



Western
UNIVERSITY • CANADA

INTERNSHIP PREPARATION

Resumes, Cover Letters & Interview Preparation



Presented by: Monica Giorgini
Career Program Coordinator, Careers & Experience

Presentation Outcomes



Resume & Cover Letter:

Utilize resume and cover letter resources to write documents which will market you effectively



Interview:

Develop an understanding of successful interview strategies

RESUMES

Resume Purpose

- Resumes are your first introduction to the employer and dramatically affect the screening process
- Invest the time to create an excellent marketing tool for yourself

Resumes: 4 Guidelines

- 1 **Relevant**
- 2 **Accomplishment based**
- 3 **Easy to read & without errors**
- 4 **Aesthetically pleasing**

Essential Resume Information

Contact Information

Who you are and how you can be reached

Professional Experience

What you've done

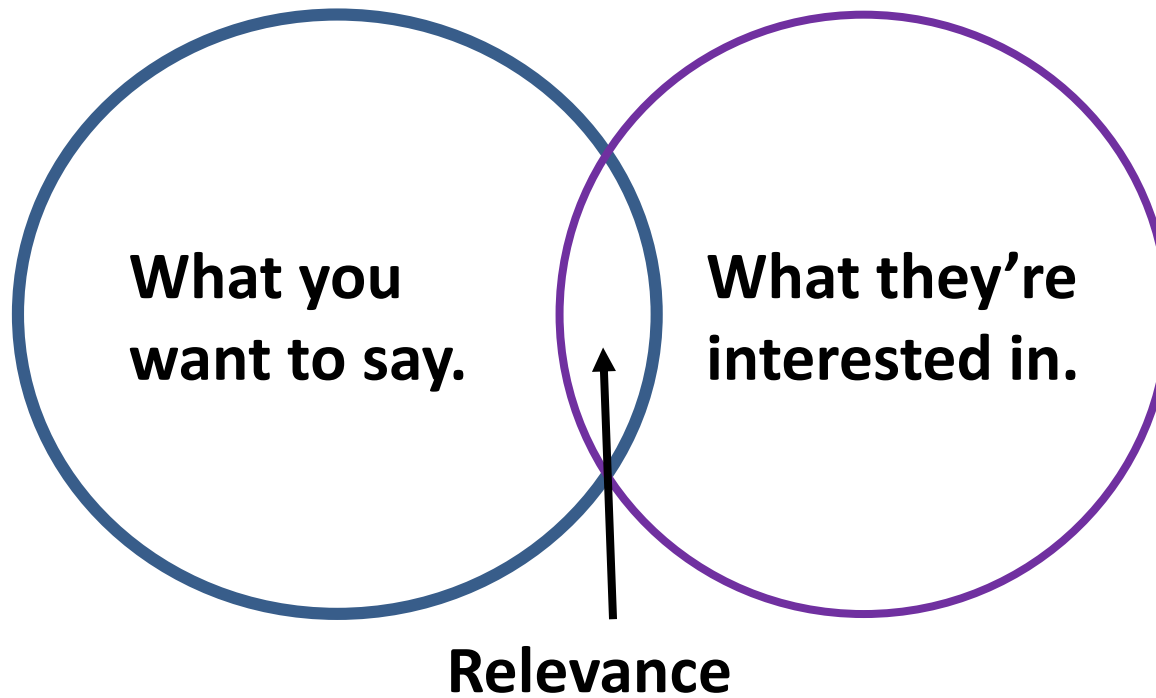
Leadership, Activities, and Achievements

What you do outside school and employment

Education Section

What you have learned or been honoured for

#1: Relevant



Prepare your resume for the right audience...

The skills/qualifications required for position & key words that define the company /organization

Your skills/qualifications as listed on your resume

Now ask yourself these questions....

- Have I included all relevant skills, qualifications, and key words?
- Are there re-occurring themes?
- Can I group my experiences or better highlight these themes?
- Does my resume make clear the type of job I'm seeking?

