



**Write Your Own Resume and Make It Your Best Seller**  
A Guide To Help You  
***Build A Better Resume***

The resume is a representation of you and your skills. You should know what it contains and be familiar with what is listed in it. You should be comfortable with the content and be able to respond appropriately to questions regarding your experience. It is great to have assistance (especially for proofreading and feedback.) However, the resume is personal and should reflect YOU.

**Who is THE SRS GROUP?**

THE SRS GROUP is a professional staffing service. The company specializes in the mortgage and financial industry, and we have been helping candidates for since 1989.

Our job functions include recruiting, screening, testing, training and interviewing applicants. We review resumes on a daily basis, and have looked at thousands of them over the years. THE SRS GROUP also works with a broad range of companies. Through our clients, we have been given insight as to what particular hiring managers look for in an applicant. THE SRS GROUP has often been asked for their feedback and expertise on writing resumes. We have structured this ebook to fulfill that need.

# Making the Right Match

## 1) State Your Talents:

WHAT ARE YOU REALLY GOOD AT DOING?

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## 2) Describe Your Dream Job:

JOB DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING THE TYPES OF THINGS THAT YOU LIKE TO DO.

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IDEAL COMPANY, CORPORATE CULTURE OR ENVIRONMENT, LOCATION, TYPE OF COMPANY, ETC.

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SALARY: STATE YOUR IDEAL & BOTTOM LINE FIGURES. WHAT OTHER TYPES OF COMPENSATION WOULD YOU ACCEPT? WHICH FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU WHEN CONSIDERING A COMPENSATION PACKAGE?

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## 3) Non-Negotiable Items

WHAT MUST YOU HAVE TO SUCCEED AT YOUR NEW POSITION?  
FOR WHICH ITEMS ARE YOU UNWILLING TO COMPROMISE?

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4) Is this the right time for you to make a change?

Knowing when the time is right is something only you can assess. Keep in mind the following can effect your timing. Check off some of the reasons that may be affecting you to make a change or not to make a change.

<u>Causing me to change</u>	<u>(Examples)</u>	<u>Causing me not to change</u>
_____	Relationships at Work	_____
_____	Relationships at Home	_____
_____	Desire to Relocate	_____
_____	Current Commute	_____
_____	Opportunity for Advancement	_____
_____	Need more Income	_____
_____	Out of Work Now	_____

5) Identify your strengths:

<u>People Skills</u>	<u>I do it</u>	<u>I am good at it</u>	<u>I am great at it</u>
Greeting Customers:			
In-person	_____	_____	_____
On phone	_____	_____	_____
Handling Customer Issues:			
In-person	_____	_____	_____
On phone	_____	_____	_____

Rate your level of skill on a scale of one to ten. (10 = expert level.)

<u>Office Skills</u>	<u>Computer Skills</u>
Filing – alpha _____	Microsoft Word _____ Excel _____
Filing – numeric _____	MS PowerPoint _____ Access _____
Coping – sheet by sheet _____	WordPerfect _____ Lotus _____
Coping – large project _____	Internet Browser _____
Ten Key – hunt & peck _____	E-mail Systems _____
Ten Key – by sight _____	Accounting Software _____
Ten Key – by touch _____	Other _____
Fax Machine _____	Other _____

# Resume Basics

## TYPE OF PAPER:

- Heavy Resume Bond
- Light Color, so that it can fax and photocopy well
- Consider an off-white. Out of hundreds of white resumes, you want yours to stand out in the stack.

Here at SRS we receive thousands of emailed resumes.

## E-MAILING YOUR RESUME

Below are some tips for you to keep your emailed resume ready for the receiver to open, store, locate later and read !

\* Use the subject line of the email to your advantage! Do Not Put "Resume". *Everyone does that!* Put what you want the reader to know about you and make it easier to pick out of a huge email stack. Example: **Underwriter with experience in Procedures Underwriting**. Truly, you should keep the subject line as short as you can but stay clear of jargon or abbreviations.

\* Use the body of the email to 'sell yourself' making the reader want to open your resume. For example: **Underwriter with professional writing skills spanning two careers, one in mortgage procedures and one in insurance procedures.**

\* Use the body of the email to list where you are physically. Recruiters will pop open a resume faster if you are located in the area of their current job order. For example, signing your name with your location. **Mary Smith, Southern California locations: Irvine, North San Diego, Orange County area**

\* Be brief in your cover sheet, your email and resume.

