

CF Revised: 6/2025



## Developing a Solid Résumé

The following categories are usually found in a résumé; adopt those that best fit your needs. Remember the key is to **SELL YOURSELF!**

What should be included?

- 1. Contact Information-** Make sure your name is the most obvious piece of information on your résumé: use a larger font size and boldface. Follow with your address, phone number, and email. Include (customized!) URLs from Linked In or your E Portfolio here.
- 2. Objective or Summary-** Gives your résumé focus. This is the career plan statement in relation to what the employer or company looks for. Be sure to make this specific for every position you apply to! While an objective states your reason for submitting your materials, a summary is a 2-5 phrase snapshot or highlight of your skills, accomplishments and knowledge as it pertains to the job.
- 3. Education-** This section is reserved for listing degrees from institutions where you have completed or are planning to receive a degree. List your educational background in reverse chronological order, starting with the highest degree.
- 4. Experience-** This category includes employment, volunteer or intern experiences. Remember to concentrate on the positive and use action words. List the job title, city, and state of your place of work as well as the dates of the experience. Be sure to tailor this section using key words from the position description to which you are applying.
- 5. Additional Information-** Skills, Activities, Certifications, Honors, Awards, Professional Development, International or Leadership Experience... **SELL YOURSELF!**
- 6. References-** It is acceptable to use the phrase "Available upon request." Generally, a separate reference section/sheet includes name, title, work address, phone number, and email address of each recommender.
- 7. Formatting-** Set up your document with .5" margins and use 10-12 point font size (depending on how much text you are fitting onto the page). Do not use templates, including those from Microsoft Word, Google, Canva, etc.!

## **Top Ten Snags in Résumé Writing**

1. **Too long...** When writing your résumé try to restrict information to one page – unless your experience warrants going onto a second page.
2. **Grammatical or Spelling Errors...** These errors and inconsistencies suggest carelessness, poor education and/or lack of intelligence.
3. **Hard to Read...** Looks unprofessional.
4. **Too Verbose...** Using too many words to say too little. Do not use complete sentences. Save some information for a detailed cover letter.
5. **Too Sparse...** Give more than the bare essentials. You are the product; sell yourself! Describe related work experience, activities, and interests.
6. **Irrelevant information ...** Customize each résumé and cover letter to the position you seek.
7. **Obviously Generic...** Stand out; too many résumés scream *“I need a job - any job.”* Make your employer feel that you are interested in that position with their organization.
8. **Too Snazzy...** Avoid exotic/color fonts, this can be distracting. Do not use templates! Use good quality résumé paper when submitting hard copies.
9. **Boring...** Make your résumé as dynamic as possible. Do not write what someone else told you to do; write what you did. Avoid repeating words and be cautious when using AI generators.
10. **Too Modest...** Put your best foot forward without misrepresentation, falsifying information, or sounding arrogant.

## Use Some of these Action Words to Develop a Winning Resume!

### **Abstracted**

Achieved  
Acquired  
Acted  
Adapted  
Addressed  
Administered  
Advertised  
Advised  
Advocated  
Aided  
Allocated  
Analyzed  
Answered  
Anticipated  
Applied  
Appraised  
Approved  
Arranged  
Ascertained  
Assembled  
Assessed  
Assisted  
Attained  
Augmented  
Authored  
**Bolstered**  
Briefed  
Brought  
Budgeted  
Built  
**Calculated**  
Cared  
Charged  
Checked  
Clarified  
Classified  
Coached  
Collaborated  
Collected  
Comforted  
Communicate  
Compared  
Completed  
Composed  
Computed

Conceived  
Conducted  
Conserved  
Consulted  
Contracted  
Contributed  
Converted  
Cooperated  
Coordinated  
Copied  
Correlated  
Counseled  
Created  
Critiqued  
Cultivated  
**Dealt**  
Debated  
Decided  
Defined  
Delegated  
Delivered  
Developed  
Designed  
Directed  
Displayed  
Documented  
Drafted  
Drove  
**Edited**  
Eliminated  
Empathized  
Enabled  
Enforced  
Established  
Estimated  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Exceeded  
Excelled  
Expanded  
Expedited  
Explained  
Explored  
Extracted  
**Facilitated**  
Fashioned