Resume Objective /Profile Statement

- Focuses your resume (especially in instances when a cover letter may not be required)
- Clearly informs the employer about the position to which you are applying
- Appears on the first page of your resume under your Contact Information
- Keep this short - usually a sentence or two directly targeted to the job
- Remember - the goal of your resume is to get an interview so this section needs to be clear, relevant, and honest

Resume Summary of Qualifications

- Also known as profile, competencies, strengths, or skills
- A combination of your education, work, & relevant experiences
- Clarifies your background; shows how you can add value to the organization
- Short statements used to show what you are able to contribute
*should align with keywords indicated in job description
- Often considered to be an important part of your resume & is more detailed than an objective
- Qualification section may replace an objective or profile statement - if both are included, place this section below the objective

Objective: To obtain a progressive position with a thriving organization, where my skills and experience will be effectively utilized.

Qualifications

- **Motivated and a self-directed learner**
- **Strong work ethic**
- **Leadership experience**
- **Excellent communication and interpersonal skills**
- **Works successfully in group and individual situation**

BEFORE

OBJECTIVE

To obtain the position of Financial Support Officer with the Department of National Defence

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills demonstrated through a variety of customer service positions
- Teamwork and leadership skills developed through club executive experiences
- Expertise with financial and other computer software programming with strong technical abilities in word processing, database and spreadsheet applications

AFTER

Points to Consider...

- Demonstrate fit with position
- Tailor experiences to highlight suitability
- Elaborate where necessary



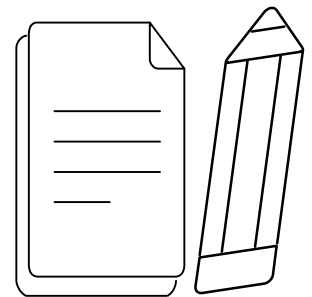
2 Accomplishment Based

“Accomplishment statements” show skills, actions and outcomes of your work.



What is an Accomplishment Statement?

- An effective way to make you stand out from other applicants
- Employers expect to see skills and results, not just a list of duties and responsibilities of past work experiences
- Accomplishments capture the employer's attention, shows what you're capable of and how you can bring value to the organization

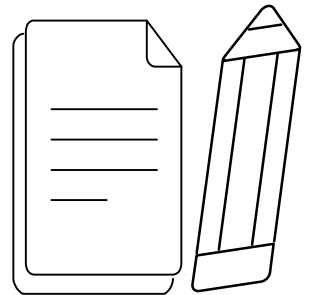


Writing an Accomplishment Statement

Step 1

Think of a time when you...

- Made a difference in your work, school, or community. What was it and how did you make it happen?
- Saved time or money for an organization, team or club; quantify your accomplishments if possible
- Received recognition or an award for a job well done
- Organized an event that had a successful outcome



Writing an Accomplishment Statement

Step 2

Use the acronym **CAR**

C - Challenge

What was the challenge, problem, or issue you faced?

A - Action

What was the action you took? How did you respond to the problem or issue?

R - Results

What was the benefit of your actions?
Who benefited....how?



Writing an Accomplishment Statement

Step 3

Transfer your accomplishments to your resume by beginning with a skill action verb (e.g. advised, evaluated, and collaborated)

Example:

“Addressed customer concerns and worked with agitated clients to resolve conflicts in a professional and courteous manner.”

