



Naugatuck Valley Community College

Center for Job Placement and College Opportunities

Guide To Resumes and Cover Letters

Center for Job Placement and College Opportunities

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The mission of the Center for Job Placement and College Opportunities (CJPCO) is to create an effective and student-centered space where students can find pro-active, hands-on support to obtain jobs and assistance with college applications, in particular, for graduating students looking to transfer to colleges and universities with need-blind admission policies in the northeast.

- Career Planning
- Resume Writing
- Interview Skills
- Job Search Strategies
- Online Job Board
- On-Campus Recruiting
- Assistance with Need-Blind College Application Process
- Workforce Transition
- Employer Connections

Office Hours:

Waterbury: Monday – Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Danbury: Check the CJPCO calendar, www.nv.edu/cjpco/calendar, for scheduled days and hours.

Stop by our office, call or email for more information or to make an appointment with one of our staff.

College Central Network – www.CollegeCentral.com/nvcc

Online job board, resume builder, career advice and job search articles, podcasts and more.

Career Coach - nv.emsicc.com - Discover majors, in-demand careers and education based on your interests!

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Functional Resumes

When to use a functional style resume

A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. You would want to use this design when you are changing careers, have gaps in employment history, or have work history that is not directly related to the job. Rather than simply listing your various jobs and tasks, specific skills and experiences are emphasized in this model to focus on the most relevant aspects of your background as it pertains to the target job. This is different from the type of resume that displays a timeline of reverse chronological work experience with brief explanations of each job.

As a result of using this model, the focus shifts from job titles and the amount of time that has passed to the actual skills the applicant possesses.

Functional resumes are ideal for people new to the workforce, have gaps in their careers, are looking to change career paths, or are applying for a job with very specific requirements and characteristics in mind.

Tips for Writing a Functional Resume

Organize by theme. When writing a functional resume, organize your resume by themes, rather than simply listing your jobs in reverse chronological order. These themes might be skills or qualifications listed in the resume (for example, “Recruiting Experience” and “Customer Service Experience”).

Use keywords. Read the job description from the employer carefully. Use the same key words in your resume and cover letter for skills and experience that are used in the description. Not only will this help the employer see that your abilities match the job requirements, but it will also help to get your resume noticed when applying online.

Include employment history. Your employment history is still important. Include your employment details at the bottom of your resume, so that your skills, at the top, will get more focus than your work history.

Functional Resume

Chris Johnson

1151 Main St
Waterbury, CT 06708

(203) 661-2111
pjohnson202@aol.edu

OBJECTIVE: Current Naugatuck Valley Community College student with customer service experience seeks a part-time position

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 5 years sales & customer service experience
- Self-motivated
- Skilled problem-solver
- Pharmaceutical product awareness
- Excels in fast-paced environment
- Attentive to detail
- Innovative team player
- Energetic and outgoing
- Honest, reliable and productive

EDUCATION

Associates of Science, Business

Anticipated Graduation 2023

Naugatuck Valley Community College, Waterbury, CT

- Related Courses: Intro to Biology, Business Management

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

SALES & COMMUNICATION

- Utilized pharmaceutical knowledge to provide support to clientele in a busy retail environment Delivered excellent customer service, addressing customers' needs promptly and efficiently
- Settled customer disputes and dealt with customer emergencies in a professional manner, expanding the customer base and winning returning customers
- Promoted to central customer service department after 3 months of exceeding quotas as Sales Associate
- Demonstrated health awareness products to customers, increasing sales of new products and customer satisfaction

LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK

- Trained new employees and provided support to senior employee when technical changes introduced Worked on a team to evaluate current training practices and deliver improved training to new employees
- Participated in the College debate club, successfully competing in the regional tournament
- Organized campus-wide donation drive for "Kids 4 The Holidays" generating \$1200 and raising student awareness of local poverty and employment issues