\* Know your target audience. If you are recreating yourself for work outside the mortgage industry put those skills and passions first on the resume before the reader sees the word " mortgage " anything.

\* Spell check everything - email text, cover letter, resume.

\* Email a copy of your resume to yourself and check for ease of use and reading

## **MISCELLANEOUS TIPS:**

- Try to limit your resume to two pages. Include additional vital information in your cover letter.
- Put your Name and Phone Number on the second page! It is a good idea to list “Page 2 of 2” on the second page as well. The pages of your resume may become separated.
- If faxing your resume to a potential employer, Follow-up by mailing an original the same day.
- Avoid Italics and Fonts that are hard to read if faxed or scanned.
- When saving your resume in your computer, include the date in the title. (Example: Resume 08/01)
- Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!  
Computerized spell check is great. Just remember, ‘and’ & ‘ant’ are both words that the spell check would recognize as correct. However, they have very different meanings. Attention to detail is important on a resume.

## **TYPES OF RESUMES:**

The most common types of resumes are:

### **a) Chronological / Historical**

Using a chronological resume will highlight your experience in chronological order with your most recent position listed at the top. This shows a potential employer the progression of your career. This is the most common type of resume, and is great to use if you have “worked your way up” within an industry.

### **b) Functional**

The Functional resume lumps the type of experience into a particular category. Some examples of these categories are Management, Underwriting, Insurance or Customer Service. This is a popular choice among people that have worked in different fields and for individuals that are applying for a position that they have not held before. The functional resume also works well for people that have been in the same line of work for many years.

# The Resume

## 1) AT THE TOP:

Center your Name, Address and Phone Number Bolded in Large Print.

- Use a Large Font at the top of your resume so that it is easy for the Human Resources Rep to locate your information and contact you.
- It is okay to include an e-mail address. Just make sure that you check your e-mail daily so that you can respond quickly.
- The cell phone can be a good alternate phone number. However, remember to answer your cell phone in a professional manner. Have a pen and paper handy at all times to write down the contact name and phone number to call back. They may call you at an awkward time. This will be fine as long as you are prepared.

## 2) TYPES OF HEADERS:

- Summary or Summary of Qualifications
- Professional Experience
- Education
- Any ONE of the Following Headers:  
Additional Skills, Computer Skills, Related Skills, Related Coursework, or Relevant Training
- Some people add: Professional Organizations, Awards Received or Volunteer Experience.
- Do **NOT** Use an Objective.
- Do **NOT** Include Salary Information on the Resume.
- Do **NOT** State a Reason for Leaving on your Resume.

### **3) THE SUMMARY:**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The Summary (or Summary of Qualifications) is a ‘Must Have’ on every resume. This section should consist of three to four powerful statements. It is your opportunity to state the attributes that make you an ideal employee. In this section you will tell a future employer that you are a highly organized, dedicated professional or a fast learner. It should detail qualities that pertain to the desired job, but are not listed in the Professional Experience area.

#### **WRITING THE SUMMARY:**

Even though the Summary section is at the top of your resume, it is recommended that you complete it last. Once you have written the details of your Professional Experience, you can use the Summary to highlight areas that are not listed anywhere else. To get started, list your strengths and qualities. State professional adjectives and characteristics that describe you. The Summary should be descriptive and polished.

#### Examples:

‘A detail oriented team player with over five years’ experience in the insurance industry. Possess strong problem solving and communication skills. An accurate, organized professional with the proven ability to multi-task effectively.’

‘A detail oriented, organized professional with extensive experience dealing with the public. Possesses excellent customer service and computer skills. A proactive team player that works well under pressure. An independent, fast learner proficient in Accounting and Bookkeeping.’

Even though it is not expected that you use complete sentences in this section of your resume, good punctuation, spelling and grammar are important. There are several references available to you, including:

- A dictionary, a thesaurus and a style manual, such as the MLA.

A list of grammar basics and ideas for writing your Summary are detailed on page 21 of this manual.

## **4) PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

### **PURPOSE:**

This section highlights your work history. Once you have decided on the format for this area (Chronological, etc.,) you will need to include some basic information. These details include the name and location of the company you worked for, the dates of employment, your title, duties and accomplishments.

### **WRITING THE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SECTION:**

The easiest way to start is on scratch paper.

- List the companies for whom you have worked.
- List the dates of employment, and your title.
- Write the address of your employer.
- (Locate the phone number and Manager's name for future reference.)

