assist in animal grooming.
- Assist in adoption event programs.

March 2009 - Present

Activities: Relevant to your experience & the employer: Activities, Professional Organizations, Awards, Technical Skills, Volunteer or Other titles/relevant experience may be used.

HONORS

Name of Award / Scholarship (briefly describe the nature of the award/honor)

Dates optional

Notes

* Include GPA if 3.0 or above.

** As college-level students, proficiency with MS Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel may be expected by employers, so listing these skills in your resume may not immediately add value. However, Access is a more unique program and listing this proficiency could be valuable (especially if an employer lists working with Access within the job description). Including computer skills beyond standard MS Office products can be positive and strategic.

RESUME INFORMATION WORKSHEET

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you gather your thoughts and job information prior to creating your resume. It helps identify the dates you worked where and for how long.

First and Last Name: _____ **E-mail Address:** _____
City, State & Zip: _____ **LinkedIn Profile** _____
Phone #: _____ **weblink:** _____

Summary Statement: _____

Education
High School _____ **Dates Attended** _____
City State: _____

College _____ **Dates Attended** _____
City State: _____ **Degree (if applicable)** _____

Experience (Go back at least 10 years if possible)
Company #1 _____ **Dates Worked** _____
City, State _____ **Reason for Leaving** _____
Job Title _____
Responsibilities/Achievements _____

Company #2 _____ **Dates Worked** _____
City, State _____ **Reason for Leaving** _____
Job Title _____

Responsibilities/Achievements _____

RESUME INFORMATION WORKSHEET

Experience (cont) (Go back at least 10 years if possible)

Company #3	_____	Dates Worked	_____
City, State	_____	Reason for Leaving	_____
Job Title	_____		

Responsibilities/Achievements _____

Other
Skills:

Professional Organizations

Volunteer Work

If your background is more complex than this guide covers, if you are interested in other forms of resumes, or if you just have questions, please contact Career Services. We would love to help you!

Henry M. Scot

9800 W. Apple Ave.
Crystal Lake, IL 60012

815-456-7890
h.scots@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE (Optional)

Brief 1 – 2 sentences summarizing your experience or what type of employment you are seeking

EDUCATION

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE, Crystal Lake, IL
Associates in Applied Science in Digital Media

May 2018
GPA: X.X/4.0 *

Or

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March 2011 – Present

EMPLOYER, City, State

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Lead Cashier

December 2009 – April 2011

WINDMILL ICE CREAM SHOPPE, Woodstock, IL

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Henry M. Scot

Crystal Lake, IL 60012

(815) 456-7890 h.scot@gmail.com

Objective: To obtain a position with a company that will allow me to gain skills and experience for the opportunity to advance

- Highlights:**
- Assertive, self-motivated, goal-oriented, organized and efficient
 - Able to work with others toward a team goal
 - Capable of handling multiple projects concurrently
 - Excellent communication, interpersonal and organizational skills
 - Familiar with computer software such as Microsoft Office XP

Experience: McHenry County College Crystal Lake, IL
Departmental Assistant 2013 to Present

- Perform variety of clerical duties and other duties pertinent to establishment
- Receive callers at establishment, determine nature of business and direct callers to destination
- Expedite communication between upper level management and general personnel
- Operate telephone console to receive incoming messages
- Type memos, correspondence, reports and other documents

First American Bank Woodstock, IL
Teller 2011 – 2013

- Received and disbursed money, and kept records of money and negotiable instruments involved in financial transactions
- Entered customers' transactions into computer and issued computer-generated receipts
- Balanced currency, coin and checks in cash drawer at end of shift, using calculator
- Explained, promoted and sold products and services, such as travelers' checks, savings bonds, money orders and cashier's checks
- Assisted subordinates and supervisors in identifying and resolving problems

Education: McHenry County College Crystal Lake, IL
Associate in Arts Expected: 2020

- Major: Business Management

Daley College Chicago, IL
Bank Teller Certificate 2019

- Affiliations:**
- Vice President of Student Government Association
 - Member of Phi Theta Kappa

Communication/People Skills:

Addressed	Conveyed	Enlisted	Judged	Participated	Resolved
Advertised	Convinced	Explained	Lectured	Persuaded	Responded
Arbitrated	Corresponded	Expressed	Led	Presented	Sold
Arranged	Created	Formulated	Listened	Promoted	Solicited
Articulated	Debated	Furnished	Manipulated	Proposed	Specified
Authored	Defined	Helped	Marketed	Publicized	Spoke
Clarified	Developed	Identified	Mediated	Read	Suggested
Collaborated	Directed	Incorporated	Merged	Reasoned	Summarized
Communicated	Discussed	Influenced	Moderated	Reconciled	Synthesized
Composed	Dispatched	Interacted	Motivated	Recruited	Translated
Condensed	Distinguished	Interpreted	Negotiated	Referred	Traveled
Conferred	Drafted	Interviewed	Observed	Reinforced	Wrote
Consulted	Edited	Involved	Obtained	Reported	
Contracted	Elicited	Joined	Outlined		

