The Job Search

The Job Search

In this scenario, a business owner interviews potential job applicants.

The job search involves at least two people—the applicant and the individual making the hiring decision. Usually more than two people are involved, however, because companies typically hire based on a committee's decision. That is the case at **DiskServe**. This St. Louis-based company is hoping to hire a customer service representative for its computer technology department. DiskServe is eager to hire a new employee because one of its best workers has just advanced to a new position in the company. DiskServe asked applicants to apply using e-mail. Thus, the applicants submitted an application by way of a cover e-mail message, an attached resume, and an attached portfolio.

DiskServe advertised this opening in the career placement centers at local colleges, through online search engines, and in its Web site: http://www.DiskServe.com.

In addition to DiskServe's chief executive officer (CEO), Sarah Beske, the hiring committee will consist of two managers from other DiskServe departments, the former employee

When you complete this chapter, you will be able to

- Use many different resources to locate possible jobs, such as college placement centers, instructors, friends, professional affiliations, want ads, social media, and the Internet
- Use either a reverse chronological resume or a functional resume
- Write a traditional hard-copy resume, a resume attached to an e-mail message, or a scannable resume
- Include a summary of qualifications on your resume
- Write a letter of application or cover e-mail message so that it targets a specific job
- Prepare before an interview so you can anticipate possible questions
- Use a follow-up letter or e-mail message to impress the interviewer and remind him or her of your strengths
- Know that over 60 percent of jobs are found through networking
- Use the Internet to help you job search
- Use the job search checklists to evaluate your resume, cover letter or e-mail message, interview, follow-up letter or e-mail message, job acceptance letter or e-mail message

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whose job is being filled, and two coworkers in the computer technology department.

Ten candidates were considered for the position. All candidates first had teleconference interviews. While Sarah talked with the candidates, the other hiring committee members listened on a speaker phone. After the telephone interviews, four candidates were invited to DiskServe's work site for personal interviews—Macy Heart, Aaron Brown, Rosemary Lopez, and Robin Scott.

Sarah Beske, who has worked hard to create a family-oriented environment at DiskServe, values three traits in her employees: technology know-how, an ability to work in teams, and a positive attitude toward customers and coworkers. When the candidates arrived at DiskServe, Sarah gave them a tour of the facilities, introducing them to many employees. Then the interviews began.

Each job candidate was asked a series of questions that included the following:

- What is your greatest strength? Give an example of how this reveals itself on the job.
- What did you like most and least about your previous jobs?
- How have you handled customer complaints in the past?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?

Then, each candidate was taken to the computer repair lab and confronted with an actual hardware or software problem. The candidates were asked to solve the problem, and their work was timed. Finally, the applicants were allowed to ask questions about DiskServe and their job responsibilities.

Sarah is a stickler for good manners and business protocol. She waited 48 hours after the final interview to make her hiring decision. The wait time allowed her to check references. More important, she wanted to see which of the candidates wrote follow-up thank you notes, and she planned to assess the quality of their writing. Sarah takes the hiring process seriously. She wants to hire the best people because she hopes those employees will stay with the company a long time. Hiring well is a good corporate investment.

The Three Rs of Searching for a Job

When beginning your job search, consider the three Rs: research yourself, research the company, and research the position. By performing this research, you will improve the focus of your job search. Learning more about your goals, the company's culture, and the specifics of the position will help you determine your goals, decide if the company and job meet your needs, and prepare you for an interview.

Research Yourself

You are not right for every job, and every job is not right for you. To ensure that you are applying for the correct position, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are your skills, attributes, and accomplishments?
- What can you bring to the company that is unique?
- How do your qualifications meet the position's requirements?
- What interests you about this company and the position?

Research the Company

By researching the company, you educate yourself about the company's culture, values, products, and services. To research the company, view the employer's Web site, read annual reports, speak with an employee, or go online to a site like Glassdoor.com to read employee reviews. Consider these questions:

- What is the employer's product or service?
- What is the company's vision or mission statement?
- What are the needs or problems of the employer?
- What role does the employer play in the community?
- Is the employer expanding?