### **Company Name & Address**

Type the name of the company. You may write the full address or just use the city and state. If the company is not well known, it is okay to include a short description. For example:

Jones and Johnson  
An Attorney Service; New York, NY

June 1999 – May 2001

### **Dates of Employment**

The month / year format is the most common. In some instances, it is appropriate to list the year only. Do not use “to Present” even if you are currently working.

(Examples: “June 1998 – May 2001” or “06/99 to 12/00” or “1987-2001”)

### **Include Job Title**

State your actual title that can be verified with personnel. For example:

International Bank, Miami, FL  
BRANCH MANAGER

Sept. 1992 - Dec. 1996

*Professional Experience continued next page*

## List Job Description and Duties

Once that task is completed, begin writing your basic job description for each company. (Remember the “Brainstorming Method” from school? This is a similar process to get you started.) It is helpful to view performance reviews from previous employers. This section states what you did, and what you accomplished.

Write the basic duties of your jobs, such as, “Answered phones, Provided clerical support to sales team, Prepared daily reports using Excel spreadsheets.” Each of these may have been important at a recent position. List all of the job functions that you can think of for each particular employer. This helps you to do two things. First, it helps you to recall all of the things that kept you so busy in the past. Second, as you review these descriptions, you may notice patterns that you had not realized before. One may see that every single job they ever had required preparing reports on several types of software. You may realize that you are capable of handling several large tasks at once. This gives you material for your Summary. One might say “Excellent Administrative Skills” or “Extensive experience with spreadsheet programs” or even “Proven ability to multi-task.”

Now, let’s edit. Put everything into perspective. Review your notes. Are you using company jargon? Are the acronyms you plan to use understood throughout the business world? Remember, the person reviewing your resume may not be familiar with your former company’s terms, policies and procedures. They probably do not know what the JAX Report is or why it is important. They will, however, be able to comprehend the statement, “Prepared monthly reports highlighting company sales and expenditures on a national level.” This will give a Human Resources Representative some insight about your former duties and responsibilities. In order to set you apart from the other people competing for the open position, tell them how you went above and beyond the call of duty. What impact did you have for that company? Did your ideas and contributions help save the company money or other resources? Did you figure out a way to do something better and faster? Were you able to complete an urgent project days before a deadline? If so, state that on your resume in the form of an accomplishment statement.

*Professional Experience continued next page*

**Accomplishment Statements** are the key to any resume. They make you stand out and separate you from the competition. Think of the resume as your marketing piece. These points will help ‘sell’ you to the hiring Manager.

Example:

Completing ten loans per day may have been great at your last job. This company may do six, or they may do twenty. Procedures and systems vary. A statement like, “Top producer within company. Far exceeded daily funding goals with a high level of accuracy.” is a much more powerful statement.

When writing your accomplishment statements, use action words. Always use past tense (even if you are currently employed.) A small list of action words follows. When used correctly, they help you create positive and powerful content for your resume. Use a variety of action words to avoid repetition. You are certainly not limited to the ones shown on the list below. Your choice of action words used should reflect your personality. Do not use action words that do not flow well when you read your sentence out loud. These should be words that you are familiar with and are comfortable saying.

**SAMPLE ACTION WORDS**

Accepted	Declined	Implemented	Processed
Adapted	Decreased	Increased	Produced
Added	Dedicated	Informed	Promoted
Altered	Delegated	Input	Provided
Analyzed	Deleted	Intensified	Purchased
Answered	Designed	Interfaced	Received
Approved	Detailed	Lead	Reduced
Assisted	Determined	Learned	Researched
Attended	Developed	Lengthened	Responded
Audited	Directed	Managed	Retrieved
Authorized	Earned	Marketed	Reviewed
Budgeted	Empathized	Mentored	Screened
Calculated	Enlarged	Minimized	Shortened
Called	Entered	Monitored	Simplified
Coached	Evaluated	Obtained	Sold
Collected	Exceeded	Organized	Supervised
Communicated	Exhibited	Oversaw	Supplemented
Compared	Experienced	Perceived	Supplied
Completed	Followed	Placed	Taught
Concurred	Forwarded	Planned	Tracked
Corrected	Fostered	Prepared	Trained
Counseled	Gained	Presented	Volunteered
Created	Gathered	Prioritized	Wrote

#### **4) EDUCATION:**

**It is not necessary to list your high school diploma.** Most employers will assume that you have one. That question is commonly asked on an employment application. Putting your high school name and graduation date on your resume only tells the potential employer your age.

