

Tips & Suggestions ...

... for writing an Internship Résumé

Above anything else, a résumé is a **marketing piece**. It is your opportunity to shine. Don't be afraid to honestly sell yourself and your abilities. Also, remember to:

- **Proofread, proofread, proofread.** Then have someone else proofread it again. Spelling errors, typos and poor grammar are a potential employer's No. 1 red flag.
- Limit your résumé to **one page**. An employer doesn't want a novel of your accomplishments, just the highlights.
- Initiate phrases with **action verbs**. Good: Plan, lead, design. Bad: Have been a part of, Had experience doing, Have participated in...
- Include the following:
 - Identifying information: Name, address, telephone and E-mail address
 - Objective statement: One line that gives your immediate goal
 - Education: Name of school, major, degree, projected graduation date and GPA
 - Relevant course work and projects: Upper-level courses and portfolio work
 - Relevant/professional experience: Emphasize skills, abilities and accomplishments, paid or volunteer
 - Skills: Foreign language, computer, technical and transferable skills
 - Activities: Students activities, community involvement and leadership roles
 - Honors/awards/professional membership: Scholarships and leadership awards
 - Employment: List paid positions in reverse chronological order

... for sending an Résumé via E-mail

When sending your résumé via E-mail, it is important to keep it **concise** and **simple**. Electronic résumés should not include fancy fonts, bullets, italics, boldface, color or columns. Keep it left justified, and use 10 to 12-point font sizes. Suggested fonts are: Helvetica, Verdana and Times New Roman. Again, attach the résumé as "**YourNameRésumé.doc**" to make it easy for the company to find in their files. If you have a Web site, include it within your identifying information. If you have work samples available to view online, include a link.

... for writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter, in many ways, serves as your first impression. It is your chance to be personable and illustrate your enthusiasm for the job. It is not your résumé, but merely a complimentary piece. When writing a cover letter, remember to:

- Limit the cover letter to **one page** and format it to fit the look of your résumé. Use the **same font** for each piece.
- Utilize a professional business format. Everything should be **flush left**.
- Address your letter to a **specific person**. No one names a child "To Whom It May Concern."
- State why you are writing the cover letter in the first paragraph. Start creatively to get their attention. Include **key words** like "student," "internship" and "Webster University." The first paragraph also opens an opportunity to drop names if someone referred you.
- Start the second or third paragraph stating why you are interested in the company. Show that you've done your **research**. Follow with a paragraph listing your **two key selling points/accomplishments** and show how these points relate to your skills.
- Close the letter in your fourth paragraph. Say thank you and express your intent to follow-up. Actually follow-up.

- Consider the **focus** and **tone** of your letter. Make it confident without sounding arrogant. Avoid needless details. Address what you can do for the company, not what the company can do for you.
- Prepare a list of references that support the cover letter. The list should include three to four names and their respective titles, phone numbers and E-mail addresses. Make sure to **ask their permission** to be included on your reference list.

... for sending a Cover Letter via E-mail

There are two ways to E-mail a cover letter. Cover letters can be sent as an attachment or written in the body of an E-mail. There are two considerations when deciding which way to include it:

- Prior communication. If you had prior conversations/contact with the employer, E-mail the cover letter and résumé as an attachment.
 - Put “**Internship**” in the subject line.
 - Save the documents as **YourNameCoverLetter.doc** and **YourNameResume.doc** so the company can easily identify it in their documents.
 - In the body of the E-mail, write a short paragraph reminding them of a prior discussion and ask them to please consider the attached cover letter and résumé as the formal application for the internship position.
- No prior communication. Use the cover letter in the body of the E-mail to give them a desire to open your résumé.
 - Put “Internship” in the subject line.
 - Save the documents as **YourNameCoverLetter.doc** and **YourNameResume.doc** so the company can easily identify it.
 - Start the E-mail with the first and last name of the contact person, their title and name of company in the top left corner like a business letter. Press enter twice and begin with “Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms _____,” If you do not know a specific person to address, put “**Greetings.**” Do not say “To Whom It May Concern.”
 - In the first paragraph, **introduce yourself** and what **position** you are inquiring about. Include the name of the person who suggested the internship.
 - The second and third paragraphs discuss why you want this position and what you will offer the company.
 - a) State why you are qualified (what quality or skill you have)
 - b) Give an example of when you’ve displayed or were recognized as having this quality/skill
 - c) How it relates to the company.

