



Resume Workshop

February 12, 2009



In tonight's workshop.....

- Cover letters
- What to include on your resume
- What NOT to include on your resume
- Resume format
- Thank you letters
- Questions



The Cover Letter

- Purpose of the Cover Letter
 - Create a favorable first impression
 - Introduce yourself
 - Demonstrate your professionalism
 - Illustrate your communication style



The Cover Letter

- It is expected that you will write a cover letter to accompany your resume when applying for a job
- The cover letter gives you another chance to emphasize what you have to contribute or how you can contribute to the organization
- Cover letters, when well written in your own words, will help get across who you are



The Cover Letter

- **Always** include a cover letter when submitting a resume
- Cover letter can be influential
- Well written cover letter can grab the attention of the recruiter and provide for that screening phone call
- Poorly written cover letter can keep you from getting that screening phone call



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Don't lose the reader with your first sentence
 - Surveys show a cover letter and resume only get a 15 second glance, so your first line either grabs the reader's attention or loses it.
 - Use the first sentence to summarize the top skills or experience you could bring to the job.



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Be specific

- Generic form letters don't work well
- Stand out by using evidence detailing past achievements, skills and results you have achieved



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Do demonstrate that you can write
 - Recruiters are viewing the cover letter as a sample of the applicants' communication ability
 - A well written cover letter gives you the opportunity to share a bit of your personality in a more conversational and informal tone, but on a professional level
 - Be concise and articulate....and no more than one page



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Do address the qualifications needed
 - When responding to a specific job posting, address each requested qualification and provide information as to the experience and skills you possess to perform that task or function



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Always proofread your cover letter
 - Read and re-read
 - Typos can move you from the "A" stack to the "C" stack
 - Good layout that is easy to read is important
 - Use a font choice and point size that is easy to read



Do's and Don'ts of a Good Cover Letter

- Include contact information on your cover letter
 - It is possible for the cover letter to become separated from the resume
 - Include name, address, home or cell phone number and email address on your cover letter

Cover letter—suggested format

- 1. Contact information
 - Name
 - Address
 - City, State, Zip Code
 - Phone number
 - Email address

 - Date

Cover letter—suggested format

- 2. Employer
 - Name
 - Title
 - Company
 - Address
 - City, State, Zip Code

- 3. Salutation
 - Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name

Cover letter—suggested format

- 4. Body of Cover Letter
 - This lets the employer know what position you are applying for, why the employer should select you for an interview, and how you will follow up.

- First Paragraph
 - The first paragraph should include information on why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for, include the name of a mutual contact if you have one. Be clear and concise in your request.



Cover letter—suggested format

- Middle Paragraph
 - The next section should describe what you have to offer the employer. Convince the reader that they should grant the interview or appointment you requested in the first paragraph. Specifically mention how your skills and experience match the job you are applying for. You are interpreting your resume, not repeating it. Use several shorter paragraphs or bullets rather than one large block of text.

Cover letter—suggested format

- Final Paragraph
 - Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position. Include information on how you will follow up. State that you will do so and indicate when (one week's time is typical).

- 5. Complimentary Close
 - Respectfully yours,

- 6. Signature:
 - Handwritten Signature (for a mailed letter)
 - Typed Signature



Cover Letter-Formatting Guidelines

- General guidelines to follow:
 - Follow a format even if you are emailing as many managers will print it out.
 - Whenever possible, address the letter to an individual
 - Use a block style business letter with one inch side margins
 - Use the same font and type size as used for your resume
 - Proofread the cover letter, and have someone else proofread it as well

Resume

- Format and presentation determine whether the resume is read
 - Average resume is scanned, not read, for only 8-15 seconds
 - Creates a strong impression or is set aside
 - Similar to the impression you make on the interviewer
 - Make sure your resume is wearing the equivalent of a “business suit” and not jeans and flip-flops



Resume Writing Tips

- Accomplishments tell what you have done; responsibilities state what you were supposed to do
 - Accomplishments should show that you got results as you carried out your responsibilities
 - Can be something you are proud of or can simply quantify what you have done on a daily basis
 - Routine activities can be quantified and written as accomplishments that demonstrate your experience and knowledge
 - Show how you have HELPED the company!



Resume Writing Tips

- 1. Technical Skills Come First
 - Put your technical skills, training and knowledge at the top of your resume
- 2. Customize Your Qualifications
 - Document your qualifications according to their relevance to the position for which you are applying, with the most relevant listed first
- 3. Quantify Your Past Results
 - Be factual with your experience, quantifying it where you can



Resume Writing Tips

- 4. Use Action Words
 - Be active rather than passive
 - Begin each word with an action, keeping it in the past tense
 - Which description do you think is better?
 - I was a customer service representative
 - Provided superior and personal service to an average of 20 customers per day
- 5. Give Yourself Credit
 - Treat your resume as a marketing and sales tool for yourself

Resume Writing Tips

- 6. Be Short While Still Being Totally Clear
 - Keep your resume as concise as practical
 - Example: Leave out details of projects in which you were not the key part
 - Articles and pronouns can be eliminated (a, an or the...and I)
- 7. Only Give Information The Reader Needs
 - Eliminate all unimportant or non-pertinent information
 - Eliminate those things that will give away your right to be considered without bias—marital status, age, health status, political affiliation
- 8. No Silly Mistakes
 - Check for errors!