**If you have a college degree, list it.** Even if the job you are applying for is in a different field than your degree, it is important to list your college education. This shows an employer dedication and implies a level of intellect. The decision of where to put the Education header depends upon the number of years since you have earned your degree and your professional experience since that time. Generally, we see the Education header near the bottom of the resume, after the Professional Experience. The exception would be for a recent college graduate. The educational experience in that field may be the most important experience you have had. In this case, it may be helpful to list the Education before the Professional Experience.

**Under the Education header, you may state:**

The Name of the School, The city and state in which it is located.  
The Degree Earned, The Field of Study, The Year the degree was obtained.

Example:

Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ  
Bachelor of Science Degree  
June 1999, Biological Science

The complete dates of attendance are not necessary. For example, you do not need to state “August 1993 – June 1999”. Many people take more than four years to complete their college degree, especially if they are attending at night. The dates of attendance are not as important as the final degree.

If you are currently attending college (and near completion,) it is okay to say so.

Arizona State University  
Bachelor of Science Degree  
English Major; Expected Date of Completion, December 2001

...OR...

Arizona State University  
Tempe, Arizona  
Pursuing Bachelor’s Degree in English

## 5) **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:**

Volunteer experience is appropriate on a resume. It becomes especially important when the experience relates to your field. If, for example, you have managed a \$100,000 budget for a non-profit organization, that information is relevant for a management or financial position. Someone applying for a job as a Police Officer may wish to list their work as a crisis counselor or as a mentor for 'at risk' children. This experience may be vital information that is not listed anywhere else on the resume.

Some people choose to omit their volunteer experience altogether. Certain organizations refer to religious, ethnic or social groups. One may feel that listing this experience will give the potential employer information relating to their non-professional life. It is a personal choice whether to state these volunteer positions on a resume. When pondering this decision, consider the value that this experience adds to your overall marketability.

## 6) **OTHER ITEMS:**

Sometimes, it is a selling feature to list additional skills that one possesses on their resume. Professional Organizations and Awards Received may be relevant as well. Any item listed should add value and be applicable to a potential employer.

### **Examples:**

#### **Additional Skills**

Type 65 wpm, 10 Key by Touch. Competent in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

#### **Computer Skills**

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Access, WordPerfect 5.1 and 6.0, Lotus 123, and Quicken

#### **AWARDS RECEIVED**

Platinum Club 5/01 and 3/01, Top Team Award 2000 and 1999, Perfect Attendance 2000.

**Industry Licenses:** Series 6 & 63, Life, Health, Property and Casualty

## 7) The “DO NOTs”

### a) **Do NOT use an Objective**

Objectives are often so general that they are not very informative. They are a section in which typos and bad grammar lurk. If the objective is specific, it often conflicts with the position, company or corporate culture to which the resume is sent.

#### Examples:

“To find a position in a progressive company where my customer service skills will be utilized.”

“To obtain a professional job that offers opportunity for advancement.”

“To obtain an accounting position in a professional environment.”

“To obtain employment with a company that is interested in my extensive knowledge and experience.”

“To offer my services to an organization that would best utilize my skills and abilities.”

What does the Objective tell a Recruiter? Nothing, except that you are looking for a job. The resume is already proof of that. It is redundant. The Objective does not say anything that can not be stated better elsewhere. Use a Summary of Qualifications instead.

### b) **Do NOT include Salary Information**

It is not common practice to list salary information on a resume. If it is stated, it will be used to screen you out. If you list a salary that is too high, employers will think that you are not within their budget and will not call you for an interview. If you list a salary that is too low, they may think that you lack experience. Salary discussions should be delayed as long as possible. This does not prevent you from determining the salary range of the position. It prevents the recruiter from using your salary history against you.

### c) **Do NOT list Reason for Leaving**

Your resume should highlight your experience and accomplishments. This is not the place to state anything that could possibly be construed as negative. This type of information is requested on a formal job application and is not necessary on the resume.