Financed  
Fixed  
Followed  
Formulated  
Fostered  
Founded  
**Gained**  
Gathered  
Gave  
Generated  
**Handled**  
Headed  
Helped  
**Identified**  
Illustrated  
Imagined  
Implemented  
Improved  
Improvised  
Inaugurated  
Increased  
Indexed  
Indicated  
Influenced  
Initiated  
Inspected  
Instituted  
Integrated  
Interpreted  
Interviewed  
Introduce  
Invented  
Inventoried  
Investigated  
**Judged**  
**Kept**  
**Launched**  
Learned  
Lectured  
Led  
Logged  
**Made**  
Maintained  
Maximized  
Mediated  
Mentored

Monitored  
**Narrated**  
Negotiated  
**Observed**  
Obtained  
Offered  
Organized  
Originated  
Overcame  
Oversaw  
**Participated**  
Perceived  
Perfected  
Performed  
Persuaded  
Planned  
Practiced  
Predicted  
Prepared  
Presented  
Prioritized  
Produced  
Programmed  
Projected  
Promoted  
Proposed  
Protected  
Proved  
Provided  
Publicized  
Published  
Purchased  
**Queried**  
Questioned  
**Raised**  
Ran  
Ranked  
Rationalized  
Read  
Reasoned  
Recorded  
Received  
Reduced  
Referred  
Related  
Relied

Reported  
Researched  
Responded  
Restored  
Revamped  
Reviewed  
**Scanned**  
Scheduled  
Schemed  
Screened  
Set goals  
Shaped  
Skilled  
Solicited  
Solved  
Specialized  
Spoke  
Stimulated  
Strategized  
Streamlined  
Strengthen  
Stressed  
Studied  
Substantiate  
Succeeded  
Summarized  
Synthesized  
Supervised  
Supported  
Surveyed  
Sustained  
Symbolized  
**Tabulated**  
Talked  
Taught  
Theorized  
Trained  
Translated  
**Upgraded**  
Utilized  
**Validated**  
Verified  
Visualized  
**Won**

# Use 1/2 margins

## Résumé Layout

### Name (18 pt)

E-mail Address | Phone Number

#### Local Address

Address

City, State Zip

#### Permanent Address

Address

City, State Zip

### Objective or Summary

Write a clear, concise statement about your job objective. This must be specific to each position you apply to!

### Education

*Degree (Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts), Major, Minor, Concentration*

Graduation Date

State University of New York (SUNY) at Oneonta, Oneonta, NY

GPA (If above a 3.0)

List each of the colleges where you completed a degree in reverse chronological order. Do not include High School information!

### Experience – (Related and Other)

*Position Title, Employer, City, State*

Dates of Employment

- List each of your work experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent on top).
- Be sure to include internships, Resident Assistant positions etc.
- Provide a bulleted summary of your experience – start each new bullet with an action verb.
- Give clear and concise information – focus on tasks, skills, and outcomes. Use numbers when appropriate!

### Volunteer Experience

Name of Organization, City, State

Dates of Employment

- List each of your volunteer experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent on top).
- Provide a bulleted summary of your experience – start each new bullet with an action verb.
- Not all volunteer activities require a bulleted summary. One day activities can simply be listed.
- Give clear and concise information – focus on tasks, skills, and outcomes. Use numbers when appropriate!

### Field Experience (Typically for Education majors)

Dates of Observations

List Observations and Participation with number of total hours

- Combine observations and participation by school district
- Do not list each 5 hour observation separately, because this would use too much space! Condense!

### Activities

List college activities and dates of participation, such as college athletics, student government, residence hall committees, Greek affiliations, community service. Be sure to spell out any abbreviations. Leadership roles should be expanded on in their own section.

### Awards/Honors

List college awards and honors - if any - with date of receipt

### Special Skills

List “hard” skills that would be of interest to potential employers, such as computer skills, foreign languages, etc.

### References

List on a separate page contact information of 3-5 people who could speak positively about your work abilities, attitudes, and experiences.

**THIS IS NOT A TEMPLATE!**

*Use as a general guide and outline for what you need to include on your résumé.*

**DO NOT just list information.**

**Organize and format to direct the reader’s eye to what is important such as your degree and job titles.**

# Sample Résumé

## **PAT STUDENT**

415B Curtis Hall | SUNY Oneonta | Oneonta, NY 13820  
5555 Garrett Place | New York, NY 10017  
(212) 555-1234 | studpa82@oneonta.edu

### **OBJECTIVE or SUMMARY**

To obtain an entry-level position in psychology with a focus on counseling.

