

## Resume and Cover Letter Writing

To assist you in these tasks, we have pulled together several resources and a number of sample resumes to use as examples. Included in the resources are word lists (helpful to describe you, your skills and duties), resume format suggestions, information from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) about how employers view common resume mistakes and sample resumes taken from real WCU students and alumni!

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### Resume Basics

To begin, you should have some information about the purpose of the resume. The primary duties of the resume are threefold –

- 1) To introduce you to the employer
- 2) To identify and demonstrate your qualifications
- 3) To entice the recruiter to invite you to an interview.

**Introduction:** Be sure you have a good mailing address, phone number and email, and be sure your name is prominent (bold and in larger font).

**Qualifications:** Tell your “story” as completely and concisely as you can. Experiences, work history, education are all important items as well as information about what you did in each area.  
**Inviting:**

The recipient of the resume should not only be informed after reading the document, but should also want to have more dialog with you. A resume that not only answers questions, but raises other questions or has something that encourages the employer to want to find out more can lead to the interview.

## Word Lists

Use results-oriented terminology which includes verbs such as:

<b>achieve</b>	<b>design</b>	<b>implement</b>	<b>maximize</b>	<b>plan</b>
<b>administer</b>	<b>develop</b>	<b>innovate</b>	<b>motivate</b>	<b>revise</b>
<b>coordinate</b>	<b>direct</b>	<b>interpret</b>	<b>negotiate</b>	<b>solve</b>
<b>create</b>	<b>establish</b>	<b>manage</b>	<b>organize</b>	<b>supervise</b>

Some key words for resume and cover letter preparation:

<b>actively</b>	<b>delegate</b>	<b>generate</b>	<b>motivate</b>	<b>proficient</b>	<b>significant</b>
<b>accelerate</b>	<b>develop</b>	<b>increase</b>	<b>organize</b>	<b>recommend</b>	<b>simplicity</b>
<b>adapt</b>	<b>demonstrate</b>	<b>influence</b>	<b>originate</b>	<b>reduced</b>	<b>set up</b>
<b>administer</b>	<b>direct</b>	<b>implement</b>	<b>participate</b>	<b>reinforce</b>	<b>solve</b>
<b>analyze</b>	<b>effect</b>	<b>interpret</b>	<b>perform</b>	<b>reorganize</b>	<b>strategy</b>
<b>approve</b>	<b>eliminate</b>	<b>improve</b>	<b>plan</b>	<b>renovate</b>	<b>structure</b>
<b>coordinate</b>	<b>establish</b>	<b>launch</b>	<b>pinpoint</b>	<b>responsible</b>	<b>streamline</b>
<b>conduct</b>	<b>evaluate</b>	<b>lead</b>	<b>program</b>	<b>revamp</b>	<b>successful</b>
<b>complete</b>	<b>expand</b>	<b>learn</b>	<b>propose</b>	<b>revise</b>	<b>supervise</b>
<b>control</b>	<b>expedite</b>	<b>maintain</b>	<b>proven</b>	<b>review</b>	<b>support</b>
<b>create</b>	<b>found</b>	<b>manage</b>	<b>provide</b>	<b>schedule</b>	<b>teach</b>

Self descriptive words:

<b>active</b>	<b>consistent</b>	<b>efficient</b>	<b>logical</b>	<b>positive</b>	<b>sense of humor</b>
<b>adaptable</b>	<b>constructive</b>	<b>energetic</b>	<b>loyal</b>	<b>practical</b>	<b>sincere</b>
<b>aggressive</b>	<b>creative</b>	<b>enterprising</b>	<b>mature</b>	<b>productive</b>	<b>sophisticated</b>
<b>ambitious</b>	<b>dependable</b>	<b>enthusiastic</b>	<b>methodical</b>	<b>realistic</b>	<b>systematic</b>
<b>analytical</b>	<b>determined</b>	<b>extroverted</b>	<b>objective</b>	<b>reliable</b>	<b>tactful</b>
<b>assertive</b>	<b>diplomatic</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>optimistic</b>	<b>resourceful</b>	<b>talented</b>
<b>attentive</b>	<b>disciplined</b>	<b>forceful</b>	<b>perceptive</b>	<b>respectful</b>	<b>will travel</b>
<b>broadminded</b>	<b>discrete</b>	<b>imaginative</b>	<b>personable</b>	<b>self-reliant</b>	<b>will relocate</b>
	<b>economical</b>	<b>independent</b>	<b>pleasant</b>	<b>self-starter</b>	



This section can include work history, internships, student teaching , volunteer positions and other significant items. By naming it “experience”, you can mix both paid and unpaid experiences. If you want to organize your resume to show positions which directly relate to the field or position sought, you can develop two areas: “Related Experiences” and “Employment”, for example.