Action 

Result 

Challenge 

Sample Accomplishment Statements

Retail Experience

- Enhanced customer satisfaction by increasing attention to detail which led to an increase in customer return rate

Teaching Assistant

- Built rapport with students through active listening and problem solving that contributed to an increase in class average from previous years

Project Work

- Created a data entry program that increased productivity and department profit by \$20,000 in the first year

Manufacturing Experience

- Coordinated with team to meet line production quotas on time, while achieving 10% increase in quality

Nov. 20xx - Mar 20xx GO Market
Marketing Representative & Supervisor

BEFORE

- Supervise the sales team for livedeal.ca sales events
- Sales and marketing representative for Nintendo & Energizer
- Made sure the event was organized and the booth was set up
- Set up displays in stores
- Demonstrated the product
- Answered customer enquiries

Marketing Representative & Supervisor

GO Marketing, Toronto, ON

AFTER

Nov. 20xx - Mar 20xx

- Supervised the sales team representing livedeal.ca, Nintendo and Energizer, demonstrating strong leadership and teamwork abilities
- Oversaw all organizational and set up activities, coordinated team and acted as liaison between sales team and event manager
- Demonstrated excellent product knowledge while educating a diverse clientele, resulting in increased sales

Practice Activity: Accomplishment Statement

- Take a few minutes to reflect on one example of work from your past
 - paid, unpaid, school projects, extracurricular
- Formulate an accomplishment statement
 - what skills you used
 - what task you worked on
 - the results of your work
- Share with a partner - feedback



Points to Consider...

Use Skill Action Verbs

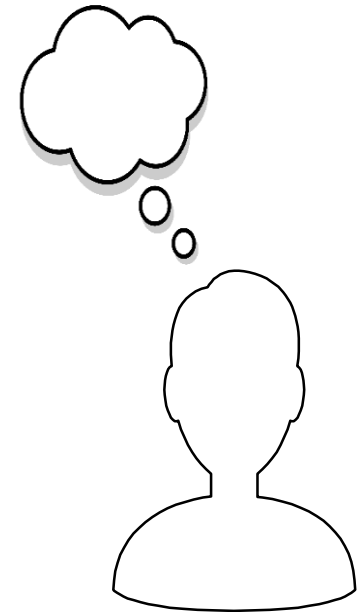
- e.g. facilitated, initiated, mediated, and collaborated

Highlight skills & accomplishments not tasks

- Use accomplishment statements liberally

Show benefits to employer/outcomes of actions

- How did you make a difference?
- What was the result of your actions?



#3 Easy to Read & Without Errors



Resume Formats

Chronological

The most common and traditional format – easily recognized by employers.

Emphasis is on your varied work history.

Work experiences are arranged in reverse chronological order (most recent first).

Functional/Skills Based

Highlights relevant skills and abilities.

Groups your experiences in terms of skills, as opposed to chronological positions. The skills highlighted are to match with the advertised position.

Combined/Hybrid

Combines features of the chronological and functional/skills based resumes. It promotes your key credentials & positive qualifications. Headings are based on skill areas and work experience is in reverse chronological order.

| Resume Formats | PROS | CONS |
|----------------------|---|--|
| CHRONOLOGICAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most common • Easy to read & prepare • Clear snapshot of career | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrates gaps in employment, and lack of experience |
| SKILL-BASED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrates transferable skills • Minimizes gaps • Doesn't indicate a specific job type | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to prepare • Employers unfamiliar with format • May not provide enough information |
| COMBINATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best of both "hybrid" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to prepare • Not commonly recognized |

Chronological Format

Experience is listed in reverse chronological order

Nursing Student - Clinical Placement

January – April 2XXX

General Medicine Unit, University Hospital, London, Ontario

- Recognized by patients and family members for kind and compassionate care; received positive evaluations from Faculty Advisor
- Provided education and emotional support for patients and families to reduce their anxieties and build trusting nurse-patient relationships

Nursing Student - Clinical Placement

September – December 2XXX

London Psychiatric Hospital, London, Ontario

- Interacted with a patient population affected by homelessness and mental illness; providing compassionate nursing care and support for patients and families

Administrative Assistant

Summers 2XXX – 2XXX

Ministry of Health, London, Ontario

- Delivered administrative support to a team of ten to twelve health-care professionals allowing other team members to concentrate on their busy case loads

Functional Format

Highlights relevant skills and abilities first. Work History is shown under separate heading, including position, company name/location & dates of employment.