**The following is a list of actual, inappropriate statements listed on resumes as published in the June 1997 issue of Fortune Magazine:**

- Received a plague for Salesman of the Year.  
Reason for leaving last job: Maturity Leave
- It's best for employers that I not work with people
- Let's meet so that you can Ooh and Aah over my experience
- I am loyal to my employer at all costs. Please feel free to respond to my resume on my office voice mail.
- My goal is to be a meteorologist. But since I have no training in meteorology, I am applying for a job as a stock broker.
- I procrastinate, especially when the task is unpleasant
- NOTE: Please don't misconstrue my 14 jobs as job-hopping. I have never quit a job.
- Reason for leaving last job: They insisted that all employees get to work by 8:45 every morning. I couldn't work under those conditions.
- The company made me a scapegoat, just like my three previous employers
- Finished 8<sup>th</sup> in my class of 10

## **8) Putting It All Together:**

You will have to make several choices when you prepare your resume. For most people, it is easiest to have all the basic content done ahead of time. Type the basic resume in your computer. Remember, you can adjust the font size and type, the margins and the spacing to make it all fit. Save your work as you go along so it will be easy to undo any changes that you do not like. Again, avoid fonts that are too small and hard to read. While your spaces can be as small as an eight, the smallest type should be a ten. A twelve size font or larger is preferred. Use professional fonts, not a cursive or creative style that is hard to read. The content should look like "just enough." You don't want too much white space, and you do not want the information to look like it has been crammed onto the page. Try to limit your resume to one page, but space it out if you need two pages. The final result should be well centered and easy to read. Most important, it should be free of typos and market your skills and abilities.

# Resume & Interview Preparation

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

### **Most Recent**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ (For Your Reference Only)

Contact this person for a reference? Y / N

Job Description / Duties

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Awards, Achievements, Goals Met or Exceeded

What were your strengths in doing this job?

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Likes / Dislikes for this Position

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Accomplishment Statements

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Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (For your info only.)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Next Position**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ (For Your Reference Only)

Contact this person for a reference? Y / N

**Job Description / Duties**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Awards, Achievements, Goals Met or Exceeded**

What were your strengths in doing this job?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Likes / Dislikes for this Position**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Accomplishment Statements**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (For your info only.)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Next Position**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ (For Your Reference Only)

Contact this person for a reference? Y / N

**Job Description / Duties**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Awards, Achievements, Goals Met or Exceeded**

What were your strengths in doing this job?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Likes / Dislikes for this Position**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Accomplishment Statements**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (For your info only.)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Next Position**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ (For Your Reference Only)

Contact this person for a reference? Y / N

**Job Description / Duties**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Awards, Achievements, Goals Met or Exceeded**

What were your strengths in doing this job?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Likes / Dislikes for this Position**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Accomplishment Statements**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (For your info only.)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Next Position**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employed From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ (For Your Reference Only)

Contact this person for a reference? Y / N

**Job Description / Duties**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Awards, Achievements, Goals Met or Exceeded**

What were your strengths in doing this job?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Likes / Dislikes for this Position**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Accomplishment Statements**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ (For your info only.)

**EDUCATION:**

**College**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of Attendance \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Coursework \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact for Reference? If yes, whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**College**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Earned \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of Attendance \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Coursework \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact for Reference? If yes, whom? \_\_\_\_\_

**High School** (For Application)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Attendance \_\_\_\_\_  
Highest Grade Completed \_\_\_\_\_ Did you graduate? \_\_\_\_\_

## Preparing the Summary:

As stated earlier, it is recommended that you write the Summary last, even though it appears near the top of your resume. Again, this area should contain three to four very powerful statements about you. It should contain attributes that are not shown in the Professional Experience section. This is a marketing area intended to make a great first impression.

**A short list of qualities is listed below. Circle your particular strengths, and add to the list as you contemplate your greatest abilities.**

Accurate	Fast learner	_____
Analytical	Goal oriented	_____
Artistic	Hard working	_____
Attentive	Loyal	_____
Competent	Organized	_____
Courteous	Precise	_____
Creative	Professional	_____
Dedicated	Proficient	_____
Dependable	Prompt	_____
Detailed	Qualified	_____
Determined	Reliable	_____
Diligent	Resourceful	_____
Diplomatic	Responsible	_____
Effective	Team Player	_____
Efficient	Top Producer	_____
Experienced	Versatile	_____

Works well: ...	In a team environment	_____
	Under pressure	_____
	Individually	_____
	_____	_____

Skills / Skills in: ...	Accounting	Leadership	Training
	Administrative	Management	Typing
	Bookkeeping	Marketing	Ten Key
	Business writing	People Skills	_____
	Clerical	Phone Skills	_____
	Computer Skills	(Specific Job Titles)	_____
	Data Entry	Supervision	_____
	Customer Service	Teaching	_____
	Filing	Time Management	_____

## Review the following Grammar Basics and suggestions for your Summary format.

### GRAMMAR BASICS:

There are three **articles**: 'A', 'An' and 'The'. 'A' is used before a word that starts with a consonant. Example: A car. Use 'An' before a noun that starts with a vowel. Example: An Apple.