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- **Customer Service Associate**, Sears Waterbury, CT **2019 - present**
- **Sales Associate**, T.J. Maxx, Waterbury, CT **2018-2019**
- **Sales Associate**, CVS Pharmacy, Waterbury, CT **Summers 2016 - 2018**

VOLUNTEER / EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

- Vice President**, Student Government Association, Naugatuck Valley Community College **2020 – 2021**
- Student Reporter**, NVCC Tamarack Newspaper **2021**
- Member, NVCC debate club **2021**

Chronological Resumes

When to use a chronological resume

The chronological resume is one of the most commonly used resume formats, your work experience is listed in chronological order starting with your current or most recent job to your earliest.

Use this format if you have a solid work history and ideal experience for the job to which you are applying, and no major gaps in employment. This type of resume's simple and straight-forward approach divides your information into separate sections, which all should fit onto one page.

Tips for Writing a Chronological Resume

Use keywords. Read the job description from the employer carefully. Use the same key words in your resume and cover letter for skills and experience that are used in the description. Not only will this help the employer see that your abilities match the job requirements, but it will also help to get your resume noticed when applying online.

Education. Education is as important as your work history, however in a chronological resume your education details should be listed after your work history.

Employment history. Do not use a chronological resume if you have gaps in your employment history or have changed jobs frequently. This type of resume will emphasize those issues. Chronological resumes do not work well either if you are changing careers. The lack of relevant jobs will be highlighted rather than skills that are transferrable. Use a functional resume in these situations to highlight skills rather than history.

Chris Johnson

123 Kings Landing, Waterbury, CT

(203) 555-1212, cjohnson2021@nv.edu

PROFILE: Banking professional with multiple years of experience and currently pursuing a degree in Finance at Naugatuck Valley Community College seeks a position as Assistant Branch Manager at Bank of America.

EDUCATION

Associates of Science in Business

Naugatuck Valley Community College, Waterbury, CT

Anticipated Graduation

2023

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Bank Teller, Branch Trainer

Wells Fargo, Waterbury, CT

2018-2020

- Assisted customers with deposits and withdrawals
- Earned branch award for introducing customers to new financial products
- Recognized by Wells Fargo as outstanding employee of the region.
- Increased new account openings by 10%

Bank teller

Santander, Waterbury, CT

2015-2018

- Assisted customers with deposits and withdrawals
- Integrated Financial Systems Theory into practice, intervening with appropriate and meaningful practices to a very diverse range of clients
- Developed a unique financial awareness program aimed at building positive customer relationships

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Cast Member

Chuck E Cheeses, Rocky Hill, CT

2013 – 2015

- Greeted customers as they came into the restaurant
- Assisted with the organization of birthday Parties and group events
- Cleaned and organized the restaurant and the games sections

Lifeguard/Instructor Summers

Windsor Y.M.C.A., Waterbury, CT

2010 – 2013

- Performed rescues and basic medical procedures
- Taught groups of 5-10 children in lifesaving techniques and aquatic skills

VOLUNTEER/EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

Phi Theta Kappa-Member, Naugatuck Valley Community College

2019-2021

Student Government-Vice president (SGA), Naugatuck Valley Community College

2019

Volunteer- St. Mary’s Church, Waterbury, CT

2012-Current

Cover Letters

Why do you need a cover letter?

The cover letter that you send with your resume is your first chance to make a great impression with a potential employer. This is your chance to introduce yourself, highlight the skills and experience that you would bring to the company, and talk of your reasons for wanting to work for this company. A cover letter is your chance to make a sales pitch to get an interview.

Tips for Writing a Cover Letter

Use keywords. Read the job description from the employer carefully. Use the same key words in your cover letter for skills and experience that are used in the description. This will help the employer see that your abilities match the job requirements.

Don't repeat what is on your resume. Instead give specifics of your relevant experiences that match the requirements and show how you can benefit the company.

