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## PREPARE A DRAFT RÉSUMÉ

Use this workbook to learn how to get started on writing a résumé and cover letter. Use the checklist below to guide your progress.

1. Watch the online videos that introduce various parts of résumé and cover letter writing. They can be accessed at:  
<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cc/résumés>
2. Complete the activity that accompanies each video. The activities are in this workbook. In the last activity, you will draft a résumé and cover letter. You may find the following resources helpful:
  - Use the templates on the last pages of the workbook to draft your résumé and cover letter
  - Take a look at the samples résumés and cover letters in the Résumé Toolkit PDF:  
<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cc/résumés>
  - You can also use Live Career Résumé Builder for templates and formatting help:  
<http://www.livecareer.com/résumé-builder>
  - Still stuck? Visit a Résumé Ready peer at the Career Centre to discuss the workbook activities one-on-one. These peers are usually available Fall and Winter for drop-in appointments from 10:45am-4pm Monday to Friday. In the Summer, call the Career Centre Front Desk at 416-978-8000 for drop-in hours.

## BRING YOUR RÉSUMÉ TO THE WORKSHOP

Enrol in an upcoming session of the Résumé Workshop via CLN: Visit the Career Learning Network website

### AFTER THE WORKSHOP

1. Edit your résumé and cover letter.
  - Ask a friend to review for grammar and spelling.
  - Ask a professional network contact to review for fit with industry standards.
  - Consider visiting your college's writing centre for advice on sentence flow.
2. Book a one-on-one appointment through the Career Centre's front desk to have a Résumé peer review your résumé and cover letter. Visit the Front Desk in person or call 416 978-8000.
3. Bring your résumé, cover letter, and a job description you are applying to with you to your appointment.

Good luck!

The Peer Résumé Team

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## SKILLS

Being a successful student means being mature and skilled. Figuring out how to organize your schedule to attend classes and workshops or hand in final papers on time takes skills that can be translated to any career. There are several types of skills:

- **Hard skills:** Practical abilities formed through concrete experiences (e.g., computer skills);
- **Soft skills:** Intangible, non-technical; employers pay special attention to these hard-to-teach skills (e.g., communication);
- **Transferable skills:** Applicable to many working environments; they can be hard or soft.
- **Describe Your Top Skills:** In each box, identify a skill that you're proud of and describe how an experience from school, work, or volunteering helped you develop that skill.

### Naming Your Skills:

When describing a skill on your résumé, think carefully about the word you're using. Would a different word better describe the task? The list below isn't exhaustive; use it to brainstorm names for your skills. Technical skills may also be important to an employer; if so, include these in your application, too.

#### Communication

- Composed
- Critiqued
- Edited
- Facilitated
- Promoted

#### Learning

- Applied
- Explored
- Investigated
- Researched

#### Coordination

- Chaired
- Delegated
- Founded
- Spearheaded
- Supervised

#### Problem-Solving

- Analyzed
- Evaluated
- Implemented
- Persuaded
- Resolved

#### Working in a Team

- Collaborated
- Listened
- Motivated
- Participated
- Supported

#### Time-Management

- Organized
- Prioritized
- Planned
- Scheduled

If you're interested in learning more about connecting your experience to skills, check out the workshop titled '[You've Got Skills](#)', designed to help you understand the skills you've drawn from your experiences. You can also ask a manager or colleague for feedback on your work to better understand the types of skills they've seen you display at work.

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## RESEARCH

When writing your résumé, research the potential employer and its needs. Below are 4 sources of information and activities to help you research job opportunities. You can also use this information to prepare for job interviews.

- The Career Centre: The Career Centre has many resources to help you with your career planning and job search. Begin by checking out CLN or meeting with a Career Start peer to learn more about what's available;

**ACTIVITY:** What will you gain from the position you are applying to (e.g., skills, experience), and how will this benefit you in the future? (Keep your career goals in mind.)

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- The Internet: When applying for a job, read through similar job postings. Skills found in several similar positions are often essential to the job to which you are applying;

**ACTIVITY:** Using a job board (like Indeed), find two job postings similar to the one you are applying to. List the skills that are important to all three positions.