Resume Writing Tips—Don't Forget... These Are Important!

- Avoid these 10 key points when writing your resume:
 1. Contact information is MIA
 2. Typos
 3. Too much information
 4. Too little information
 5. Extreme formatting
 6. Lies
 7. Lack of focus
 8. You, you, you
 9. Being funny
 10. Not enough white space



Resume Styles

- Determined by the goal you have for your career
- Four styles: Chronological, Functional, Skills and Imaginative
- **Chronological** is the most common
 - starts with most recent job and works backward



Resume Styles

- **Functional** style is also common and only includes work experience, internships and volunteer work
 - Focus on work experience you have had that gives you background and experience for the job you are seeking
 - List the job first that displays the most relevance and expertise for the job you are seeking



Resume Styles

○ Skills style

- May be ideal for college students and recent graduates or those seeking career change
- Highlight experience consisting of responsibilities that you have acquired from various job that related to the job you want
- Focus is with overall skills learned such as project management, customer service, teamwork, etc..
- Start with job showing most pertinent experience and work backwards



Resume Styles

- **Imaginative** style is best when seeking position requiring demonstration of creativity or individuality
 - Examples may include graphic artist, architect, creative writer
 - Could combine text with graphic art, a creative layout or possibly color
 - Use this style only after researching firm – are they too traditional to accept this style?

Sample Resume

John Smith

501-690-0428
kchhoff@yahoo.com

1800 S. Brentwood Blvd. Apt. 714
St. Louis, MO 63144

- **OBJECTIVE**
- **OUTSIDE SALES / DIRECT SALES / ACCOUNT MANAGER**

- **PROFILE**
- Sales professional recognized for effective and persuasive communication, a drive to convincingly sell products and services, ability to continually build trustworthy relationships with clients, and identifying goals and problems with the means to achieve and solve. Perceived as committed, knowledgeable, accountable, passionate, and possessing a work ethic both tenacious and energetic.

- **SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
- **Increased annual resort revenue 8%** per group room night by selling and executing all aspects of meeting, conference, corporate event and banquet planning necessary to ensure client satisfaction.
- **Boosted food and beverage revenue 40%** from 2006 to 2007 for Big Cedar Lodge.
- **Raised leisure revenue 50%** (entertainment and amenities) from 2006 to 2007 for Big Cedar Lodge.
- **Enhanced guest check averages 12%** by promoting appetizers, wines (featured versus house brands), and specialty items (adding shrimp to a steak entrée) at J Buck's.
- **Achieved 100% positive customer comment cards** exceeding customer satisfaction objectives.
- Served as an intern manager at resort steakhouse.
- Completed end of day billing & paperwork for accounting & night audit.
- Led weekly staff meetings.
- Resolved guest requests to ensure complete satisfaction.

Sample Resume cont.

- **EXPERIENCE**

- J BUCKS RESTAURANT, St. Louis, MO
3/2008 – Present
 - *Server*
- INSURISK, Little Rock, AR
9/2007 – 12/2007
 - *Office Support*
- BIG CEDAR LODGE (BASS PRO SHOPS), Branson, MO
5/2005 – 9/2007
 - *Sales Executive (8/2006 – 9/2007)*
 - As the conference sales manager responsible for planning corporate and social events, success depended upon selling internal and external arrangements and accommodations, food & beverage, activities and entertainment – all preceded by hosting site visits for corporate liaisons, outside sales calls and trade shows.
 - *Customer Service Representative (8/2005 – 8/2006)*
 - *Internship (5 – 8/2005)*

- **EDUCATION**

- Bachelor of Science in Hospitality/Restaurant Management (2005)
- University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

Sample Resume

Jane Smith

Address
Address

Phone
Email

- **PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**
- **Experienced leader in Product Marketing, Product Management, and New Product Development with a proven track record of leading and creating new organizations that deliver results, as well as successfully launching and managing new products and services.**
- **Achieved a 68% increase in subscriber net gain and 74% reduction churn year over year through the introduction of new, innovative sales and marketing strategies and through radical improvements to the customer experience.**
- **Realized a 12% reduction on monthly billing calls and 25% increase on customer satisfaction ratings through customer bill redesign effort.**
- **Drove a 65% increase in offer rate, 19% decrease in average handle time in calls, and a 2 week reduction in time to market for new product offers and promotions through introduction of SBCs first CRM tool.**
- **Gained a 40% increase in net gain year over year, realized a 50% reduction installation time, and a 28% reduction in customer support calls through introduction of the DSL customer self install process and repositioning the DSL marketing strategy based on a more mass market appeal.**

Sample Resume Cont.