Research the Position

When you consider the job opening, go online to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (http://www.bls.gov/oco/ooh_index.htm) to learn about a career field's salary range and job outlook. When you consider a specific company, review advertised job requirements and duties. This will help you determine if the job is right for you. Ask yourself these questions:

- What are the job responsibilities?
- What are the pay and benefits for this job?
- What skills and talents are needed for the position?
- What is the growth opportunity for this field?

("Resume Guidelines")

Researching the Internet to Find Job Openings

You should make the Internet part of your job search strategy. Internet job search engines, like those listed in Table 1, provide excellent job search resources, such as the following:

- **Resumes**—explaining the difference between resumes and curriculum vitae (CV), addressing gaps in your career history, avoiding typical resume mistakes, and writing winning resumes.

TABLE 1 Online Job Search Links

Search Engines for Jobs in the United States

- http://www.monster.com—lets you post resumes and search for jobs, and provides career advice
- http://www.careerbuilder.com—lets you search for jobs by company, industry, and job type
- http://www.twitjobsearch.com—lets you use Twitter for your job search
- http://www.collegerecruiter.com—lists the latest job postings, "coolest career resources, and most helpful employment information"
- http://www.careerjournal.com—the *Wall Street Journal*'s career search site; provides salary and hiring information, a resume database, and job hunting advice
- http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/—lets you search for jobs by keyword, city, and state
- http://www.dice.com/—focuses on technology careers
- http://www.job-hunt.org/—called by *PC Magazine* and *Forbes* the Internet's best Web site for job hunting and resources
- http://usajobs.opm.gov/—a site dedicated to government job searches and advice

Search Engines for International Jobs

- http://www.monster.com/geo/siteselection.aspx—allows you to select the country and search for jobs worldwide
- http://www.careerbuilder.com/JobSeeker/Jobs/jobfindil.aspx—allows you to select the country and search for jobs
- http://www.job-hunt.org/international.shtml—provides a listing of Web sites with jobs located outside of the United States

- **Interviews**—interviewing to get the job and handling illegal questions.
- **Cover letters and thank-you letters**—providing sample cover letter techniques and ways to write a better thank-you letter.
- **Job search tips**—employing the correct netiquette and job search techniques.

Using Social Media to Find Jobs

In the past, networking was primarily achieved face to face. Now, you can network virtually through social media. Twitter, for example, allows you "to connect directly with recruiters and employees at companies you want to work for" (Schawbel "7 Secrets"). You also can use blogs to search for job openings. Technorati provides you access to "over 130 million blogs" (Schawbel "7 Secrets"), which you can search to find information about job openings. In addition, search engines like Pipl, PeekYou, and Wink can help you find people to contact at companies you're interested in.

Social media isn't just for the job seeker. The Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest association of hiring managers, reports that a significant number of employers use social media to research job candidates. According to a SelectMinds survey, "72% of Companies Use Social Media to Recruit Candidates"; according to a CareerBuilder.com India survey, 73% of "employers reported . . . that they use social networking sites to research job candidates."

Problems with Digital Dirt in the Job Search

If you're like most people, you have a Facebook site. You post photographs of yourself having fun while on vacations or at parties. You list your favorite bands, restaurants, television shows, and movies. You chat with friends, state your relationship status, and post

intimate information. Some of the information might be unflattering. That's called "digital dirt." Do you want a prospective employer to see your life in such detail? Information that you consider harmless might, in fact, hurt your job chances. Therefore, be careful about what you post. Treat your social media sites as reflections of your professionalism.

Who Uses LinkedIn?

To enhance your job search profile, consider joining LinkedIn, a social media site for professionals. LinkedIn not only lets you post your own profile, but also through this social media site, you can find information about other professionals in your work environment. Fortune 500 companies, including Yahoo, Kraft, Microsoft, Lockheed Martin, EBay, EMC, Intuit, Netflix, Allstate, Target, and ConAgra, use LinkedIn to recruit, find, and hire new employees. The site has registered users in over 200 countries and is available in many languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. A mobile version of the site provides access over a smartphone (*LinkedIn*).