LEADERSHIP & TEAM WORK

- Trained new employees and provided support to senior employee when technical changes were introduced
- Participated on university intramural hockey team, successfully competing in the championships 3 concurrent years
- Organized campus-wide fundraiser for Thames Valley Conservation Authority generating \$1200 and raising student awareness of environmental issues

ORGANIZATION & TIME MANAGEMENT

- Planned and directed group activities for 100+ student members of the Environmental Science Association, increasing membership by 20% over previous year
- Introduced new strategy to manage staff schedules, providing more flexibility and increasing staff satisfaction

Combined Format

Highlights and organizes skills & experiences in most relevant way:

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts: Major in Childhood and Social Institutions; Minor in Psychology 2XXX

The University of Western Ontario (Western), London, Ontario

Relevant courses:

Introduction to Social Work Practice: Became familiar with Generalist Intervention Model of social work practice; learned Intentional Interviewing skills and relation to theoretical bases

Introduction to Social Welfare: Developed a base knowledge of social policy in Canada

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATION

Customer Service Representative, The XYZ Group, London, Ontario 2XXX - 2XXX

- Addressed customer concerns and worked with agitated clients to resolve conflicts while fostering positive client relations and minimizing the impact of negative experiences

Assistant Manager, Japan Camera Centre, London, Ontario 2XXX - 2XXX

- Consistently exceeded month sales quotas by selling cameras priced up to \$3000

Points to Consider...

- No grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors
- No acronyms or jargon specific to one employer
- One page or two pages maximum
- Present the most relevant information first
- Room for creativity depending on industry
- Ensure your resume can be opened by recipient and not distorted if submitting online

#4 Aesthetically Pleasing

Make it easy for the reader to find the information they require!

- Enough white space (use spacing effectively to not crowd information)
- Consistent formatting
 - e.g., if using bolding for a company name, use bolding whenever showing this
- Appropriate sizing/fonts/styles/margins

References

- Ask permission to have someone act as a reference
- Keep your references informed about positions you're applying to
- Thank your references once job search is complete
- List references on a separate document, using the same header and style as your resume/cover letter
- Bring one or two copies to the interview, unless requested otherwise

References

What to include:

- Name
- Job title and relationship to you
- Company/Organization
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address

Ally Mustang

1151 Richmond St, London, ON N6A 3K7, (519) 661-2111, amustang@uwo.ca

References

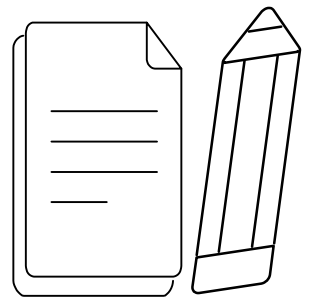
Dr. Jon Stephens
Associate Professor
Faculty of Science
Western University
1151 Richmond Street
London, ON
519-661-2111 x 5555
jonsteph@uwo.ca

COVER LETTER

Purpose of the Cover Letter

A cover letter has several purposes

- Identifies the position to which you are applying and how you learned about it
- Allows you to expand on your accomplishments
- Your cover letter should address the question, “Why should you hire me?”



Cover Letters

3 Basic Cover Letter Guidelines



Highlighting specific skills and abilities



Demonstrate your knowledge of organization



Fit between you and employer

What's Great About ME...

Management & Organizational Studies

Math Skills

- Knowledge of the budgeting process and the ability to understand and interpret financial information
- Skills to conduct quantitative/qualitative analysis of information/data to forecast trends and make plans

Organization Skills

- Determine the appropriate allocation and distribution of resources, finances, materials and personnel

more....

What's Great About ME...

Management & Organizational Studies

Management Skills

- Effectively manage people and relationships to accomplish organizational goals
- Successfully manage change in a rapidly changing global market

Knowledge Skills

- Apply business, finance and management practices and principles to a variety of situations
- Develop strategies and plans to anticipate and manage new information and technologies

This is What I Know About YOU...

Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization:

- Did you attend any employer information sessions?
- Did you speak to representatives at the Career Fair?
- What have you learned from researching their website?
- Have you conducted informational interviews with staff there?

This is how WE Fit...

Connecting their needs with your skills and/or experiences:

- Highlight your most significant accomplishments, abilities, and experiences that are specifically relevant to the employer and the job requirements.



Cover Letter Do's

- ✓ Be concise and clear in your request. Keep your letter to one page.
- ✓ Demonstrate confidence - use words such as “confident”, “certain”, and “positive” rather than “think”, “feel”, & “believe”.
- ✓ Make sure the overall tone is quite upbeat and enthusiastic.
- ✓ Show that you have taken time to research the company and the position.
- ✓ Demonstrate that you meet or exceed the requirements of the position.
- ✓ Use several short paragraphs (consider using bullet points in the middle section) to make your cover letter easier to read.
- ✓ Personalize your letter by addressing it to the appropriate contact person, either the employer or a human resources officer. Use their name and title & and double-check the spelling.
- ✓ **Proofread your letter and ask someone else to read it as well.** Use your cover letter as an example of your written communication skills.

Cover Letter Don'ts



- ❌ Don't repeat your resume in your cover letter.
- ❌ Don't end a resume without a covering letter, unless specified to do so. *Follow the instructions!
- ❌ Don't call attention to what you may be lacking – focus on what you bring!
- ❌ Don't use the same cover letter to apply to every position.

Resume and Cover Letter Help



In-Person - UCC Room 210 Monday to Friday - 10 -4
No appointment required!

http://career.uwo.ca/prepare/resume_cv/werc.html

INTERVIEW PREPARATION THE BASICS

The Interview

Employers must determine the following about you during the interview process:

1. Are you **capable** of doing the job?
2. Are you **motivated** to do the job and do it well?
3. Are you the person with whom they will like working? Will you make a good addition to the **team**?



Interviews: First Things First

- Prepare, prepare, prepare
- Know as much about the position you are applying for as well as the people you are interviewing with as possible
- The more you know about the company you are applying to, the more competent and serious you look
- How? Check out their website, or their social media. The best way is to meet people who are already working there

What Should I Bring to an Interview?

- Something to hold a copy of your resume/cover letter, official transcript.
- List of questions to ask the interviewer
- References
- A positive and enthusiastic attitude!



Should I Ask Questions?

- Always - this shows you are interested!
- Demonstrates that you have taken the time to learn about the company and position
- Limit to 2 or 3 questions
- Examples:
 - How would you describe the company's culture and leadership philosophy?
 - What would you say are the three most important skills needed to excel in this position?

Should I Practice?

- Yes, know your resume thoroughly
- Know yourself and your experiences – be yourself and be confident
- Be ready to speak on certain themes *have your skill stories ready - prepare 6 - 8 examples you can “adjust” on the fly
- Practice how you will handle introductions and closing.

How to Practice Your Interview Skills

1

Interview Stream

Access over 1500 practice questions, example responses, and more. If you have a webcam, you can conduct a personalized interview through **uwo.interviewstream.com**

2

Mock Interview

- Simulate an actual interview and receive feedback on your interview skills from a career counsellor in a video-captured session. Limit of one per term
- Schedule a 'Peer Mock Interview' with WERC (unlimited)

Types of Questions

- Traditional Questions
- Behavioural Questions
- Situational/Hypothetical Questions
- Skill Testing Questions
- Problem Solving Questions
- Case Based Questions
- Illegal Questions (race, religion, marital status, etc)



http://career.uwo.ca/prepare/interview_prep/question_types.html

Example...

“Tell me about yourself...”

Bad:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqhWU3H7djc>

Good:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=Kuo2aOOMc8Y

“What is your greatest weakness...”