An **adjective** describes a noun or pronoun. Examples: Red, Excellent, Several, Annual  
Many adjectives are words that can also be used as verbs. They become adjectives when used to describe a noun in a sentence. For example, the word 'Organized'

- Is a verb in the following sentence: She organized the party.
- Is an adjective in the following sentence: She is an organized person.
- For the purposes of your Summary, you might start with: An organized professional...

An **adverb** is used with a verb. It strengthens, weakens or emphasizes the meaning of a verb, adjective or another adverb. It can also describe *where, when, why, how* or *how often* something happens. Many adverbs end in *ly*. Examples: Quickly, Usually, Fast, Efficiently, Accurately

A **noun** is used to name a person, place or thing. Common nouns name an item or a thing. They are not generally capitalized unless they are at the beginning of a sentence. A proper noun is capitalized because it is usually the formal name or title of something; 'John' for example.

A **verb** describes what a noun does. For the purposes of writing your resume, most verbs will be used in past tense form. Examples: He typed his resume. She processed home loans.

**Conjunctions** join words or sentences together. The most common conjunctions are: 'and' & 'but'.  
Examples: AJ and Tammy got lost. They took a wrong turn, and could not find their way home.

The basic Summary format can loosely follow the sample shown below.

#### Sentence One:

- The word 'A' or 'An', then:
- One or two **adjectives**, such as:  
Organized, Proactive, Experienced, Courteous, Analytical, Results oriented, etc.
- A **Noun**, such as:  
Professional, a specific job title, team player, etc.
- The word, '**with**', and one of the following:
  - a) X# years' experience in ... clerical support, the banking industry, administration, etc.
  - b) Ability to ... multi-task, work well under pressure, consistently meet deadlines, etc.

#### Additional Sentence:

- The word '**Possess**' and then:
- An **Adjective**, such as: 'Good' or 'excellent' and then:
- A **Skill Type**; Time management skills or Customer service skills, for example.

#### Additional Sentence Ideas:

Particular strengths include ...      Proven ability to...  
Dedicated to the principals of ...      Repeat and reword Sentence One format

**\*\*\* These sentences structures are just ideas to get you started. The final result should flow well and accurately describe your abilities.**



## **Cover Letters**

If you plan to use a cover letter, it should be specific to a particular position. Do not write one generic letter and fax it with every resume you send. The purpose of this letter is to introduce yourself to potential employers. It needs to be well written and creative enough to get the company representative to look at your resume. The goal is to generate enough interest for them to call you for an interview. Since your resume includes a Summary instead of an Objective, it is not always necessary to write a cover letter. Remember, your best characteristics are already listed there. However, if you do chose to write a cover letter, follow the guidelines shown below.

- Use a business letter format.
- State which position you are applying for.
- Site the source of the job listing; i.e. newspaper, referred by, etc.
- Keep letter to one page in length.
- Highlight any achievements that do not appear on your resume.
- Content should be informative and may include such things as desire to change fields.
- The overall sentiment of the letter should be a cordial and professional introduction.

There are many books that discuss cover letters in great detail. Often, they show sample letters that are appropriate for a myriad of situations. These books are an excellent resource to consult if you do not already have a good comfort level writing cover letters.

# **Completing the Application**

It is highly been recommended that you complete a sample application ahead of time to bring with you. **DO NOT TURN IN YOUR SAMPLE. THIS IS FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.** Having a sample application prepared will make it easier and faster to complete an employer's paperwork. You can discretely refer to your sample for addresses, job descriptions and special skills.

**Fill out the application completely.  
Print neatly and do not leave any blanks.**

Common information on an employment application includes:

❑ **Personal Information:**

Your name, address, phone number and social security number. An emergency contact name and phone number. Position applied for.

- ❑ Under “**Expected Salary,**” it is recommend that you write “negotiable.” A specific dollar amount may help to screen you out. It is best to delay salary discussions until after the interview.

❑ **Education:**

Name and address of high school and colleges attended. Number of years completed. Diploma or Degree.

❑ **Previous Employers:**

Names and addresses of prior employers for the last 7 to 10 years. Dates of employment, Job Title, Job Description, Supervisor's name and phone/fax number.