Why Should a Prospective Employee or a Company Seeking Employees Create a LinkedIn Site Profile? LinkedIn Jobs lets members of LinkedIn search for or post jobs by keyword, country, and postal code. In addition, human resource managers can access a network of over 65 million professionals to find candidates with specific skills and required experience. Job seekers can use their connections at potential employers to help them land a job within the company. In their LinkedIn sites, job seekers can post a profile of their experiences, talents, and professional references. Job seekers also can review a company's profile to learn more about its products, services, projects, clients, employees, ratings, community involvement, and corporate contacts. Finally, Google tends to rank LinkedIn profiles high, usually within the first five Google hits. This is dependent on the LinkedIn participant using key words and using his or her name instead of a URL or company name.

How to Create an Effective LinkedIn Profile Page. When building a profile, focus on the following:

- **Enhance your headline.** List your full name, title, primary job responsibility, and company name. This headline is the first thing the audience sees, so make a clear statement.
- **Add a photo.** Include a headshot, making sure it's small (around 80 × 80 pixels).
- **Summarize and sell.** In the summary, engage the audience quickly. To do so, pinpoint your primary industry (this aids another company's search), focus on your key areas of interest, highlight your experiences, and clarify your achievements.
- **Detail your work experience.** Include dates of employment, the names of the companies for which you have worked, and a detailed listing of your job activities and achievements.
- **Provide keywords and skills.** Include keywords and skills to help others (recruiters, colleagues, clients, etc.) easily search for and find your profile.
- **Add links to your LinkedIn site.** Help your connections find out more about you. Link your LinkedIn site to your company Web site, blog, alternative e-mail addresses, Facebook site, Twitter account, etc.
- **Get recommendations.** List others with whom you have worked and for whom you have worked. This is how connections are made and how your value is quantified. (Brogan, Doyle)

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FAQs: LinkedIn's Features

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Q: Besides helping me with my job search, what other benefits does LinkedIn offer?

A: LinkedIn isn't just a social networking site that allows you to post a profile. Look at its many interesting features:

- LinkedIn Answers—Lets you ask business-related questions to the large LinkedIn community. The identities of both the person who poses the question and those who answer are made public.
- LinkedIn Groups—allows users to form like-minded groups of peers within an organization or industry.
- LinkedIn Polls—helps you find answers to questions and research topics. LinkedIn analyzes results, factoring in age, gender, job function, and company demographics (for a small fee).
- LinkedIn DirectAds—lets you connect with a large audience by geography, job function, age, gender, industry, and company size.
- LinkedIn Blog —shares posts from professionals in many industries.

Q: Is Linked In secure?

A: LinkedIn assures the security of your personal data by participating in the United States and European Union's International Safe Harbor Privacy Principles. LinkedIn protects private and sensitive information and assures users that they will be able to correct errors and delete information.

Using Mobile Apps in the Job Search

For the job search candidate on the go, use mobile apps to find job openings and to network with recruiters. Following are apps that can "help you own your online identity, build a strong database of professional contacts, and locate a job in your area in a flash" (Schawbel "10 iPhone Apps").

- Jobs by CareerBuilder
- JobCompass
- JobFinder
- ABContacts
- BeKnown
- Beyond.com Search Jobs

See Figure 1 for a screenshot of the Jobs by CareerBuilder app.

Using Traditional Job Search Techniques

In addition to using the Internet, social media, and apps, also use other, more traditional ways to find jobs, as follows:

- Network with friends and past employers. A *Smart Money* magazine article reported that 62 percent of job searchers find employment through "face-to-face networking" (Bloch 12).
- Visit your college or university job placement center.
- Attend a job fair.
- Talk to your instructors.

