



Employability Workbook



Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship
215 Dominion Street, Gateway Plaza, Suite 108
Bridgewater, NS, Canada B4V 2K7
P: 902-543-1067 f: 902-543-7042
Email: acsbecrc@bwr.eastlink.ca or navigator@youthjobs.ca

Résumés

Tips for Writing a Résumé

- Customize your résumé to the specific job you are applying for
- Always include a specific objective (one sentence is fine)
- Have a cover letter with every résumé you submit
- Focus on accomplishments instead of "responsibilities"
- Use power words (action verbs to describe skills and accomplishments)
- Keep your résumé no longer than two pages in length
- Don't have errors of any kind. (Spelling, grammar, punctuation, facts, etc.)
- Do not exaggerate or lie
- Don't include reasons for leaving previous jobs
- Don't include personal info like age, sex, marital status, race, height, or weight
- Never mention money
- Don't use coloured paper (quality white paper is easy to photocopy and read)
- No Graphics, pictures, or weird designs

What's Your Style?

The main résumé styles are Functional, Chronological, Combination, and Electronic.

A chronological résumé is the most common style and is best for people who have had a consistent work history and are staying in the same line of work. Your work experiences are the main focus and your employment history is shown starting with your last job.

A functional résumé is better for people who are changing careers or who do not have a lot of work experience. This style of résumé focuses more on your accomplishments and skills and is popular with youth just starting out.

The combination résumé as the name implies is a combination of the chronological and functional styles. It is used to draw attention to certain skills and work experiences.

The electronic résumé is becoming a more accepted way of applying for jobs. Today, everyone should have a hard copy (paper) and an electronic version of their résumé.

The Ultimate Skills List - 365 Power Words

How to Use These Words

Be prepared to defend every word you have included in your résumé - this means not using words that do not accurately describe you or tasks you have completed. Select each word carefully. Remember that recruiters and HR people are jaded by Cliché buzzwords such as trouble-shooter or success-oriented. On the other hand, you want a resume that sparkles and appears dynamic. Avoid flabby, tentative words such as "participated in" or "helped out". Action words make you a doer. Doers get jobs.

Accelerated	Enhanced	Planned
Accomplished	Enlarged	Predicted
Achieved	Enlisted	Prepared
Acquired	Ensured	Prescribed
Acted	Established	Presented
Activated	Estimated	Presided
Adapted	Evaluated	Prioritized
Addressed	Examined	Problem-solved
Adjusted	Exceeded	Processed
Administered	Executed	Produced
Advanced	Expanded	Programmed
Advised	Expedited	Projected
Advocated	Explained	Promoted
Aided	Expressed	Proofread
Allocated	Extracted	Proposed
Altered	Fabricated	Protected
Amended	Facilitated	Provided
Analyzed	Figured out	Publicized
Applied	Filed	Published
Appointed	Financed	Purchased
Appraised	Finalized	Questioned
Approved	Focused	Raised
Arbitrated	Followed up	Received
Arranged	Followed through	Recognized
Assembled	Forecasted	Recommended
Assessed	Foresaw	Reconciled
Assigned	Formulated	Recorded
Assisted	Fostered	Recruited
Attained	Founded	Rectified
Audited	Flagged	Redesigned
Authored	Gathered	Reduced
Authorized	Gave	Released
Balanced	Generated	Referred
Bought	Guarded	Refined



Boosted	Guided	Regulated
Briefed	Handled	Rehabilitated
Broadened	Headed	Reinforced
Budgeted	Helped	Related
Built	Hired	Rendered
Calculated	Identified	Renegotiated
Calibrated	Illustrated	Renovated
Catalogued	Implemented	Remodeled
Categorized	Improved	Reorganized
Chaired	Improvised	Repaired
Charted	Indexed	Replaced
Changed	Incorporated	Reported
Charted	Increased	Represented
Checked	Indoctrinated	Researched
Classified	Influenced	Resolved
Coached	Informed	Responded
Collated	Initiated	Restored
Collected	Innovated	Restructured
Combined	Inspected	Retrieved
Communicated	Inspired	Reversed
Compared	Installed	Reviewed
Compiled	Instituted	Revised
Completed	Instructed	Revitalized
Composed	Interacted	Saved
Computed	Integrated	Scheduled
Conceived	Interfaced	Schooled
Concluded	Interpreted	Screened
Conducted	Interviewed	Searched
Configured	Introduced	Secured
Considered	Invented	Selected
Consolidated	Investigated	Separated
Constructed	Itemized	Served
Consulted	Judged	Serviced
Contacted	Justified	Set up
Contracted	Launched	Shaped
Contained	Learned	Shared
Contributed	Lectured	Showed
Controlled	Led	Simplified
Conceived	Liaised	Sold
Conceptualized	Listed	Solidified
Conducted	Listened	Solved
Constructed	Located	Sorted (out)
Consulted	Lobbied	Specified
Controlled	Maintained	Spoke