<https://biginterview.com/blog/2014/02/what-is-your-greatest-weakness.html>

Behavioral Based Questions

- Designed to elicit information about how you have performed in the past
- Past behaviour is a good indicator of how you will perform in the future
- For example:
 - Tell me about a time...
 - Describe a situation in which...
 - Recall an instance when...
 - Give me an example of...

Behavioral Strategies: STARS

| | | |
|----------|------------------|--|
| S | Situation | Where you were |
| T | Task | You were facing |
| A | Action | What action you took |
| R | Result | The outcome of your action *Who benefitted? How? |
| S | Summary | Remind interviewer of the skill, strength, lesson, implications |

Example...

Give an example of a time when you had to solve an unexpected problem that arose.

S: During my job last summer, I was responsible for planning staff schedules for the summer camp program I was working for.

T: When I started, I noticed that the current schedule was difficult to read and understand. We were also unexpectedly understaffed and unable to maintain proper staff to child ratios. I needed to do something to improve this quickly.

more...

Example...

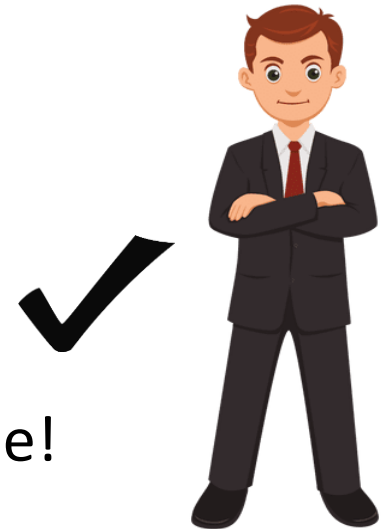
- A:** I redesigned the schedule taking into consideration staffing regulations and child to staff ratios. I collected feedback from staff and supervisors to make secondary improvements as well.
- R:** As a result I utilized some of the ideas from my co-workers and created a scheduling system which was more understandable and ensured that we maintained proper ratios.
- S:** My critical thinking and teamwork skills were very valuable in this situation, and a strength that I could bring to this position

Non-Verbal Behaviour

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Eye Contact | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicates interest, confidence, and sincerity |
| Facial Expressions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smiling indicates warm and friendliness |
| Posture | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good posture shows confidence and power potential |
| Gestures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should be minimal, natural, and meaningful |
| Space | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviewers become uncomfortable if their personal space is invaded• A meter is a common “social zone” |

Professional Presentation

- Wear business attire, as appropriate
 - Make sure clothing is clean and pressed
 - Consider personal grooming
 - Avoid scents
- *your appearance is a reflection of your attitude!



After the Interview

- Overall assessment of the interview
- Review questions you answered effectively
- Consider questions with which you had difficulty; prepare a good answer for next time
- Record name of the interviewer(s)
- Make notes for future interviews
- Send a thank you letter/e-mail to each person with whom you had contact during the interview process
- Follow up
- If you were not the successful candidate, politely ask for feedback



Internship Success...once you've started

- Arrive on time
- Map out your route, find a parking place
- Don't arrive with coffee
- Have something to write with and on
- Familiarize yourself with work culture
- Be aware of proper computer/technology etiquette (check company policy)
- Dress appropriately
- Always act professionally
- Respect environmental sensitivities (scents, food allergies, etc.)

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Need more Help?

Come visit us in UCC 210!
Monday to Friday 8:30 - 4:30

Careers & Experience

Build a meaningful life and career



Western



Career Education

Prepare for work in a changing world

- Connect your degree with future work
- Learn about job search and interview strategies
- Build your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile



Experiential Learning

Enhance your degree with practical experience

- Gain work experience
- Connect with local and global communities
- Track your involvement with *Western's Co-Curricular Record*



Employer Relations

Make connections and grow your professional network

- Access internship and job postings
- Meet employers at Fairs and Information Sessions
- Interview on campus

careerexperience.uwo.ca • connect.uwo.ca
hirewesternu