FIGURE 1 Jobs by CareerBuilder App
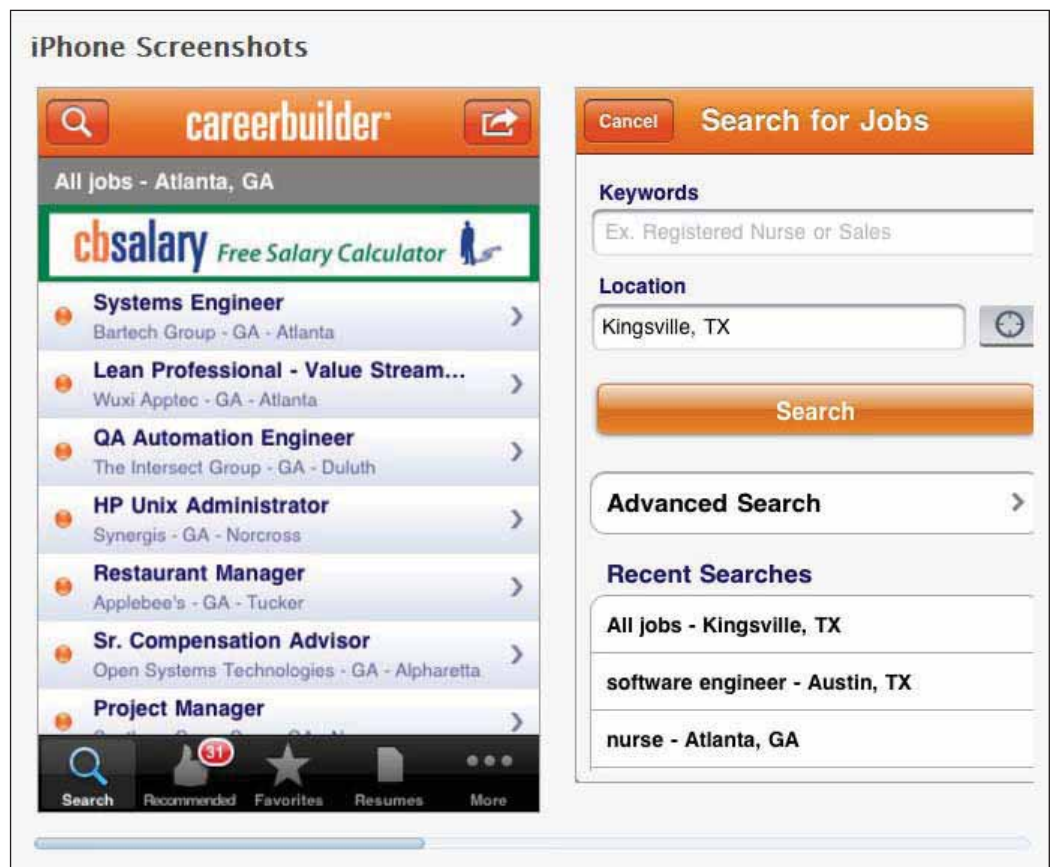
Source: Courtesy of CareerBuilder 2012

- Get involved in your community by volunteering for a community committee, pursuing religious affiliations, joining community clubs, or participating in fund-raising events.
- Access job postings from professional affiliations or business journals.
- Read the want ads.
- Take a "temp" job that will pay you while you look for a job, help you acquire new skills, allow you to network, and could lead to full-time employment.
- Get an internship to network, acquire additional skills, and improve your resume.
- Shadow a mentor on a job to learn about job responsibilities in a certain field.
- Set up an informational interview with a professional in your field to learn about career opportunities.

Criteria for Effective Resumes

Once you have found a job that interests you, it is time to apply. Your job application will start when you send the prospective employer your resume. Resumes are usually the first impression you make on a prospective employer. If your resume is effective, you have opened the door to possible employment—you have given yourself the opportunity to sell

your skills during an interview. If, in contrast, you write an ineffective resume, you have closed the door to opportunity.

Your resume should present an objective, easily accessible, detailed biographical sketch. However, do not try to include your entire history. Because the primary goal of your resume, together with your letter of application, is to get an interview, you can use your interview to explain in more detail any pertinent information that does not appear on your resume. When writing a resume, you have two optional approaches. You can write either a reverse chronological resume or a functional resume.

Reverse Chronological Resume

Write a reverse chronological resume if you

- Are a traditional job applicant (a recent high-school or college graduate, aged 18 to 25)
- Hope to enter the profession in which you have received college training or certification
- Have made steady progress in one profession (promotions or salary increases)
- Plan to stay in your present profession

Functional Resume

Write a functional resume if you

- Are a nontraditional job applicant (returning to the workforce after a lengthy absence, older, or not a recent high-school or college graduate)
- Plan to enter a profession in which you have not received formal college training or certification
- Have changed jobs frequently
- Plan to enter a new profession

Ethical Considerations When Writing a Resume

If your resume contains inaccurate information, your potential employer can find out. Prospective employers can perform follow-up reference checks, contacting your previous bosses to verify your resume's assertions. In addition, it is very easy to perform Internet background checks related to a job candidate's credit issues, prior criminal offenses, driving records, military history, or even presence on terrorism watch lists. Many employers use social networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, to learn details about a job candidate.