Creative Skills

Abstracted	Customized	Established	Initiated	Modified	Revitalized
Acted	Designed	Explored	Innovated	Originated	Shaped
Adapted	Developed	Fashioned	Instituted	Painted	Shared
Began	Devised	Formulated	Integrated	Perceived	Set
Combined	Directed	Founded	Introduced	Performed	Solidified
Composed	Discriminated	Generated	Invented	Photographed	Solved
Conceptualized	Displayed	Illustrated	Launched	Planned	Synthesized
Condensed	Drew	Imagined	Memorized	Published	Visualized
Created	Entertained	Imported	Modeled	Revised	Wrote

Data/Financial Skills

Administered	Balanced	Detailed	Maintained accuracy		Researched
Adjusted	Budgeted	Determined	Managed	Programmed	Retrieved
Allocated	Calculated	Developed	Marketed	Projected	Trimmed
Analyzed	Computed	Estimated	Measured	Qualified	Solved
Appraised	Conserved	Extracted	Netted	Reconciled	Yielded
Assessed	Corrected	Forecasted	Planned	Reduced	
Audited	Decreased	Increased speed	Prepared		

Helping Skills

Adapted	Cared	Directed	Guided	Perceived	Safeguarded
Adjusted	Clarified	Educated	Helped	Prevented	Serviced
Advised	Coached	Encouraged	Integrated	Provided	Simplified
Advocated	Collaborated	Ensured	Insured	Referred	Spoke
Aided	Contributed	Expedited	Intervened	Rehabilitated	Supplied
Answered	Cooperated	Facilitated	Led	Related	Supported
Arranged	Counseled	Familiarized	Listened	Rendered	Used teamwork approach
Assessed	Demonstrated	Furthered	Mentored	Represented	Volunteered
Assisted	Developed sensitivity		Motivated	Resolved	
Attended	Diagnosed				

Manual Skills

Assembled	Controlled	Handled	Performed	Retooled	Worked
Bound	Drilled	Lifted	Set-up	Shipped	

Management/Leadership Skills

Accentuated	Controlled	Established	Increased	Oversaw	Restructured
Administered	Converted	Evaluated	Initiated	Performed	Reviewed
Advanced	Coordinated	Executed	Inspected	Planned	Salvaged
Analyzed	Cut	Expanded	Instituted	Presided	Saved
Appointed	Decided	Fine Tuned	Led	Prioritized	Scheduled
Approved	Delegated	Generated	Managed	Produced	Secured
Assigned	Developed	Handled	Merged	Quadrupled	Selected
Attained	Directed	Headed	Moderated	Recommended	Streamlined
Chaired	Doubled	Hired	Motivated	Recovered	Strengthened
Considered	Eliminated	Hosted	Navigated	Recruited	Supervised
Consolidated	Emphasized	Implemented	Organized	Reorganized	Terminated
Contained	Enforced	Improved	Originated	Replaced	Tripled
Contracted	Enhanced	Incorporated	Overhauled	Restored	Troubleshoot

Organizational/Detailed Skills

Accomplished	Compared	Executed	Maintained	Provided	Scheduled
Achieved	Compiled	Facilitated	Met deadlines	Purchased	Screened
Approved	Completed	Filed	Monitored	Recorded	Standardized
Arranged	Configured	Followed through		Registered	Submitted
Catalogued	Corrected	Generated	Obtained	Reserved	Supplied
Charted	Corresponded	Implemented	Operated	Responded	Systematized
Classified	Dispatched	Incorporated	Ordered	Retained	Tabulated
Coded	Distributed	Inspected	Organized	Retrieved	Updated
Collated	Diversified	Judged	Prepared	Reviewed	Validated
Collected	Enforced	Logged	Processed	Routed	Verified

Research Skills

Analyzed	Critiqued	Experimented	Inspected	Observed	Studied
Branded	Decided	Explored	Interpreted	Organized	Summarized
Catalogued	Detected	Extracted	Interviewed	Perceived	Surveyed
Clarified	Determined	Extrapolated	Invented	Published	Synthesized
Collected	Differentiate	Field Formulated	Investigated	Recognized problems	
Compiled	Documented	Gathered	Linked	Reviewed	Tested
Compared	Evaluated	Hypothesized	Located	Searched	Wrote
Conducted	Examined	Indoctrinated	Measured	Solved	Systematized