### **EDUCATION**

*Bachelor of Science in Psychology; Minor in English* May 2024  
State University of New York (SUNY) at Oneonta, Oneonta, NY  
GPA 3.6

*Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts* May 2022  
State University of New York (SUNY), Rockland Community College (RCC), Suffern, NY  
GPA 3.5

### **RELATED EXPERIENCE**

*Resident Assistant*, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY January 2023 - Present

- Assist 40 undergraduate students with personal and academic issues
- Develop monthly educational and recreational programs for a building of over 300 residents
- Ensure safe environment and enforce college regulations

*Intern*, Patient Services, New York Presbyterian Hospital, White Plains, NY January - May 2022

- Interacted with patients and families in recreational areas
- Observed patient support groups and therapeutic sessions
- Assisted with maintaining confidential records for over 50 patients

*Camp Counselor*, Riverdale Neighborhood House, Riverdale, NY May - August 2021

- Supervised groups of 10 children ages five to eight
- Planned and monitored craft and sports activities

### **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

*Sales Associate*, TJ Maxx, Suffern, NY October 2021 - May 2023

- Increased personal sales by 15% in a six-month period to over \$15,000
- Organized and kept track of an inventory of over \$100,000 of merchandise

### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

*St. Vincent Elementary School*, St. Vincent, NY September 2020 - May 2021

- Coordinated an after-school program for 25 children ages five to eight
- Maintained a safe and conducive learning environment

### **AWARDS/HONORS**

Psi Chi (Psychology Honor Society), SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY May 2023 - Present  
Dean's List, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY December 2022 - May 2023

### **ACTIVITIES**

Psychology Club, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY August 2022 - Present  
Harvey Delaney Leadership Institute, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY March 2023  
Intramural Basketball, RCC, Suffern, NY August 2020 - May 2022

### **SKILLS**

Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook, SPSS  
Conversational Spanish and Sign Language

### **REFERENCES**

Available upon request

## Cover Letter Writing Guidelines

1. Ask yourself before contacting an employer...Do I have interest in the organization – its products, services, and goals, etc.?
2. Is the work in line with my interests, education, and experience?
3. Is the place of employment within the boundaries of where I want to live?
4. Am I willing to invest the time necessary to do a successful and thorough job search with this organization?

**Suggestions:** *Things you should keep in mind while writing to a prospective employer.*

1. Present your reason for writing.
2. Create a desire for your services and skills.

### **DO:**

1. Follow rules of layout and format of a standard business letter – block format.
2. When submitting documents electronically – be sure to submit as a .PDF.
3. Address, whenever possible, to an individual along with their correct job title. Avoid using “To whom it may concern” if possible. A web search or telephone call to the organization may help you obtain the correct information.
4. Spell, punctuate, and paragraph correctly. It should be perfect!
5. Tailor your letter to the employer/position as much as possible regarding geographic location, your personal accomplishments, or colleagues you have in common.
6. **Be sure to address all required qualifications from the job ad in your letter!** Use exact language and key words from the position description.
7. Take advantage of any link to the employer that can put your foot in the door or give you an edge over the competition (i.e. mention names).
8. Slant letter toward what you can offer the employer, not what you think the employer should be offering you.
9. Refer to your résumé but do not rehash. You should be giving more information as it relates to the position.
10. Be brief, concise, and to the point.
11. Follow-up after 1-2 weeks to inquire on the status of your application.

### **DON'T:**

1. Develop one letter to send to all employers. One size does not fit all.
2. Use stiff language or phrasing – avoid vagueness.
3. Be gimmicky in an attempt to be original or clever.
4. Overload with constant use of the word “I”.
5. Avoid using contractions.



## Components of a Cover Letter

Your Street Address  
City, State Zip code  
Today's Date (spell out)

**(Four spaces)**

Name Addressee  
Job Title  
Name of Organization  
Street Address  
City, State Zip code

**(Two spaces)**

Dear (Mr. Ms. Mrs. Dr.) Addressee:

**(One space)**

Your opening paragraph should state the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying and how you learned of the job opportunity. You may want to state briefly why you are interested in the position.

**(One space)**

Your middle paragraph(s) should sell your skills and explain how your academic and/or experiential background qualifies you for the position. Point out specific achievements or unique qualifications. Include any special skills that may be useful in the position, i.e., abilities with computers, administration. Don't just repeat information in your résumé, single out a few especially salient factors: expand on an item or two of special relevance. Be concise and to the point. Address all required qualifications from the job ad!