❑ **Reason for Leaving**

Know in advance what you are going to write in this section. Be honest, but put yourself in the hiring manager's position. What would you like to see there? There are many acceptable reasons for leaving. “Relocated, Laid off, Department Downsizing, To seek... full time employment or a job w/ benefits or a position closer to home” are also understandable. Just consider your current situation. It is probably not a good idea to state “To seek a position closer to home” when the job you just left was 20 minutes from your house, and this job has a 45 minute commute.

*Completing the Application continued next page*

- ❑ **Salary Information.** Writing ‘n/a’ is recommended.  
Your salary at *that* job during *that* time period for *those* duties is not relevant. Since then, you have increased your skills and earnings potential. Each company and position is different. That job may have been five minutes from your house permitting you to take lower pay. You may have earned thousands of dollars in bonuses that you would not expect from another employer. Maybe the benefits were outstanding. Each of these things play a role in your decision to accept a position. Obviously, you will review the entire package when evaluating any offer. (Be aware that this will come up during an interview. Be prepared to write salary information on the application if they consider offering you a job. You should comply with this request at that time.)
  
- ❑ **References**  
Have at least three to four business *and* personal reference names, addresses and phone numbers. These people should not be related to you. Get their permission ahead of time to use them as a reference.
  
- ❑ **Clerical Skills**  
These skills include: Typing Speed, Ability to operate office equipment, Computer programs.
  
- ❑ **Special Skills and Qualifications**  
Do not leave this section blank! This is your opportunity to “sell yourself.” List any industry knowledge you may have, special courses completed, great customer service skills, accuracy or attention to detail. All of these things are important.
  
- ❑ **Hobbies**  
Some applications have this section and some do not. If you list a hobby, be ready to discuss it in an interview. Recruiters sometimes use this to “break the ice.” If you list karate, know that the interviewer may be a black-belt. Be able to talk intelligently about a subject. If you wrote “reading,” they may ask you the last book you read. This can be a wonderful way to bond during the interview.
  
- ❑ **General Questions**  
These are listed on most applications. Be honest and have explanations prepared if necessary. (Know that “yes” answers to these questions will not automatically disqualify you.)
  - 1) Have you ever been discharged or asked to resign from a position?
  - 2) Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
  - 3) Do you have any physical condition or handicap which limits your ability to perform the job applied for?
  
- ❑ **Miscellaneous**  
If there is a space for “Additional Comments” you may write, “Please refer to resume.” However, you should still complete the job description section even if you are turning in your resume at the same time.

# Interviewing

## 1) Dress Appropriately:

Dress professionally unless you are specifically told to do otherwise. If you are unable to dress in a professional manner, let the interviewer know in advance, and obtain their approval. Don't wear heavy fragrance.

## 2) Arrival:

- Get good directions and allow plenty of time to get to your interview. Websites such as '[www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)' can give you precise directions and approximate driving times. Allow adequate time for parking.
- Arriving 10-15 minutes early is ideal. Call the company as soon as possible if you realize that you are going to be late.
- Be courteous to the Receptionist. Maintain a professional attitude at all times.

## 3) Come Prepared:

*It is recommended that you bring the following to your interview:*

- Additional copies of your resume
- A blue or black pen, pencils, paper, calculator
- Your I-9 Hiring Information  
(Generally a government issued photo ID such as a Drivers License or Passport, and proof of right to work in the United States such as a Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, Green Card or Visa.)
- A completed sample application for your reference
- Letters of recommendation or any certificates that are applicable

*Turn off your cell phone or pager, or put them on silent mode!*

## 4) Body Language:

- Maintain good eye contact throughout the interview. Follow the five second rule. Look away for approximately five seconds to avoid staring. Try not to look up a lot.
- Avoid "talking with your hands"
- Sit erect. Do not slouch or recline in the chair.
- Be aware of defensive body language, such as crossing your arms or clenching your fists tightly.
- Do not chew gum. Be aware of your tone of voice and the speed at which you speak. Annunciate clearly.

## 5) Anticipate Interview Questions and Rehearse:

### A) The Basics

- *Tell me about yourself...*  
Be able to summarize your experience and characteristics in 2 minutes or less.
- *Your Strengths*  
Confidently name a few strengths without hesitation. Give examples.
- *Your Weaknesses*  
Be prepared to answer this question. It is best to state something that you have improved upon or that is not applicable to the job for which you are applying.