First impressions. Often your cover letter is the first contact you have with an employer. Be sure it is free of typos and grammatical errors. Be sure that your letter is not a generic template but has been written specifically for the position you are applying for. Make references to the company and to the job to show that you have taken the time to research them, this will show serious interest on your part.

Less is more. Your cover letter should be focused and to the point. Do not go over one page. Do not include personal information, salary requirements (unless requested by employer), or questions about benefits, vacation, sick time, schedule, etc.

Cover Letter

[Date]

Ms. Rhonda West
Customer Service Manager
Acme Inc.
123 Corporate Blvd.
Sometown, CO 50802

Re: Customer Service Representative Opening (Ref. ID: CS300-Denver)

Dear Ms. West:

I was excited to see your opening for a customer service rep, and I hope to be invited for an interview.

My background includes serving as a customer service associate within both call-center and retail environments. Most recently, I worked on the customer service desk for Discount-Mart, where my responsibilities included handling customer merchandise returns, issuing refunds/store credits, flagging damaged merchandise for shipment back to vendors and providing back-up cashiering during busy periods.

Previously, I worked within two high-volume customer-support call centers for a major telecommunications carrier and a satellite television services provider. In these positions, I demonstrated the ability to resolve a variety of issues and complaints (such as billing, disputes, service interruptions or cutoffs, repair technician delays/no-shows and equipment malfunctions). I consistently met my call volume goals, handling an average of 56 to 60 calls per day.

In addition to this experience, I gained considerable customer service skills during my part-time employment as a waitress and restaurant hostess while in high school.

I also bring to the table strong computer proficiencies in MS Word, MS Excel and CRM database applications and a year of college (business major). Please see the accompanying resume for details of my experience and education.

I am confident that I can offer you the customer service, communications and problem-solving skills you are seeking. Feel free to call me at 555-555-5555 (home) or 555-555-5500 (cell) to arrange an interview. Thank you for your time – I look forward to learning more about this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Sue Ling

Enclosure: Resume

The 30 Second Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is a clear, concise message or personal commercial about you. It precisely says who you are, what you are looking for and how you can benefit an organization. It should be brief, about 30 seconds, the time it takes for an elevator ride. The purpose of an elevator speech is to quickly introduce yourself to anyone you might meet, at any time, at any place and get them interested enough to want to learn more. Use it at a career fair or networking event to tell employers who you are and why they would want to hire you.

Your elevator speech needs to be practiced until it flows naturally, like a conversation. You should be relaxed and pleasant while speaking, with a smile and good eye contact. Let your listener know your experience and skills, how you got them and what you would bring to their company. Rehearse your speech out loud with another person or in front of a mirror. Practice enough to be comfortable with what you have to say so you are ready for any chance meeting with a potential employer or networking contact.

An elevator speech should be no longer than 25 to 30 seconds, about 8 to 10 sentences. But be ready go deeper about your background and experience should you be asked for more. Have examples ready to support your speech, more information on your education, and be prepared to tell them more on how you would benefit them and their organization.

Elevator Speech Topics

Write down a sentence or two about the following topics. Then put them all together in a style that flows like a conversation. Make short, strong, to the point sentences.

1. Who you are and what can you bring to their company.

Tell who you are, describe yourself, your background, and your experience. Be enthusiastic about how much you would benefit their organization. Give an example supporting your experiences.

2. Why you are interested in a particular position or about their organization in general.

Talk about a job opening at their company and tell them what you would bring to that position. Tell them something positive that interests you about their organization.

3. How are you qualified.

Tell them how your education and experience would make you the perfect person to fill their opening. Give examples to support this.

Always watch the body language of the person you are speaking to. If they seem interested engage them in the conversation as well. Also be aware of when you have been speaking too long. It is better to leave them wanting more than to sell yourself too hard or go on too long.

Once you have your basic elevator speech down you may want to work on slightly different versions depending on the situations you may find yourself in. If looking to talk to someone from a particular organization learn about that organization to show them you are interested in them too. When attending job fairs research employers you are interested in speaking with before you go to the fair.