Coordinated	Managed	Started
Corrected	Manipulated	Stimulated
Corresponded	Marked	Straightened
Counseled	Marketed	Streamlined
Created	Measured	Strengthened
Critiqued	Mechanized	Structured
Cultivated	Mediated	Studied
Cut	Memorized	Summarized
Dealt with	Mentored	Supervised
Debated	Merged	Supplied
Decided	Met	Supported
Decreased	Modified	Synthesized
Defined	Modulated	Systemized
Delegated	Monitored	Tabulated
Delivered	Motivated	Talked
Demonstrated	Molded	Taught
Described	Minimized	Tended
Designated	Modeled	Tested
Designed	Moderated	Took charge
Detected	Modernized	Traced
Determined	Modified	Trained
Developed	Monitored	Transcribed
Devised	Motivated	Translated
Diagnosed	Narrated	Transformed
Differentiated	Navigated	Traveled
Directed	Negotiated	Treated
Discovered	Observed	Trimmed
Dispensed	Obtained	Trouble-shot
Displayed	Opened	Tutored
Dissected	Operated	Uncovered
Distributed	Ordered	Unified
Diverted	Organized	Unraveled
Documented	Oriented	Updated
Doubled	Originated	Upgraded
Drafted	Overhauled	Used
Drew	Oversaw	Utilized
Edited	Painted	Validated
Educated	Participated	Verified
Eliminated	Perceived	Viewed
Empathized	Performed	Weighed
Empowered	Persuaded	Widened
Enabled	Photographed	Won
Encouraged	Piloted	Wrote
Enforced	Pinpointed	



Sample Chronological Résumé

Jane Smith

Address
Telephone
Fax (if applicable)
Email (if applicable)

Objective: A full-time position as a personal care worker.

Experience:

July 2002 – May 2003

Riverview Retirement Village

- Planned special events for seniors
- Assisted seniors with personal hygiene
- Demonstrated sensitivity to people's needs
- Followed directions
- Provided friendly, compassionate service

Sept 2001 – July 2002

Shady Pines Home for Special Care (Part-time)

- Receptionist Duties
- Reading to seniors
- Organizing special events

April 2001 – Sept 2001

Riverview Convenience

- Providing friendly customer service
- Tendering cash
- Preparing deposits
- Responsible for inventory control

Education:

Sept 2001 – June 2002

At-Home Care Solutions

Personal Care Worker Certification Course

- Theory as well as practical, hands on experience.
- O-J-T placement Riverview Retirement Village

Sept 1997 – June 2000

Riverview and Area High School

Completed Grade 12 (Academic)

Computer Skills:

- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access)
- Internet Explorer and Netscape
- Outlook Express, Outlook, Groupwise
- Adobe Illustrator 7.0

Interests:

- Reading and drawing
- Biking, jogging
- Gardening

References available upon request

Sample Functional Style Résumé

Jane Smith

Address
Telephone
Fax (if applicable)
Email (if applicable)

Objective: A full-time position as a Personal Care Worker.

Highlights of Qualifications:

- Experience working with seniors
- Enthusiastic with excellent people skills
- A good communicator and team member
- Relevant computer knowledge

Work Experience:

- Personal Care Worker (full-time)
Riverview Retirement Village
- Personal Care Assistant (part-time)
Shady Pines Home for Special Care
- Customer Service Clerk
Riverview Convenience

Job Skills:

- **Customer Service**
 - Treated seniors with courtesy, patience and respect
 - Greeted patients and their family with a smile
 - Demonstrated sensitivity to people's needs
 - Served customers in an accurate and friendly manner
- **Leadership Skills**
 - Planned and coordinated special events with residents and staff
 - Directed clients and problem solving
 - Handled safety responsibilities for seniors on outings
 - Oversaw inventory control with other employees
- **Teamwork**
 - Participated in staff activities and meetings

Education:

- **Personal Care Worker Certification Course**
At-Home Care Solutions, Bridgewater, NS
- **Completed grade 12 (with honors)**
Riverview and Area High School
- **Computer Training**
Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer / Netscape, Email Programs (Outlook, Outlook Express, Groupwise), Adobe Illustrator

References available upon request

Sample Combination Résumé

Jane Smith

Address

Telephone

Fax (if applicable)

Email (if applicable)

Objective: A full-time position as a personal care worker.