### B) Experience Related Questions

These questions are usually taken from information provided on your application and resume. They relate to previous positions and create discussions about your professional experience.

- Comfortably describe specific job functions and accomplishments.
- Know the content of your resume!
- Highlight specific skills and attributes.
- Do not become defensive when discussing the reasons for leaving previous jobs.
- Avoid negative comments about former companies or Supervisors.

### C) Situational Questions

Remain calm. Answer in a logical manner. Ask for clarification if necessary.

- These questions often start with:  
“Describe for me a time when...”  
You had to meet a deadline, You had to deal with an irate customer, You exemplified great listening skills, You were not able to complete a project, You were disappointed with a work situation, You had a conflict with your boss, etc.
- These questions also take the form of an If/Then Scenario:  
“What would you do if you were...\_\_\_ then....\_\_\_\_\_” Example:  
*If you were working on an urgent project and were told to do something else immediately, what would you do?*

## D) Insight Questions

Your answers to these questions generally reflect how you think as a person and give the potential employer insight into your personality. The questions are open ended. Keep your answers honest and concise. (Try not to ramble.) Be prepared to give examples or further explain your responses. Sample Questions:

- Besides money, why do you work?
- What qualities do you look for in your peers? Subordinates? Management?
- Describe your management style.
- What do you do to relieve stress?
- What are you most proud of in your life?
- How do you feel about working overtime?

## E) Behavioral Questions

These questions often seem odd and appear to have no correct answers. They are not questions that can be anticipated. When answering them, remain calm and do not become defensive. Be cooperative and try to answer as best as you can. Your answers show your ability to work well under pressure. They are an opportunity to share positive characteristics such as creativity and good listening skills. Sample behavioral questions are:

- If you were a fruit, what kind would you be and why?
- First, pick one word from the following choices that best describes you: Honest Dependable Hard Working Accurate Intelligent  
Second, of those choices, which one least describes you and why?
- Which of the following list of occupations is the most appealing and least appealing, and why?  
Race Car Driver, Police Officer, Active Military, Sky Dive Instructor
- If you won the lottery tomorrow, what would you do with your life?
- The Interviewer may tell you a two-three minute story about an incident in which someone had to make several decisions. Their decisions revealed their priorities, their ethics and their ability to think in a stressful situation. You may then be asked to critique each decision that you can recall, and explain point by point what you would have done differently.

## 6) **Research the Company**

The more you know about the company and the position you are applying for, the better you will perform in an interview.

- You can often find information online. Most organizations have a general website and a link to pages with job postings and job descriptions.
- Your local librarian can assist you in finding recent newspaper articles and periodical news releases if that information is not available on the Internet.

This will be especially helpful if you are asked the question, “So, why do you want to work here?”

## 7) **Be Prepared to Interview Them**

Most employers expect you to ask a few questions. If you accept the position, you will be dedicating a major portion of your time and energy to that company. It is a huge decision. You want to be well informed so that you can determine if it is a good match. This is your opportunity to discuss any details or items that were not clear.

Sample questions to ask:

- What are the most important qualities an employee in this position should possess?
- Why is this position available?
- Why do you like working here? What would you change?
- What are the major factors that influence this company’s growth?
- What is the competition for this position, and how do I compare?
- What is the next step in the interview process?
- When will you be making your decision?

## Interview Preparation

### **THE 2 MINUTE INTERVIEW SUMMARY:**

Your answers to the following list of questions may be useful in determining content for your Interview Summary. This would be the rehearsed response to the question, “Tell me about yourself.”

Born and raised where? \_\_\_\_\_  
Originally from? \_\_\_\_\_  
Attended High School \_\_\_\_\_  
Interests in High School \_\_\_\_\_  
Attended College \_\_\_\_\_  
Studied which Subjects \_\_\_\_\_  
Internships \_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Work \_\_\_\_\_  
What did you gain from this experience? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Began Working Where/ Which Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Doing What? \_\_\_\_\_  
From there... did what? \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you enjoy doing? \_\_\_\_\_  
End with what led you to seek this position \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Other Key Points: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

You do not need to include the answers to all of the questions listed above in your response. Detail the most important aspects to make an overall positive impression. While you should always maintain a professional attitude, your answer to the question, “Tell me about yourself” should be conveyed in a somewhat relaxed and cheerful manner. You are talking about your own life, so you should be very comfortable with the content of your response.

*End of This SRS e-Book....The beginning of a new resume for you !*