While an elevator speech is to “sell” yourself, at the same time you need to answer the employer’s questions of why they should hire you and what is in it for them. Relate your qualifications in terms that would answer those questions.

Qualities and Skills for Resumes

A list of some of the qualities and skills that employers are looking for. (Not including technical/job knowledge skills)

Always read the job description. Use the same terminology in your resume and cover letter.

accurate	energetic	relationship management
adaptable	engaging	reliable
administrative skills	enthusiastic	resourceful
analytical	entrepreneurial	responsible
arbitration	ethical	results-oriented
articulate	experienced	risk taking
attentive to detail	facilitation skills	safety conscious
bilingual or multilingual (list languages)	financial skills	sales skills
budgeting skills	flexible	self-motivated
business development skills	goal oriented	self-sufficient
business management skills	high level of energy	service oriented
change management skills	influencing skills	strategic thinker
caring	initiative	supervisory skills
coaching skills	innovative	supportive
collaborative	interpersonal skills	teaching / training skills
communication skills	judgment skills	team building skills
compassionate	leadership skills	teamwork skills
computer skills	management skills	thrive under stress
conflict resolution skills	mediation skills	time management skills
conscientious	MS Office skills	work well under pressure
coordination skills	multi-tasking skills	writing skills
creative thinker	negotiating skills	versatile
critical thinking skills	organized	visionary
customer focused	patient	
data driven	persistent	
decision making skills	persuasive	
dedicated	planning skills	
delegation skills	proactive	
dependable	problem solver	
determined	process (or workflow) management skills	
diplomatic	public speaking	
diversity awareness	punctual	
effective listener	quality focused	
empathetic	quick learner	

Action Verbs

It is important to use **strong action verbs** to **highlight your skills and experience** in your resume and cover letters. Use the list below to vary your choice of verbs so you do not become repetitive.

Communication

Addressed	Contacted	Enlisted	Interviewed	Observed	Reported
Acted	Consulted	Edited	Interpreted	Obtained	Referred
Advertised	Conveyed	Explained	Involved	Outlined	Resolved
Amplified	Convinced	Expressed	Joined	Participated	Responded
Arbitrated	Corresponded	Forged	Lectured	Persuaded	Reviewed
Arranged	Counseled	Formulated	Led	Presented	Solicited
Articulated	Created	Helped	Listened	Promoted	Specified
Authored	Debated	Identified	Marketed	Proposed	Spoke
Clarified	Defined	Incorporated	Mediated	Publicized	Suggested
Collaborated	Developed	Influenced	Moderated	Published	Summarized
Communicated	Directed	Informed	Motivated	Read	Supported
Composed	Discussed	Instructed	Negotiated	Reconciled	Translated
Condensed	Drafted	Interacted	Networked	Recruited	Wrote

Creative

Acted	Developed	Formulated	Marketed	Published	Solidified
Adapted	Devised	Founded	Modeled	Recorded	Solved
Combined	Diagrammed	Generated	Modernized	Redesigned	Spearheaded
Composed	Directed	Illustrated	Modified	Remodeled	Started
Conceived	Displayed	Initiated	Originated	Renovated	Stimulated
Conceptualized	Drafted	Innovated	Painted	Replaced	Strategized
Condensed	Drew	Instituted	Performed	Revamped	Streamlined
Conducted	Entertained	Integrated	Photographed	Revised	Transformed
Created	Established	Introduced	Pioneered	Revitalized	Validated
Customized	Executed	Invented	Planned	Shaped	Visualized
Designed	Fashioned	Launched	Played	Sketched	Wrote

