

## What is a Resume?

The purpose of the resume is to summarize for employers the key elements of your background. Keep in mind that a good resume alone won't get you a job; however, it can help you get an interview and influence an employer's perception of your skills and potential for a particular kind of work.

## What is a CV?

A CV is a curriculum vitae or vita, and is used to detail your academic credentials and your experiences. Preferred in academic settings, it is usually longer and more detailed than a resume. The following links are excellent resources for developing a CV, transforming a CV into a resume and also academic and non-academic cover letters.

## Cover Letters

Students often say that cover letters mystify them. *Where do I begin? What do employers want to know? How can I show that I'm really interested?*

Your resume offers a big picture of you: education, experience, activities, skills. Your cover letter includes only certain aspects -- the ones that matter to an employer. For best results, match your skills and knowledge to an employer's needs. The most effective cover letter answers the question, "How do I meet the employer's requirements for this position?"

You may have one or two versions of your resume; however, you should customize your cover letter for each position.

## Cover Letters: Do They Really Make A Difference?

Employers want to hire individuals who can communicate well, whether speaking or writing. They say this consistently in an annual survey conducted by the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#). In fact, this year, they rated communication #1 among the 'soft skills' which they value. Interestingly, they also said in the same survey that candidates lack these very skills.

## What does this mean for you, as you look for jobs and internships?

Knowing that employers seek skilled communicators, you can demonstrate this proficiency by crafting powerful and persuasive cover letters to accompany your resume. Learn more on this page, do an [online workshop](#), and bring your letters to Career Services to get feedback.

## How To Get Noticed

- **Customize your background for a specific job** - Your letter guides the reader by summarizing the skills and experiences relevant to a particular opportunity.
- **Demonstrate your research, writing, and analytical skills** - Your letter allows you to communicate your knowledge of the employer, industry, and career field.
- **Convey your motivation and professionalism** - Your letter reflects your personality, enthusiasm, and interest.

## References

A reference sheet contains a list of people that potential employers and graduate schools can contact to confirm and elaborate on your professional and academic experiences. The following tips and samples will help you create your reference sheet.

- Always ask the person before you list them as a reference, and make sure they know what to talk about and that it is positive. Provide them with a resume and background on the experience or the situation you shared so they can speak intelligently about you. Let them know where you are applying.
- Use no more than four references.
- Have at least two employment-related references. If using faculty, make sure he/she is someone who knows you and not just a teacher of a favorite class.
- Use the same color/quality of paper for the reference sheet as you do for your resume.
- Put your name at the top of the page in case it gets separated from your resume.
- When you do use a reference that is not clearly related to jobs and education listed on your resume, identify that person with a short phrase.
- For many jobs, references will give a verbal recommendation in a telephone call. Written recommendations will be asked for as “letters of recommendation”.
- [Reference Sheet Sample](#)