Teaching Skills

Adapted	Communicated	Empowered	Focused	Instructed	Stimulated
Adopted	Conducted	Enabled	Guided	Invented	Taught
Advised	Coordinated	Encouraged	Individualized	Motivated	Tested
Benchmarked	Counseled	Enlightened	Influenced	Persuaded	Trained
Briefed	Critiqued	Evaluated	Informed	Schooled	Transmitted
Clarified	Decided	Explained	Initiated	Shaped	Tutored
Coached	Developed	Facilitated	Instilled	Simulated	Valued

Technical Skills

Adapted	Conserved	Engineered	Printed	Regulated	Specialized
Applied	Constructed	Fabricated	Programmed	Remodeled	Standardized
Assembled	Converted	Fortified	Rebuilt	Repaired	Studied
Automated	Debugged	Installed	Rectified	Replaced	Upgraded
Built	Designed	Maintained	Re-designed	Restored	Utilized
Calculated	Determined	Operated	Re-engineered	Solved	
Computed	Developed	Overhauled			

An action verb expresses achievements or something a person does in a concise, persuasive manner.

- Absorbed
- Accelerated
- Accentuated
- Accomplished
- Achieve
- Adhered to
- Administer
- Adopted
- Advance
- Announced
- Apply
- Appraised
- Apprehended
- Assess
- Assign
- Assimilated
- Assist
- Attained
- Attracted
- Authorize
- Balanced
- Bargained
- Beneficial
- Benefited
- Bolstered
- Boosted
- Budgeted
- Built
- Carry out
- Caused
- Charted
- Check
- Close
- Collaborate
- Combine
- Command
- Commissioned
- Complied
- Conduct
- Construct
- Continue
- Contributed
- Controlled
- Cooperate
- Coordinate
- Create
- Critique
- Delegated
- Demonstrated
- Derived
- Designate
- Design
- Detect
- Develop
- Devised
- Direct
- Discharged
- Dispatch
- Display
- Earned
- Effected
- Efficient
- Emphasized
- Employ
- Empower
- Enforce
- Engineer
- Enhanced
- Enrich
- Establish
- Exceed
- Excelled
- Exercised
- Exerted
- Exhibited
- Expedited
- Featured
- Financed
- Forecast
- Formed
- Formulated
- Fulfill
- Generate
- Granted
- Guided
- Handled
- Helped
- Hosted
- Implemented
- Increased
- Indicated
- Influenced
- Initiated
- Innovated
- Instituted
- Integrated
- Invested
- Investigated
- Justified
- Listed
- Logged
- Made
- Maintained
- Managed
- Mapped
- Mastered
- Measured
- Mentored
- Merited
- Mobilized
- Modeled
- Multiplied
- Negotiated
- Observed
- Obtained
- Operated
- Organized
- Originated
- Outlined
- Oversaw
- Participated
- Perform
- Persisted
- Plan
- Pointed out
- Pooled
- Practice
- Prepare
- Present
- Prevailed
- Produce
- Program
- Progressed
- Project
- Promote
- Prompt
- Propose
- Provide
- Pursue
- Qualified
- Quantify
- Quote
- Reacted
- Recommend
- Recover
- Refine
- Regulate
- Reinstated
- Reject
- Remained
- Represent
- Resisted
- Resolve
- Restore
- Resume
- Retain
- Revamp
- Revealed
- Revive
- Save
- Schedule
- Schemed
- Screen
- Secure
- Segmented
- Seized
- Share
- Show
- Simplified
- Skilled
- Specialized
- Sponsor
- Streamlined
- Strengthen
- Stressed
- Succeed
- Supervise
- Support
- Surpass
- Sustain
- Synchronize
- Synthesized
- Taught
- Train
- Transacted
- Translate
- Triumphed
- Troubleshoot
- Tutor
- Uncover
- Understood
- Undertook
- Unify
- Unite
- Update
- Upgrade
- Use
- Utilize
- Validate
- Ventured
- Verify
- View
- Withstand
- Witness

HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

Cover Letter – What is it?

A cover letter is a document that allows you to show off your skills and stand out from the crowd. It shows the employer that you are interested in the job, and will summarize that you have the qualifications needed. Unless requested otherwise, you should always send a cover letter when you send your resume.