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- People: Gain first-hand knowledge of a company or and the personalities of employees by speaking with someone who works for the company;

**ACTIVITY:** Find two of the company's employees in LinkedIn whom you'd be interested in speaking to. Generate 3 questions you would ask them to learn more about the organization's work environment and culture (e.g., how departments interact).

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- Company or organizations: Read information written by a company about itself (including mission, vision, values, and annual reports) and news coverage of the company to learn about the company culture and recent history;

**ACTIVITY:** Find the company's mission statement, vision and values. What have you learned about working for the organization? Why does this interest you?

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If you're interested in learning more about conducting job-related research, check out the workshop titled '[Finding Work](#)'. To learn more about informational interviewing, check out '[Interview Them](#)'.

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## FORMAT YOUR RÉSUMÉ

You've identified your skills, and learned more about the job you are applying to. Now it's time to put this information together by drafting a résumé.

### Resume Formats:

There are a few ways to present your experiences in a résumé. Employers usually prefer reverse chronological résumés. See the Resume Toolkit at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cc/résumés> for the following examples:

- Jayani Lal's and Maxwell Smith's experiences have built toward jobs they are applying to now (reverse chronological).
- Matthew Stuart's and Jonathan Chang's have held experiences relevant to the jobs they are applying to now, but those experiences are not their most recent (modified reverse chronological).

### Pro Tips:

- The first information to appear in your résumé should be your name and contact information (including your phone number and professional email address, and if you'd like, your LinkedIn address and your home address.);
- Order your section headings and the bullet points you use to describe your experiences in terms of relevance to the job description;
- Use three to six bullet points to describe each of your experiences, within two lines per bullet point;
- Maintain consistency throughout your résumé, with regard to font and emphasis (bolding, italics, or underlines);
- Use an easy-to-read font, like Calibri and Cambria;
- Ask friends to check for spelling and grammar ... ensure perfection here.

### Résumé Headers:

Below are some headers that might help you decide what to include in your résumé. This list isn't exhaustive. Use the headers that best illustrate how your qualifications fit with the job to which you're applying, add other headers as appropriate, and order the headers according to relevance to the position.

#### EDUCATION

- Program, University, and (Anticipated) Graduation Date
- Relevant Courses/GPA (include no more than 3 courses, and write the full course name)
- Relevant Project Work (describe one or more projects using bullet points)
- Awards, Scholarships (include a statement explaining relevance of the award to the job application)

#### EXPERIENCE (listed in reverse chronological order, or modified reverse chronological order)

- Work
- Co-curricular Activities
- Volunteer Activities

OTHER HEADERS may include Certifications, Skills, and/or Interests

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## FORMAT YOUR COVER LETTER

Compared with the résumé, the cover letter has a more standard format. It allows you to elaborate on one or two of the experiences or skill area(s) you've mentioned in your résumé.

### Cover Letter Sections:

- The header: This should be exactly the same as on your résumé;
- Salutation: Address the cover letter to the hiring manager for the position. Use the individual's full name unless you know of a different preference (ex, 'Dr.' or 'Professor'). Use 'Hiring Manager' or 'Hiring Committee' as backup.
- First paragraph: Refer to the position to which you're applying (include reference number) and how you found out about the position (job board, networking, etc.). Explain what interests you about the company or job.
- Middle paragraph(s): More fully describe an experience or skill relevant to the job to which you're applying, adding to the information in your résumé.
- Final paragraph: Provide your contact information and thank the employer for considering your application.
- A cover letter is 1 page max.

### Cover Letter Template:

Name

Phone # • Email • LinkedIn address • Home Address (if preferred)

Application Date (Month/D/Y)

Dear (FirstName) (LastName):

Please accept my application to the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (Ref # \_\_\_\_\_). I learned of this position \_\_\_\_\_. I am interested in this position because \_\_\_\_\_.

In one paragraph, describe how you have developed a skill that is essential to the job you are applying to. To end each paragraph, explain how the skill relates to what you know about the position or company. Build on the information in your résumé.

Thank you for taking the time to review my application. I can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss my suitability or to arrange an interview (choose one).

Sincerely,

(FirstName LastName)