**(One space)**

In your closing paragraph, refer the reader to your enclosed résumé and focus on the action to follow. Indicate your desire for a personal interview – but don't be pushy. State that your references can be sent at their request. Also include your phone number where the employer can contact you with any questions.

**(Two spaces)**

Sincerely,  
**(Four spaces)**

*Your Signature* (Scan and insert when sending electronically)

Typed Name

**(Two spaces)**

Enclosure: (This is a formal way to indicate there are attachments to this letter)

## Interviewing Tips

1. Your interview begins before you say “hello” - an interviewer begins to evaluate you the minute you are identified. Make eye contact. Shake the interviewer’s hand. Do not be scared to extend your hand first; be **CONFIDENT**. Now that it’s time to speak, be sure to use appropriate language and grammar.
2. **ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS** that an employer is likely to ask during the interview. i.e.:  
Tell me a little bit about yourself. Why are you interested in working for this organization? What is your major strength/weakness?  
Practice these kinds of questions so that during your interview, you can respond naturally to them. Study the job ad; many interview questions are based off this.
3. **RESEARCH** the organization you would like to work for. Be sure to look at the organization’s website. What is their mission? Where have they been in the news? You must demonstrate that you are knowledgeable about the organization!
4. After you have been interviewed, it’s your turn to **ASK QUESTIONS**. It is important to have a few ready. Questions should show the employer you are serious about the organization and the position you are applying for.  
How would you describe an average day on the job? How would you describe the ideal candidate? Is there room for personal growth and upward mobility?
5. The interview is not over until you walk out of the door. The last five minutes are very important. **REMAIN ENTHUSIASTIC** and courteous. Shake the interviewer’s hand and thank them for considering you for the position.
6. **FOLLOW UP** - Always send a thank you letter to your interviewer(s) conveying your interest in the position. Good option: send a handwritten thank you. Better option: send a professional thank you via email. Best option: Mail a professional thank you letter on Résumé paper. (see page 10)

**Remember: Interviewing is a two-way street! You are interviewing the organization as much as they are interviewing you!**

## **Questions Asked by Employers**

During an interview there are several questions asked by an employer to get an understanding of who you are. These questions fall under several categories and are referred to as behavioral interview questions. These Categories include *Personal, Education, Experience, and Career Goals*.

### **Personal**

- Tell me about yourself
- What are your hobbies?
- What can you offer us?
- Define success. Define failure.
- What motivates you most in a job?
- Where do you want to be in five to ten years?
- Why should we hire you instead of another candidate?
- What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
- If you could choose to be an animal, what animal would you be and why?

### **Experience**

- What job-related skills have you developed?
- What have you learned from your work experiences?
- What did you enjoy most about your most recent employment? Least?
- Have you ever quit a job? Why?
- Give an example of a time when you worked under dead-line pressure?

### **Education**

- Why did you choose your major?
- In which campus activities did you participate?
- Which classes in your major did you like the least? Best? Why?
- Do your grades accurately reflect your abilities? Why or Why not?
- Why did you choose to attend your college or university?

### **Career Goals**

- Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
- Would you be successful working with a team? Why or why not?
- What other types of positions are you considering?
- Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
- How do you feel about travel?
- How do you feel about working overtime?
- How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
- Please describe a time when you worked with a difficult co-worker.
- Describe a professional failure and how you handled it.

*Before interviewing think about these questions and possible responses. The key is to be prepared; having the ability to communicate your answers clearly in an interview may give you an advantage over other candidates applying for the position.*

# Sample Thank You Letter

Your Street Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Today's Date (spell out)

Name  
Title  
Organization  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Full Name:

Thank you for interviewing me yesterday, January 6, 2019. It was very enjoyable to speak with you about the \_\_\_\_\_ position at \_\_\_\_\_ (Agency/Company/Organization). The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match with my skills and interests. The creative approach to account management that you described confirmed my desire to work with you.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I will bring to the position strong writing skills, assertiveness and the ability to encourage others to work cooperatively with the department. My artistic background will help me to work with artists on staff and provide me with an understanding of the visual aspects of our work.

I understand your need for administrative support. My attention to detail and organizational skills will help free you to focus on larger issues. I neglected to mention during my interview that I had worked for two summers as a temporary office worker. This experience helped me to develop my secretarial and clerical skills.

I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position. Should you have further questions, I may be reached at (607) 111-4321.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature* (Scan and insert when sending electronically)

Your Typed Name