Due to the ease with which an employer can verify your resume's assertions, you must honestly present your qualifications. Make sure that your resume is ethical and honest. Following are examples of resume fraud that you must avoid:

- Including a degree that you have not earned
- Listing colleges or universities that you have not attended
- Inflating your job title
- Inflating your job responsibilities
- Inflating your job achievements
- Listing jobs that you have not held
- Claiming technical knowledge that you do not have
- Omitting large amounts of time from your school and job histories
- Including military rank you have not earned

Failing to follow ethical standards and being completely honest on your resume could result in your not being offered a job or being fired from your current job.

Key Resume Components

Whether you write a reverse chronological or a functional resume, include the following key components.

Identification.   Begin your resume with the following:

- **Name (full first name, middle initial, and last name).** Your name can be in boldface and printed in a larger type size (14 point, 16 point, etc.).
- **Contact information.** Include your street address, your city, state (use the correct two-letter abbreviation), and zip code. If you are attending college or serving in the armed forces, you might also want to include a permanent address. By including alternative addresses, you help your prospective employer contact you more easily.
- **Area code and phone numbers.** Limit yourself to two phone numbers, and don't provide a work phone. Having prospective employers call you at your present job is not appropriate. First, your current employer will not appreciate your receiving this sort of personal call. Second, your future employer might believe that you often receive personal calls at work and will continue to do so if he or she hires you.
- **E-mail, Web site address, or fax number.** Be sure that your e-mail address is professional sounding. An e-mail address, such as "ILuvDaBears," "Hotrodder," or "HeavyMetalDude," is not likely to inspire a company to interview you.

Career Objectives.   The career objectives line is like a subject line in a memo, e-mail, or report. Your career objective informs the reader of your resume's focus. Be sure your career objective is precise. Too often, career objectives are so generic that their vagueness does more harm than good. In addition, a successful career objective emphasizes how hiring you will benefit the company.

This poorly constructed career objective provides no focus. What kind of business? What kind of opportunities for professional growth? Employers don't want to hire people who have only vague notions about their skills and objectives.

BEFORE

Flawed Career Objective

Career Objective: Seeking employment in a business environment offering an opportunity for professional growth.

AFTER

Improved Career Objective

This improved career objective not only specifies which job the applicant is seeking but also how he or she will benefit the company.

Career Objective: To market financial planning programs and provide financial counseling to ensure positive client relations.

Summary of Qualifications.   After the career objectives, provide your audience a summary of qualifications. According to Monster.Com, "resumes normally get less than a 15-second glance at the first screening" (Isaacs). A summary of qualifications allows the employer an immediate opportunity to see how you can add value to the company.

A summary of qualifications should include the following:

- An overview of your skills, abilities, accomplishments, and attributes
- Your strengths in relation to the position for which you are applying
- How you will meet the employer's goals

To write an effective summary of qualifications, list your top three to seven most marketable credentials.

FAQs: Resume Guidelines

Q: Do I really need to limit my resume to one page?

A: Do not worry about limiting yourself to the traditional one-page resume. Conciseness is important in all technical communication, but if your education, work experience, and professional skills merit more than a page, you must show your accomplishments. In addition, if you submit your resume as part of an e-mail message, readers will scroll. However, don't pad the resume. Limit yourself to jobs within the last ten years and skills that fit the job you're seeking.

Q: In my resume, which should I list first, my work experience or my education?

A: It's all about location, location, location. You should present your most important section first. If education is your strength and will help you get the job, lead with education. If, in contrast, your work experience is stronger, begin your resume with work.

Q: Can I omit jobs that I didn't like?