Data / Financial

Adjusted	Closed	Financed	Planned	Reduced	Solved
Administered	Compiled	Forecasted	Prepared	Refined	Sought
Allocated	Compounded	Grossed	Procured	Remedied	Strengthened
Analyzed	Computed	Increased	Profited	Researched	Submitted
Appraised	Conserved	Managed	Programmed	Reserved	Substantiated
Assessed	Converted	Marketed	Projected	Retrieved	Supplemented
Audited	Corrected	Maximized	Purchased	Satisfied	Sustained
Balanced	Decreased	Measured	Quantified	Scrutinized	Tabulated
Bought	Determined	Minimized	Raised	Secured	Tailored
Budgeted	Developed	Monitored	Rated	Settled	Totaled
Calculated	Earned	Multiplied	Reconciled	Sold	Transferred
Capitalized	Estimated	Netted	Recorded	Solicited	Yielded

Management / Leadership

Accounted for	Changed	Developed	Guided	Navigated	Recruited
Achieved	Charted	Directed	Handled	Organized	Reorganized
Acquired	Commissioned	Eliminated	Headed	Originated	Replaced
Administered	Condensed	Emphasized	Hired	Overhauled	Restored
Advanced	Considered	Employed	Hosted	Oversaw	Restructured
Analyzed	Consolidated	Enforced	Improved	Performed	Reviewed
Anticipated	Contracted	Enhanced	Incorporated	Planned	Saved
Appointed	Controlled	Established	Increased	Predicted	Scheduled
Approved	Converted	Evaluated	Initiated	Presided	Secured
Assigned	Coordinated	Executed	Inspected	Prioritized	Selected
Attained	Corrected	Expanded	Instituted	Produced	Streamlined

Authorized	Decided	Finalized	Led	Proposed	Strengthened
Awarded	Decreased	Formulated	Maintained	Qualified	Supervised
Centralized	Delegated	Founded	Managed	Recognized	Tailored
Certified	Designated	Generated	Merged	Recommended	Terminated
Chaired	Determined	Grew	Motivated	Regulated	Updated

Organizational

Accomplished	Classified	Established	Lobbied	Provided	Settled
Achieved	Collaborated	Executed	Logged	Recorded	Simplified
Acquired	Collected	Expedited	Maintained	Rectified	Specialized
Administered	Compiled	Extracted	Monitored	Registered	Standardized
Adopted	Completed	Facilitated	Obtained	Reorganized	Streamlined
Advanced	Confirmed	Filed	Ordered	Reserved	Submitted
Allocated	Consolidated	Formalized	Operated	Responded	Suggested
Approved	Coordinated	Generated	Organized	Revamped	Systematized
Arranged	Corrected	Identified	Prepared	Revised	Tabulated
Catalogued	Corresponded	Implemented	Prioritized	Routed	Tracked
Categorized	Designated	Incorporated	Processed	Scheduled	Updated
Centralized	Designed	Inspected	Procured	Screened	Validated
Chartered	Distributed	Integrated	Proved	Secured	Verified

Problem Solving

Alleviated	Customized	Extracted	Investigated	Remodeled	Revived
Analyzed	Debugged	Finalized	Modified	Repaired	Resolved
Augmented	Deciphered	Foresaw	Monitored	Researched	Satisfied
Brainstormed	Detected	Formulated	Procured	Restored	Solved
Collaborated	Developed	Found	Recommended	Retrieved	Streamlined
Conceived	Diagnosed	Generated	Rectified	Revamped	Supplemented
Conceptualized	Elevated	Implemented	Reduced	Reviewed	Synthesized
Created	Engineered	Improved	Remedied	Revitalized	Theorized

Research

Acquired	Compiled	Dissected	Gathered	Led	Published
Analyzed	Computed	Documented	Hypothesized	Linked	Researched
Assessed	Conducted	Estimated	Identified	Located	Reviewed
Calculated	Conceptualized	Evaluated	Inferred	Measured	Searched
Chartered	Critiqued	Examined	Innovated	Minimized	Solved
Cited	Deciphered	Executed	Inspected	Modified	Studied
Clarified	Detected	Experimented	Interpreted	Observed	Summarized
Classified	Determined	Explored	Interviewed	Organized	Surveyed
Co-authored	Diagnosed	Extracted	Invented	Prioritized	Systematized
Collected	Differentiated	Extrapolated	Investigated	Processed	Tested
Compared	Discovered	Formulated	Justified	Projected	Validated