Skills:

- Able to follow directions
- Excellent customer services skills
- Experience handling cash
- Responsible, reliable, committed

Experience:

July 2002 – May 2003

Riverview Retirement Village

- Planned special events for seniors
- Assisted seniors with personal hygiene
- Demonstrated sensitivity to people's needs
- Followed directions
- Provided friendly, compassionate service

Sept 2001 – July 2002

Shady Pines Home for Special Care (Part-time)

- Receptionist Duties
- Reading to seniors
- Organizing special events

April 2001 – Sept 2001

Riverview Convenience

- Providing friendly customer service
- Tendering cash
- Preparing deposits
- Responsible for inventory control

Education:

Sept 2001 – June 2002

At-Home Care Solutions

Personal Care Worker Certification Course

- Theory as well as practical, hands on experience.
- O-J-T placement Riverview Retirement Village

Sept 1997 – June 2000

Riverview and Area High School

Completed Grade 12 (Academic)

Computer Skills:

- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access)
- Internet Explorer and Netscape
- Outlook Express, Outlook, Groupwise
- Adobe illustrator 7.0

Interests:

- Reading and drawing
- Biking, jogging
- Gardening

References available upon request



Information Worksheet for Résumés

This worksheet is useful when gathering the information needed to write a résumé. It is not necessary **that all** the information you list on the data sheet appear in your resume. This is simply a place to organize your information and thoughts.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ **Postal Code** _____

Phone # _____ **Message #** _____

Email Address _____

Skills (Abilities, Strengths or Accomplishments)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Work Experience (Most recent first)

From (mm/yyyy)	Company	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To (mm/yyyy)	Position	
_____	Duties	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

From	Company	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To	Position	
_____	Duties	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____





From	Company	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To		Position
_____	Duties	_____

From	Company	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To		Position
_____	Duties	_____

Education/Training (Courses, Upgrading, Programs)

From (mm/yyyy)	Name of Institution	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To (mm/yyyy)		
_____	Grade Completed/Certificate Acquired	_____

From	Name of Institution	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To		
_____	Grade Completed/Certificate Acquired	_____

From	Name of Institution	Town, Province
_____	_____	_____
To		
_____	Grade Completed/Certificate Acquired	_____





From _____ **Name of Institution** _____ Town, Province _____

 To _____

 Grade Completed/Certificate Acquired _____

From _____ **Name of Institution** _____ Town, Province _____

 To _____

 Grade Completed/Certificate Acquired _____

Volunteer Activities

Organization _____ Town, Province _____
 Position _____ Dates _____
 Activities in which you were involved _____

Organization _____ Town, Province _____
 Position _____ Dates _____
 Activities in which you were involved _____

Organization _____ Town, Province _____
 Position _____ Dates _____
 Activities in which you were involved _____

Interest and Hobbies



Cover Letters

A Standard Cover Letter Consists of:

PERSONAL INFORMATION - your name, address, phone number

DATE

EMPLOYER'S INFORMATION - who the letter is intended for, their title, their address

SALUATION - i.e. Dear Mr. Smith

FIRST PARAGRAPH: State the reason why you are writing and try to capture the reader's attention. Explain why you are interested in the job or the company and how you found out about the opportunity.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: This is where you draw attention to your specific skills and qualifications for the job. Include any special accomplishments that you feel are important. Be enthusiastic and refer the reader to your resume.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Thank the employer for their consideration and request an interview. You can also indicate when you will make contact as a follow-up.

CLOSING - Yours truly, Sincerely yours, Best Regards, etc.

YOUR NAME (leave a few spaces to SIGN your name and then type your name below)

Enc. (lets them know a resume or application is attached)

Did you remember to...

<input type="checkbox"/>	Proofread it for spelling, grammar, and punctuation?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Print it using a good quality printer?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Address it to a specific person?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a format and style that matches your résumé?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write it in a way that will get the readers attention?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate your interest in the company and the job?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Highlight your important qualifications and personal strengths?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request an Interview?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have someone else proofread it for mistakes?