Company name    City, State    dates  
Job Title  
Responsibilities / Achievements

For Example:

**Accounting Intern** June 2009 - August 2009  
KPMG, Philadelphia, PA  
- Prepared Reports on....(specific topic/duty)  
- Worked with a team of auditors to...  
- Developed new report using XXX software to track...

**Activities, Involvement, Community Service, Awards and Leadership**

A section such as this can allow you to add other experiences, such as short term volunteer activities, involvement in organizations, Honors or Awards received. If you held a leadership position in a group, it can be helpful to give that title in the description. If it is not clear what the organization is (some honor societies use Greek letters in their name and can be confused with a social fraternity or sorority, for example) provide some detail.

References Available Upon Request

Definitely an optional statement on the resume, but it can still be useful. If your resume appears short, this can be an acceptable line to use to add length – and remove when you have more content. It can also be adapted to show more available information –

**References and Co-Curricular Portfolio Available**

The above statement lets the employer know that you have additional experience, but have chosen to show the most relevant on the version they received.

Consider having a separate page for listing references. It should have 3-5 references showing the persons’ name, title, address, phone and email. If the relationship to you is not clear by the title, consider indicating their professional relation to you. The listing should also have your name and contact information at the top. And be sure to give your references a copy of your resume.

### **Employer reactions to common resume and cover letter situations.**

The following is taken from a survey done by the Society of Human Resource Management where hiring managers were asked “Of the mistakes you indicated you have seen, which have caused you NOT to look at a particular candidate?”. They are ranked from 1 to 10 with the percentage answering “yes” following.

Resume/cover letter with grammatical errors or typos	86.5%
Cover letter without a resume	70.3%
Gaps in employment history	61%
Missing detailed job histories	57.8%
Missing specific employment dates	48.5%
Resume in narrative format	44.9%
Salary information not included (If asked for in ad)	38%
Resume more than two (2) pages long	19.5%
Resume without a cover letter	14%
Presented in chronological (most recent last) order	7.7%

### **Resume do's and don'ts**

Here are some Do's and Don'ts provided by the University of Vermont Career Services Office:

#### **DO**

- Reflect you, the individual, as much as possible.
- Use clear and articulate writing.
- Condense to the most job-related qualifications.
- Think through including political or religious affiliations.
- Begin with action verbs.
- Devote more space to your strong areas, whether they are education, professional development, work history, or college activities.
- Use laser printing on "resume quality" paper stock. Use the same color for your cover letters and envelopes.

#### **DON'T**

- Include personal data (i.e. marital status, age, etc.) unless the information directly relates to job responsibilities. It is illegal for employers to otherwise require such information.
- Use "I" statements.
- Go over one page (exceptions: nursing, education, more experienced people).
- List an experience more than once.
- Have any grammatical or spelling errors or use punctuation inconsistently.
- Include everything you have ever done.
- Expect your first draft to be your final resume

- Profreed, Proofread, Proofread!

### **Electronic Submissions**

Chances are very good that the majority of your applications for positions will be done electronically as opposed to the traditional “hard copy” presentation or mailing. Listed below are some suggestions to maximize the chances for your materials to succeed in the career search process.

Submitting electronically usually means sending the resume/application/cover letter via email or by uploading it to an application email address or website. You want to make certain that your materials transmit well, without scrambling, changing format or becoming unreadable. Be sure to read the submission instructions carefully, noting if there are specific requirements such as a size limit to the file or a particular type of file that is preferred (e.g. Rich Text Format or .rtf, Word 2007 or .docx, .pdf).

Avoid excessive formatting. The more tables, headers, footers or italics that are used, the more difficulty you may have in the transmitting of your information. Send it to a trusted resource (such as the career center) or yourself first.

If your materials are going to be scanned electronically, you may want to review key words that are used in the field in which you are seeking employment.

Spelling still matters. Electronic documents (including emails) should have the same attention to spelling and grammar that formal letters and documents receive.

Contact information (Name, address, phone and email) should be at the top of the page with the name always on the top line.

Font should be large enough to be readable (not only by humans, but also scanning devices). Size 11 or 12 font is the recommended standard. The type style should also be a standard font; Ariel or Times New Roman are two.

Graphics do not always transmit well and are not recommended in most fields.