In the last paragraph, thank them for considering your attached résumé and say you look forward to future correspondence. Add a salutation including your first and last name, E-mail address, telephone number and a website address if you have one. A website is a great opportunity for future employers to view your work.

... for ongoing Correspondence with an Internship Organization/Company

There are three types of on-going correspondence you may engage in with the internship supervisor.

- Thank you: Send a thank you letter by E-mail or mail to thank **each person** you met during the face-to-face or telephone interview process. Write a short paragraph reminding them of a prior discussion you had. If you have a business card, include it in your thank you.
- Letter of Acceptance: This is the formal acceptance of an internship with a company.
- Thank you, but Decline: Thank the company for their internship offer, but respectfully decline. Be sure to allow for a future relationship with the company.

Tips & Suggestions ...

... for professional Phone Correspondence

Phone interviews and conversations are a way for employers to test the waters, to see if you are as good as you look on paper. Always **be prepared** for these exchanges and remember to:

- Review your own **voicE-mail/answering machine message**. It should be professional, just like your E-mail address. “Yo, leave a message, dude” doesn’t say “professional.”
- Keep notes near your phone of each place you have sent a résumé. If someone calls, they may want to conduct an interview on the spot. Always be prepared, but don’t hesitate to reschedule if you need to.
- Return calls **as soon as possible**, even if it means you have to leave a voicE-mail.
- Write out a **script** of what you’re going to say. Yes, it sounds silly, but it can be helpful during a nervous first call. A typical phone script might look like this:
 - Hello, Mr./Ms. (name of contact person), my name is (your name). I’m a (major) at Webster University and I’m calling to speak about an internship with (company name) beginning in (month).
 - If referred by someone: (Mindy Berkowitz) suggested I call you to discuss an internship...
 - If you have to leave a message: So sorry I missed you. I will call back in a couple of days. Do not ask the employer to call you back.
- Employ a less confrontational method if you are having trouble hearing or understanding someone. It’s always better to say “I’m having trouble hearing you. Can you hear me clearly?” than “Can you speak up?”
- Write a **thank you note** after the phone call that includes something from the conversation to help the interviewer remember you. Here’s an example:
 - Thank you for spending time with me on the phone today talking about (the position). I enjoyed the conversation and have a better understanding of the position. I’d be interested in an on-site interview and would welcome the opportunity to further discuss my candidacy.

... for professional E-mail Correspondence

While certain employers prefer E-mail correspondence, it should not be relied upon as the sole method of communication. However, it can be a good way to quickly make the initial contact. Just keep it professional. Save the emoticons for another time. ;-) Also, remember to:

- Make it **obvious** why you are writing in the subject line, i.e. “Application for XYZ Position.”
- Change the contact name and content of your E-mail according to the person to whom you are sending the message.
- Include the **original message** in the reply if you are responding to an E-mail. Respond to any E-mail within **two business days**.
- Never use capital letters and keep the message simple and professional.
- Scan your résumé for **viruses** before you attach it to any E-mail.
- Ask the receiver if there is a particular format you should send your résumé in, i.e. **Work Perfect, Microsoft Word** or **PDF**.
- Send a friend a copy of your résumé attached in an E-mail to ensure that it is properly formatted before sending it to an employer.
- Name your document “**Your Name, Résumé**.” It’s a lot easier to search and find.
- Keep a formal tone, even if the employer slips into an informal one.