Sample Cover Letter Advertised Position

Jane Doe
Your address
Your Town, N.S., B4V 2L0
(902) 555-5555

Month Day, Year

Mr. Employer
Business Name
1871 Money Maker Blvd
Lunenburg, N.S., BOJ 1X2

Dear Mr. Employer:

I am submitting my resume in response to the ad you placed in the (Newspaper Name) on March 28 for the position of "Administrative Assistant". I am confident that after you've read my resume you'll appreciate the qualifications I have and hope you will consider me for this position.

My combination of experience and education has made me proficient with most computer applications including Microsoft Office and Corel Suite 8. I have also worked with many industry specific programs, and can easily transfer these skills to a new office.

I am a reliable and efficient person who has developed strong work ethics. I can work both independently and as a team player and my communications skills are exceptional.

I hope that after reading my resume you will find that my qualifications are what you are looking for in a future employee. I would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you, at your convenience to further discuss the Administrative Assistant position.

Respectfully Yours,

Jane Doe
Enc.

John Smith
Your Address
Your Town, N.S., B4V 1X1
(902) 555-5555
email: JSmith@getajob.ca

March 25, 2000

Mr. Contact Name
Personnel Director
Big Construction Company
123 Rockpile Drive
Bridgewater, N.S., B4V 3R5

Dear Mr. Contact Name:

I read in the March 24th Newspaper Name classified section of your need for a Building Construction graduate for one of your project sites. I will be returning to the Bridgewater area after graduation in May and believe that I have the necessary credentials for the project.

I have worked at various levels in the construction industry every summer since the 10th grade. As you can see from my résumé, I worked several summers as a general laborer, gradually moved up to a carpenter, and last summer I worked as assistant construction manager on a large housing project.

In addition to this practical experience, I will complete the requirements for my Building Construction degree in May. As you may know, HowTo University is one of the few Schools in the country that offers such a specialized degree for the construction industry. I am confident that my Building Construction degree, along with my years of experience, make me an excellent candidate for your job.

The Big Construction Company projects are familiar to me, and my aspiration is to work for a company that has your excellent reputation. I would welcome the opportunity to interview with you. I will be in the Bridgewater area during the week of April 12th and would be available to speak with you at that time. In the next week to ten days I will contact you to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Enclosure

Interviews

Tips for Successful Interviews

- Do your homework. Learn as much about the company as possible. You can do this by checking out their website, talking to staff members or visiting their location and trying their out services.
- Try to anticipate the types of questions you may be asked. If you've responded to a job ad, you should be able to guess a few questions that might come up. Otherwise, look through the *Common Interview Questions* in this booklet.
- Go alone. Never take a friend or family member. If someone drives you, ask them to wait in the car or come back and pick you up.
- Make sure you know how to get there. Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Take a copy of your résumé, a pen and a copy of your references (if they're not included in the résumé).
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and a friendly greeting.
- Try to project qualities such as enthusiasm, interest, motivation, flexibility and willingness to work.
- Speak clearly and directly, maintain good posture, make eye contact.

Common Interview Questions

If you rehearse your answers to some common interview questions, you will be feel more comfortable. You can practice in the mirror or with a friend.

Avoid giving a Yes / No answer and be careful not to sound like you are reading a script.

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you know about our company (or the job)?
- Why are you interested in working here?
- Have you ever done this type of work before?
- What are your strengths (or weaknesses)?
- How did you do (are you doing) in school?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- When can you start?
- What hours can you work?
- Can you work overtime?
- Do you have any long-range goals?
- What are some of your other interests?
- How much are you expecting to be paid?
- Do you have references?
- Do you have any questions?

When given the opportunity, you should ask questions at the end of the interview. Here are a few questions you could ask:

- Why was this position created?
- What is the management style?
- Would I be encouraged to express my ideas?
- When will I hear if I have been chosen for this position?

Interview Checklist

- Do your planning
- Practice with a friend
- Arrive 10 minutes early
- Be well groomed
- Use a firm handshake (but not a crusher handshake!)
- Be friendly, courteous, and professional to everyone
- Remember names
- Dress appropriately for the situation
- Display good posture
- Act confident
- Be enthusiastic
- Listen carefully
- Maintain eye contact
- Answer questions clearly and fully but don't ramble
- Ask questions when appropriate
- Have a copy of your resume or application available
- Have your reference sheet available
- Avoid strong scents and be conservative with jewelry
- Don't smoke or chew gum
- Never lie or exaggerate
- Never interrupt the employer
- Don't be too aggressive or pushy
- Avoid saying anything bad about past employers or jobs
- Don't mention money until asked or an offer is made
- Thank the interviewer for their time and consideration