### **Cover Letter Basics**

Whether by email, electronic uploads or traditional paper copies, cover letters are an important part of your job search materials. They are “functional writing”; introducing you, your qualifications and materials to the prospective employer. They provide the opportunity for you to highlight your qualities targeted to the needs of a specific company, agency or position. Below are suggestions for what to include in your communication:

**Opening Paragraph:** State the reason for your letter with attention-getting self confidence.

Be creative within the bounds of reason, respect and good taste. Include the type of job or the specific position you are seeking. If possible, mention how you became aware of the position and organization. Tell the person “Why you are writing”.

**Middle Paragraph(s):** Refer to the enclosed resume and any facts within it that you want the employer to notice. It is here that you should identify what skills, background, education or other "tools" you have that they need. Your resume should present facts to support this, but this section should not be a mere restatement of the information in the resume. Add detail to the facts in your resume. Tell the person “Why they need YOU”.

**Closing paragraph:** This is where you request the interview. Ask that you be contacted to set a mutually convenient time; or better still, suggest that you will contact them soon (e.g. Thursday, next week) to arrange an appointment. You may state that you will contact them to insure that they have received all the materials they require to consider you as a candidate for the position. Above all, be positive in your attitude; expect an appointment.

More Cover letter and job search correspondence samples are available on the Job Web online supplement to the *Job Choices* magazine: <http://www.jobweb.com/students.aspx?folderid=134>

### **Samples**

Click on the section below to see a sample which incorporates some specific details relative to that field. View more resume samples on the Job Web online supplement to the *Job Choices* magazine: <http://www.jobweb.com/resumes.aspx?folderid=142>

## Jayne Dough

701 Hillview Drive • Cumberland, PA 18079 • 717-555-1776 • Jayne.dough@live.com

Your name and Contact information is the first thing on the resume. Be **SURE** it is correct. If you have multiple addresses, you can list them, but two is enough. Be sure the email is appropriate and check it regularly.

### **Objective or Summary**

To secure a position in marketing , which will best utilize my communication, group interaction, team leadership, and interpersonal skills

This section can have many names: Profile, Summary, Qualifications. An **Objective** indicates your target job/field plus key strengths.

A **Summary** provides several specific yet broader skills and experiences you bring to the workplace, typically used by individuals with several years of experience.

This can be divided into several sections, "Activities", "Related Experience" or just labeled "Experience" depending on your priorities and organization.

### **Experience**

**West Chester Golf & Country Club** West Chester, PA

**Mar 2008- Current**

*Hostess Coordinator/Server/Banquet Server*

Hostessing and coordinating service staff; customer service; assisting in servicing banquet parties up to 150 guests

**Taste of Britain/Easy Elegance Catering** Devon, PA

**Sept 2007- May 2008**

*Food Service*

At this Brunch/Lunch eating establishment, served the entire establishment; cash receivable duties for both the restaurant and the adjacent grocery item shop; and was the representative of the firm for private catering parties.

**Hershey Lodge- Bears Den** Hershey, PA

**Mar- Aug 2007**

*Food Service*

Hostessing, table designation, greeting and communicating with guests, and assisting with food service.

**SUBWAY Restaurant franchise** Carlisle, PA

**Jun-Aug 2006**

Oversaw satellite branch of this national sandwich chain located at the Auto Show Exhibition Grounds. Capably handled high traffic customer order servicing and food preparation, especially on weekends.

**Applebee's Restaurant** Exton, PA

**Oct-Mar 2005**

*Food Service*

**Emrich's Restaurant** Camp Hill, PA  
*Food Service*

**May-July 2005**

**Bob Evans Restaurant** Cumberland, PA  
*Food Service*

**June 2003-Aug.2004**

Multiple listings of a similar nature can be combined to save space:

**Food Service**

**2003-2005**

**Applebee's Restaurant** (Exton, PA)  
**Emrich's Restaurant** (Camp Hill, PA)

## Education

**West Chester University**, West Chester, PA  
*Bachelor of Science in Business Management*  
GPA: 3.0

**May 2009**

This section could be moved higher if more emphasis is to be placed on the fact that you have a degree. The GPA is OK to list, but not always required or suggested (especially if below a 3.0)

High School is not needed; and more than one college/university can be shown.

## *References Available Upon Request*

This "References" line is fast disappearing because it provides little needed information. However, if you have additional information, it can serve as a "prompt" for the reviewer. Such as:

References and Complete Employment Listings Available Upon Request

One versus two pages...This example is two pages because of the comments, but the original resume easily fit on one page. You will find there are times when two page resumes are appropriate, and some professions have their own preferences (if you have a second page, be sure your name is on page 2 somewhere). The main question is whether you can fit on one page without sacrificing crucial information.