- Cover letters should contain 2 - 4 paragraphs.
- Cover letters should be less than **ONE** page in length; you want to make sure that your cover letter matches your resumes style, i.e. same font, same spacing, etc.
- A good cover letter should highlight why the potential employers wants **YOU** as an employee, not why you want the job.
- Make sure that all the information on a cover letter is relevant and factual.
- Research the name of the interviewer/HR manager and use it to your advantage and make sure to use your resources!

Basic cover letter format

Opening Paragraph

- State the purpose for writing the letter.
- The first paragraph should state how you learned about the job opportunity and that you are interested in the position.
- It should also state the job title/position, where you saw the advertisement and/or the job ID number.

Middle Paragraph

- Tell the reader why you are qualified and why you are a great candidate for the job.
- Relate how your background is a good match for the employer.
- Give specific examples of the qualifications and personal attributes you have which match what the job requires.
- This is your opportunity to explain details about your resume in greater depth.

Final Paragraph

- Close the deal – this is where you tell the reader that you would like an opportunity to interview for the position or talk with the employer to discuss the position in greater detail.
- Thank the employer for his/her consideration.
- Conclude your letter with a standard closing such as “Sincerely” and type your name.
- If you are mailing your letter or delivering it in person, leave space to hand-sign your letter as well.
- Note at the bottom that your resume is enclosed – and be sure to remember to enclose it.

There is a sample letter on the reverse side to use as a template for your own personal cover letter.

Henry M. Scot

9800 W. Apple Ave, Crystal Lake, IL 60012
(###) ###-#### h.scots@gmail.com

McHenry County College
8900 US Highway 14
Crystal Lake, Il 60012

February 17, 2020

Dear Mr. Robinson,

Please accept my resume for the career coaching position advertised on mchenry.edu/hireascot. I appreciate your consideration for this position. I believe my skills are an ideal match for the career coach role. Let me take this opportunity to present my background in comparison to the job requirements listed.

I possess strong verbal skills, with experience in public speaking gained through speaking in front of crowds of hundreds of people as a member of a theater production group. I also have spoken with an anti-bullying campaign to over 1,000 middle school students about the effects of bullying. My written skills are also strong, as I have maintained above average scores in English classes as well as taken part in Honors English classes. I take great pride in my dependability and initiative, always arriving 10 – 15 minutes early and taking control of assigned tasks. I go about my job with friendliness and enthusiasm and have often been complimented on my friendly persona, warm smile and kind words.

As you can see, my experience provides a terrific match with your requirements for the career coaching position. I deeply appreciate you spending your time to review my credentials and experience. Again, I thank you for your consideration and I look forward to speaking to you in person.

Sincerely,

Henry M Scot

HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE THANK YOU LETTER

Thank You Letter

A thank you letter after an interview is highly recommended. It shows that you are interested in the job and that you are polite and professional.

- A very small percentage of people send thank you letters, so sending one will make you stand out from the crowd.
- Plan to send a thank you letter within 24 hours after an interview.
- A thank you letter lets you bring up something that you forgot to mention in the interview.
- You can mail a thank you letter, typed or handwritten. You can send it by e-mail. You can also deliver it in person.
- Make sure to keep the thank you letter short and to the point.
- Thank you letters may give you higher consideration in the event of a tie breaker in the hiring process.

Basic thank you letter format

Opening Paragraph

- Use the first paragraph to thank the interviewer for taking the time to meet with you.
- Name the job title/position.
- Mention your interest in the job.

Middle Paragraph

- The second paragraph of your thank you letter should include the reasons why you are an excellent candidate for the job.
- List specific skills that relate to the job you interviewed for.
- The more detailed you are the more the interviewer will know about your qualifications.
- Can be used to mention anything that you did not bring up during the interview that you would like the employer to know (optional).

Final Paragraph

- In the closing paragraph, reiterate your appreciation for being considered for the job.
- Let the employer know that you are looking forward to hearing from them soon.

There is a sample letter on the reverse side to use as a template for your own personal cover letter.

Henry M. Scot

9800 W. Apple Ave, Crystal Lake, IL 60012
(###) ###-#### h.scots@gmail.com

Demetrius Robinson
McHenry County College
8900 US Highway 14
Crystal Lake, Il 60012

February 17, 2020

Dear Mr. Robinson,

I would like to thank you for the time you took to interview me and state how interested I am in the career coaching position.

My strong verbal and written communication skills, along with my experience in presenting to groups of students, would allow me to exceed your expectations. If hired, I will also show you how I am a dependable, reliable, and enthusiastic employee. I believe that it would also be a pleasure to work with everyone in the McHenry County College family

In conclusion, I would like to mention how appreciative I am of being considered for the position. I look forward to the day I hear about your decision. Thank you and I hope you have a terrific day!

Sincerely,

Henry M Scot