



RÉSUMÉ WORKBOOK



STUDENT
LIFE

Career Exploration
& Education

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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. Visit the Career Exploration & Education website at careers.utoronto.ca for a full list of programs, services, and resources.

1. Use the templates on the last pages of the workbook to draft your résumé and cover letter.
2. Explore the samples résumés and cover letters in the [Résumé & Cover Letter Toolkit](#).
3. You can also use [Live Career Résumé Builder](#) for templates and formatting help.

BRING YOUR RÉSUMÉ TO THE WORKSHOP

Register for an upcoming Résumé & Cover Letter Workshop via the St. George Career Exploration & Education Events Calendar on the Career & Co-Curricular Learning Network (CLNx).

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 Career Exploration & Education's front desk to have a Career Peer Advisor review your résumé. For information on how to book an appointment please visit studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/career-advising-appointments/
3. Bring your résumé, cover letter, and a job description you are applying to with you to your appointment.

SKILLS

As a student, you are developing several transferable skills through everyday tasks. This includes organizing your schedule to attend classes, workshops or club meetings to completing course assignments.

There are several types of skills:

- **Hard skills:** Learned abilities formed through technical 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
Analyzed
Critiqued
Edited
Facilitated
Promoted

Coordination

Chaired
Delegated
Founded
Spearheaded
Supervised

Working in a Team

Collaborated
Listened
Motivated
Participated
Supported

Learning

Applied
Explored
Investigated
Researched

Problem-Solving

Evaluated
Implemented
Persuaded
Resolved

Time-Management

Organized
Prioritized
Planned
Scheduled

If you're interested in learning more about connecting your experience to skills, check out the workshop titled 'Know Your 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. We also recommend revisiting your [Co-Curricular Record](#) to understand how your campus experiences and activities have led to skill development.



RESEARCH

When writing your résumé, research the potential employer and their 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.

Career Exploration & Education: Career Exploration & Education has many resources to help you with your career planning and job search. Begin by checking out the Career & Co-Curricular Learning Network (CLNx) or meeting with a Career Peer Advisor 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).

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 the CLNx job board), find two job postings similar to the one you are applying to. List the skills that are important to all three positions.

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).

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?

If you're interested in learning more about conducting job-related research, check out the workshop titled 'Job Search Strategies'. To learn more about informational interviewing, check out 'Networking Strategies'.

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.

Résumé Formats

There are a few ways to present your experiences in a résumé. Employers usually prefer reverse chronological résumés. Check out the [Résumé & Cover Letter Toolkit](#) for the following examples:

- Maxwell Smith'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).
- Jayani Lal's and Sarah Newart's experiences have built toward jobs they are applying to now (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);
- 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 bulleted accomplishment statements 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)

- Relevant Experience
- Other Experience
- Co-curricular Activities

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

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. It should highlight your professional personality, most relevant skills and experience and explain why you are interested in the position.

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 the job posting 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. It can be experience-based where it describes a past job that contains all the required skills or skills-based where it provides a summary of experiences related to a particular skill.
- Final paragraph: Provide your contact information and thank the employer for considering your application.
- A cover letter should be 1-page max.

Cover Letter Template

Name

Phone # Email LinkedIn address (if preferred)

Application Date (*Month/Date/Year*)

Dear (*First Name Last Name*):

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 hope to have the opportunity to discuss my candidacy in an interview. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(First Name Last Name)