Results Driven/Initiative

Accelerated	Consolidated	Established	Guaranteed	Modernized	Re-established
Accomplished	Constructed	Exceeded	Improved	Obtained	Reduced
Achieved	Contributed	Excelled	Initiated	Opened	Rejuvenated
Added	Decreased	Expanded	Increased	Orchestrated	Renovated
Advanced	Delivered	Expedited	Integrated	Overcame	Restored
Attained	Demonstrated	Extended	Introduced	Pioneered	Stabilized
Augmented	Diminished	Finalized	Invented	Prevailed	Standardized
Boosted	Earned	Fulfilled	Joined	Produced	Targeted
Built	Eliminated	Gained	Launched	Qualified	Transformed
Combined	Ensured	Generated	Maximized	Realized	Uncovered
Completed	Enlisted	Grew	Minimized	Received	Validated

Teaching / Helping

Accommodated	Coached	Directed	Guided	Mentored	Served
Accompanied	Collaborated	Eased	Helped	Modified	Set Goals
Adapted	Contributed	Educated	Identified	Motivated	Shaped
Adjusted	Communicated	Elevated	Implemented	Observed	Simulated
Advised	Conducted	Empowered	Incorporated	Organized	Solicited
Advocated	Cooperated	Enabled	Influenced	Partnered	Stimulated
Aided	Coordinated	Encouraged	Informed	Persuaded	Structured
Alleviated	Corrected	Enriched	Initiated	Prepared	Supplied
Applied	Counseled	Evaluated	Inspired	Provided	Supported
Assessed	Critiqued	Expedited	Instilled	Questioned	Taught
Assigned	Cultivated	Explained	Instructed	Referred	Tested
Assisted	Defined	Facilitated	Interacted	Rehabilitated	Trained
Assured	Demonstrated	Familiarized	Integrated	Reinforced	Translated
Bolstered	Designated	Focused	Led	Represented	Tutored
Cared	Developed	Fostered	Listened	Resolved	Valued
Clarified	Diagnosed	Generated	Persuaded	Rewarded	Volunteered

Teamwork

Accommodated	Augmented	Diversified	Harmonized	Motivated	Shared
Acknowledged	Balanced	Elevated	Ignited	Negotiated	Stimulated
Adapted	Blended	Encouraged	Improvised	Nominated	Supplemented
Adjusted	Buoyed	Energized	Instructed	Organized	Supported
Aided	Collaborated	Engaged	Involved	Participated	Tailored
Altered	Contributed	Enlisted	Joined	Partnered	Teamed
Amended	Cooperated	Forged	Melded	Performed	Unified
Anchored	Coordinated	Fostered	Mediated	Promoted	United
Assisted	Cultivated	Gathered	Merged	Recruited	Volunteered

Technical

Activated	Customized	Elevated	Inspected	Redesigned	Screened
Adapted	Debugged	Engineered	Installed	Re-engineered	Serviced
Assembled	Deciphered	Enhanced	Maintained	Regulated	Solved
Automated	Delivered	Excelled	Navigated	Rehabilitated	Specialized
Built	Designed	Exercised	Operated	Remodeled	Standardized
Calculated	Detected	Exhibited	Overhauled	Repaired	Studied
Computed	Determined	Fabricated	Pinpointed	Replaced	Supplied
Conserved	Developed	Formed	Programmed	Resolved	Trained
Constructed	Devised	Implemented	Rebuilt	Restored	Upgraded
Converted	Displayed	Improved	Rectified	Retrieved	Utilized