



DIY Career Guy

SHARPENING TOOLS TO REMODEL CAREERS

Resume & Cover Letter Basics

Resumes

What is the purpose of a resume?

A resume is intended to be a short summary of your skills, abilities and professional accomplishments. It is a quick advertisement of who you are professionally and should offer the reviewer your "highlight reel" with the intent of capturing and emphasizing top leadership actions, processes, tools/systems used, and results to help you secure a job interview. Since your resume is a primary tool required in any job search, it needs to be carefully written and critiqued by a professional to be acceptable for today's hiring standards.

Steps to Take for a Great Resume

1. Make a Master List of All Jobs
2. Don't Put Everything On There
3. Chronological Order (Keep Most Important/Relevant Stuff "Above The Fold")
4. Ditch Objective Statements, include a clean 1-line headline instead that is interchangeable with certain job titles
5. Keep It Simple, Recent, & Relevant (bullet points; some leadership action X, using tool/process Y, yielding result Z)
6. Draw Out Transferrable Skills
7. Show, don't Tell Your Soft Skills
8. Design for human eye's to review (Recruiters & Hiring Managers), not the ATS (that's a myth)
9. Use a simple, clean, effective formatting that doesn't include graphics, wacky fonts, and too much whitespace

Cover Letters

What is the purpose of a Cover Letter?

A great cover letter is used to briefly introduce yourself to a new organization, demonstrate your specific interest in the company or a certain vacancy, draw attention to who YOU are as a professional and human, NOT a reiteration of your resume. In recent years, many companies have begun to do away with their requirement for a cover letter, so they are nice to have just in case they're still requested.

If you are presenting a cover letter that is long-winded, copy/pasted from your resume, it will not be read, and rendered a waste of time. Avoid this by framing your brief, personalized cover letter using these main tenants.

Steps to Take for a Great Cover Letter

1. Do Not Regurgitate Your Resume Content - this means don't copy bullet points or offer a bulleted-list.
2. Tell a quick Personal Story - Evoke Emotion
3. Keep It Brief & Don't Ramble On
4. Intro - Get 'Em Hooked early by jumping in with a quick, bold summary of your skills
5. Body - Why YOU are the perfect fit for this company (connect the dots for them)
6. Conclusion - Why the company is the perfect fit for you (compliment them & wordsmith your way to placing yourself in the role)
7. Close Strong - Sell Yourself & Ask for the Interview