- **MAJOR STRENGTHS**
- **Creative and Innovative Marketing Leader Consumer Marketing and Communications Customer Experience and Insight Product Marketing / Product Management Product Development & Technical Competence Results and Action Orientated WORK EXPERIENCE**
- **AT&T Video Product Marketing and Management (2003 – 2008)**
- **Executive Director, *San Antonio, TX***
- **Led multi-million dollar organization responsible for satellite video product marketing, profitability and product enhancements. Executed successful launch of the new video satellite business unit; developed the strategic roadmap for the organization and created the infrastructure and marketing plan to support subscriber growth and ultimately retain customers. Served as product advocate to key stakeholder organizations such as Consumer Sales Channel, IT,**

Sample Resume cont.

- **Sales Operations, and Finance. Managed alliance relationship between Echostar and AT&T to mutually advance priorities including subscriber growth, revenue growth and expense reduction for both companies.**
- **Achieved a 68% increase in subscriber net gain and 74% reduction churn year over year through the introduction of new, innovative sales and marketing strategies and through radical improvements to the customer experience.**
- **Drove a 36% decrease in Average Speed of Answer (ASA) and increased field quality by 58% while leading TV field operations by ensuring the highest level of customer service through management of the customer care call centers and field quality management.**
- **SBC Consumer Marketing Experience Delivery (2002 – 2003)**
- **Executive Director, *San Antonio, TX***
- **Developed and led consumer marketing organization responsible for the successful deployment and support of the first AT&T CRM sales and ordering tool for the consumer sales channel. Promoted usage and understanding of the tool to the regional sales channels.**
- **Realized a 12% reduction on monthly billing calls and 25% increase on customer satisfaction ratings through program initiated to revise consumer bill format and layout based on customer insight and research. Developed prototype for the Ideal Bill that was utilized as a template for the enhanced billing effort.**
- **Drove a 65% increase in offer rate, 19% decrease in average handle time in calls, and a 2 week reduction in time to market for new product offers and promotions through introduction of SBCs first CRM tool.**
- **Ensured the multi-million dollar Call Center Transformation Initiative met or exceeded customer expectations on service levels and customer priorities by providing customer insight and research.**

Sample Resume Cont.

- **Manager, *St. Louis, MO***
- **Managed team responsible for repair of all Inter-Exchange Carrier Special Service Analog and POTS services. Received division recognition for most months at highest performance scores for analog service and Mean Time To Repair (MTTR).**

- **Southwestern Bell Regulatory Accounting (1994 -1995)**
- **Manager, *St. Louis, MO***
- **Responsible for maintaining monthly GAAP reports and serving as liaison to the Public Utilities Council for all internal audits and RFIs.**
- **Received department recognition for mechanizing monthly report which reduced processing from four business days to one.**
- **Southwestern Bell ICSC (1993 – 1994)**

- **Manager, *St. Louis, MO***
- **Responsible for Special Service Provisioning for MCI.**
- **Received Presidential award for contributions on the MCI FAA project.**

- **EDUCATION:**
- **BS in Business Administration (1993)**
- **Emphasis in Marketing and Advertising**



How To Be Noticed

- 8-15 seconds....grab their attention
 - Does the top 1/2 of your resume set you apart?
 - Objective is no longer a must have
 - Can use Professional Summary instead
 - List major strengths you bring to job

Thank You Letter Tips

- **When do I need to send a thank you letter/email?**
 - After an informational or formal interview or other career exploration activity.
 - Send a thank you letter when someone provides you with job search assistance such as referring you to an employer, providing a network contact, or speaking on your behalf to a prospective employer.
 - When in doubt - send a thank you letter – (nothing wrong with being over courteous)



Thank You Letter Tips

- Send same day as interview
- Tailor to company and interview
 - Re-cap highlights of interview
 - Stand out! Interviewer may have met 10 or more people during process
- Allows you to restate or clarify anything that may have been misunderstood during interview



Thank You Letter-Suggested Outline

○ First Paragraph

- Thank interviewer for his/her time and re-state the position for which you interviewed

○ Second Paragraph

- Mention something specific you learned from the interview or comment on something of importance that you discussed
- Emphasize strengths, accomplishments, experience
 - Fine-tune letter towards areas interviewer emphasized



Thank You Letter-Suggested Outline

○ Third Paragraph

- End by thanking the interviewer for his/her time and consideration.
- If appropriate, close with a suggestion for next steps (a second interview perhaps), or mention that you plan to follow up with a phone call in a few days.



Questions?

- I'm happy to share my opinions