# STEPHEN P. SAUER

StevenSauer@lol.com

## Permanent Address

105 E. Orange St.  
Lancaster, PA 17602-4999  
(123) 333-1111

## Current Address

614 S. High Street Apt 3  
West Chester, PA 19380  
(456) 789-1109

**OBJECTIVE:** To bring my education and experience in the fields of communication, journalism and public relations to a company in need of a creative and dedicated full-time employee

**EDUCATION:** West Chester University, West Chester, PA May, 2009  
B.A. Liberal Studies, Overall GPA: 3.44 GPA within Major: 3.52  
Minor in Journalism, GPA: 3.50  
Minor in Communications, GPA: 3.40

**Selected Coursework:** Business and Professional Writing, Research Topics in Communications, Technical Writing, Public Speaking

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:

### Content Manager

***On This Day In Led Zeppelin History, LZHistory.com*** July 2006 – present

- Author daily newsletter with an average of 450 words per day
- Correspond with 1,900 recipients and a member of the band

**Wire Editor *The Quad*** March 2007 – October 2008

- Select, edit and compile news stories for four pages of the student newspaper

**Freelance Writer *Daily Local News*** January 2008 - present

- Contribute articles on demand in a timely manner

## OTHER EXPERIENCE:

### Undergraduate Assistant

**Interpersonal Communication with C. Jack Orr, Ph.D.** Spring 2008

- Improvised dialogue on-the-spot to demonstrate Key concepts of effective communication

### Organist

**Historic St. Mary's Catholic Church** August 2005 - present

- Lead weekly cantor and choir rehearsals
- Contract to perform at and plan weddings

## LEADERSHIP:

**Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, PA Tau Chapter** December 2004 – Present

- Held various elected positions

References and writing samples available upon request

# Betty Helper

91 Flintstone Drive  
Lanstown, PA 19406

123-345-5678  
EH647583@wcupa.edu

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**Objective:** To diligently serve both national and global communities by educating and empowering the public with health promotion-based life skills.

## EDUCATION

### **West Chester University of Pennsylvania, West Chester, PA**

- Bachelor of Science, May 2009: Graduated Summa Cum Laude **GPA: 3.83**
- Concentration in Public Health: Health Promotion
- Minor: Spanish

## EXPERIENCE

**Quality Assurance Intern, Icon Clinical Research North Wales, PA** May 08 – Aug 08  
May 07 – Aug 07

- Maintained QA Archive Room
- Oversaw archival and off-site shipment of over 100 studies
- Audited and maintained Randomization files

**Data Entry Specialist, Icon Clinical Research North Wales, PA** May 06 - Aug 06

- Assisted CDC in managing confidential study information
- Handled departmental query requests
- Liaised with site coordinators for query resolution

## CERTIFICATIONS

- Eligible for Certified Health Education Specialist Exam
- **Anticipated Exam Date:** October 17, 2009

## COMPUTER SKILLS & RELEVANT COURSE WORK

- **Proficient:** Microsoft Office & Macintosh PC
- **Completed coursework:** Program Planning & Evaluation, Health Behavior, Chronic and Communicable Diseases, Research Methods in Health, Health Marketing and Communications, Health Curriculum and Instruction, Public/Community Health, Health Care Delivery
  - **Completed elective coursework:** Human Sexuality, Health Issues of Women, Transcultural Health, Drugs & Society, Healthy Youth, Intro to Sociology, Sociological Theory, Intro to Psychology, Theory of Personality

## ACHIEVEMENTS

**Academic Dean's List, West Chester University** 2006 – 2009

**Outstanding Student Volunteer, West Chester University** Feb 2009

- Awarded for bridging efforts between Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity and the Maternal & Child Health Consortium of Chester County

**Student Member, Pennsylvania Public Health Association** 2007 – 2009

CONFERENCES

<b>Health Education Advocacy Summit</b> , Washington D.C.	Mar 2007
<b>Volunteer Leadership Retreat</b> , West Chester University, PA	Sept 2008
<b>Executive Leadership Retreat</b> , Camp Saginaw, PA	Sept 2008
<b>Integrative Health Conference</b> , Childhood Obesity Trends West Chester University, PA	Mar 2009

ACTIVITIES

<b>Tutor</b> , Honickman Learning Center, Philadelphia PA	Feb – May 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Participated in conjunction with 6 credit course at Chestnut Hill College</li><li>○ Assisted middle school-aged students with daily assignments</li><li>○ Participated in student skill-building activities</li></ul>	
<b>Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity</b> , WCU	2006 - 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Vice President of Membership<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Mentor to 12 member Spring 2009 pledge class</li></ul></li><li>○ Public Relations Chair<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Relay for Life Team Co-Captain Apr 2008<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Coordinated team of 30 volunteers</li><li>▪ Awarded “Best Theme”</li></ul></li><li>○ Relay for Life Team Captain Apr 2009<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Coordinated team of 30 volunteers</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>○ Scouting &amp; Youth Chair<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Liaised with youth-based organizations</li><li>○ Coordinated weekly service opportunities for chapter</li></ul></li></ul>	
<b>Volunteer</b> , Kennett Square Family Center	Jun 07 – Apr 09
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Assisted with community-based events on a monthly basis</li><li>○ Performed administrative duties as needed</li><li>○ Coordinated Dental Health Fair in June 2007 for 70 participants</li></ul>	
<b>Tutor</b> , Sankofa Charter School West Chester, PA	Oct 08 – Mar 09
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Served as a mentor to 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> grade students</li><li>○ Assisted students with Lang. Arts &amp; Math skills</li><li>○ Lead Health Education classes as needed</li></ul>	
<b>Summer Support Coordinator</b> , Kennett Square Family Center	May 09 – Aug 09
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ West Chester University Public Health Internship for Summer 2009</li><li>○ Developed standards-based curriculum for Kindergarten Transition Program</li><li>○ Supervises 20 children during the 3 hour school day</li><li>○ Coordinates additional summer programs which implement Parents As Teachers</li></ul>	

**(Nursing Sample)**

**Mary Smith**

7777 Tudor Rd.

Philadelphia, PA 19128

215-999-7777 ms123456@wcupa.edu

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**OBJECTIVE**

To obtain a nursing position in labor and delivery or NICU.

**EDUCATION**

**West Chester University**

Philadelphia, PA

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

June 2010

Cumulative GPA: 3.2

*Relevant Coursework:* Include selected, advanced coursework to demonstrate certain knowledge or skills.

*Honors and Awards:* Include academic or professional level awards if applicable.

**LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS**

- CPR and First Aid (2009)
- Basic Life Support (2009)

**CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

**Hahnemann University Hospital**

Philadelphia, PA

Comprehensive Adult Nursing

January - April 2009

- Include 1-2 sentences that describe the clinic or unit and population

**Eleventh Street Family Clinic**

Philadelphia, PA

Community/Public Health Nursing

September - December 2008

- Include 1-2 sentences that describe the clinic or unit and population

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

**West Chester University, Goshen Hall**

West Chester, PA

Resident Assistant

August 2007 – May 2008

- Organize and promote a range of social and education events for floor residents
- Provide support and refer students to services on campus to increase academic success, such as tutoring and study skills training
- Facilitate initial conflict resolution with roommates or hall residences

**ACTIVITIES**

- Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania (SNAP), Member (2008 – present)
- Mary Kline Professional Day, Volunteer (2008)

**COMMUNITY SERVICE / VOLUNTEER**

- Chester County Hospice, Volunteer (2008 – present)
- Kennett Middle School Park Clean-Up Day, Volunteer (2007)

# Tim Hildebrandt

2408 Bradley Drive Harrisburg, PA 17110 Phone: 111.222.3333 Email: [peerless211@aol.com](mailto:peerless211@aol.com)

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**Education**      **West Chester University**      West Chester, PA  
*Bachelor of Fine Arts candidate*      May 2009  
--Concentrations: Graphic Design/Art History/Web Design  
**Pennsylvania State University**      University Park, PA  
--Coursework: AutoCAD Engineering      Summer 2007

**Experience**      **Rhino Ramps**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Retail Market Researcher*      2006-Present

**Radio Shack**      West Chester, PA  
*Retail Salesperson*      2006-07

**Sears Portrait Studio**      Exton, PA  
*Photographer/Salesperson*      2006

**Lower Paxton Township Recreation Camp**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Summer Camp Counselor*      2006

**Science Explorers**      Downingtown, PA  
*Summer Camp Counselor*      2005

**Colonial Country Club**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Snack Bar Attendant/ Golf Course Maintenance*      2004

**Harrisburg Senators Baseball Club**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Batboy/Entertainer/Salesperson*      2001-2003

**JPL Video**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Actor (HIPAA Patient Privacy Training Film)*      2002 *Actor*  
*(Lawn Care Commercial)*      1999

**Freelance Graphic Design**      Harrisburg, PA  
*Cover Design, Bishop McDevitt Reunions*      2006-Present  
*Poster Art, OCD Circus Band*      2005  
*T-Shirt Design, West Chester Fraternity*      2005

**Special Skills**      *Music Composition, Audio Engineering, AutoCAD, Graphic Design*

References by Request