A: Yes and no. You can not have any large gaps in your resume, such as a missing year or more. If you have any large gaps, you must either explain the gap or fill it with other activities (education, volunteerism, or childrearing, for instance). However, a missing month or so is not a problem. If you worked a job for a month, left that job, and then found other employment, you do not need to list the short-term job.

Summary of Qualifications

- Over four years combined experience in marketing and business
- Developed a winning bid package for promotional brochures
- Promoted to manager in less than two years
- Maintained a database of over 1,000 customers, special ordered merchandise, and tracked inventory
- Managed over ten employees

Employment. The employment section lists the jobs you've held. This information must be presented in reverse chronological order (your current job listed first, previous jobs listed next). This section must include the following:

- Your job title (if you have or had one)
- The name of the company you worked for
- The location of this company (city and state)
- The time period during which you worked at this job
- Your job duties, responsibilities, and accomplishments

This last consideration is important. This is your chance to sell yourself. Merely stating where you worked and when you worked there will not get you a job. Instead, what did

Assistant Manager

McConnel Oil Change, Beauxdroit, LA
2012 to present

- Track and maintain over $25,000 in inventory
- Train a minimum of four new employees quarterly
- Achieved a 10 percent growth in service performed for three consecutive years
- Developed a user manual for hazardous waste disposal, earning a "Citizen's Recognition Award" from the Beauxdroit City Council

Listing your job title, company name, location, and dates of employment merely shows where you were in a given period of time. To prove your contributions to the company, provide specific details highlighting achievements.

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you achieve on the job? In this part of the resume, you should detail how you met deadlines, trained employees, cut expenses, exceeded sales expectations, decreased overage, managed money, and so forth. Plus, you want to quantify your accomplishments.

Education.   In addition to work experience, you must include your education. Document your educational experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent education first; previous schools, colleges, universities, military courses, and training seminars next). When listing your education, provide the following information:

- Degree. If you have not yet received your degree, you can write "Anticipated date of graduation June 2014" or "Degree expected in 2014."
- Area of specialization.
- School attended. Do not abbreviate. Although you might assume that everyone knows what *UT* means, your readers won't understand this abbreviation. Is UT the University of Texas, the University of Tennessee, the University of Tulsa, or the University of Toledo?
- Location. Include the city and state.
- Year of graduation or years attended.

As you can see, this information is just the facts and nothing else. Many people might have the same educational history as you. For instance, just imagine how many of your current classmates will graduate from your school, in the same year, with the same degree. Why are you more hirable than they are? The only way you can differentiate yourself from other job candidates with similar degrees is by highlighting your unique educational accomplishments. These might include any or all of the following:

Grade point average (generally if over 3.0 on a 4.0 scale)	Academic honors, scholarships, and awards
Academic club memberships and leadership offices held	Fraternity or sorority leadership offices held
Unique coursework	Number of hours you worked while attending school
Special class projects	Software and hardware certifications or technical equipment you can operate

Please note a key concern regarding your work experience and education. You should have no chronological gaps when all of your work and education are listed. You can't omit a year without a very good explanation. (A missing month or so is not a problem.)

Professional Skills.   If you are changing professions or reentering the workforce after a long absence, you will write a functional resume. Therefore, rather than beginning with education or work experience, which won't necessarily help you get a job, focus your reader's attention on your unique skills. These could include any of the following:

Proficiency with computer hardware and software	New techniques you have invented or implemented
Procedures you can perform	Numbers of and types of people you have managed
Special accomplishments and awards you have earned	Machinery you can operate
On-the-job training you have received	Certifications you have earned
Training you have provided	Languages you speak, read, and write

These professional skills are important because they help show how you are different from all other applicants. In addition, they show that although you have not been trained in the job for which you are applying, you can still be a valuable employee.

Professional Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, and PowerPoint
- Knowledge of HTML, Java, Visual Basic, and C++
- Certified OSHA Hazardous Management Safety Trainer
- Fluent in Spanish and English
- Completed Second Shift Administration Certificate

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Highlight professional skills that will set you apart from other potential employees.

Military Experience. If you served for several years in the military, you might want to describe this service in a separate section. You would state the following:

Rank	Discharge status
Service branch	Special clearances
Location (city, state, country, ship, etc.)	Achievements and professional skills
Years in service	Training seminars attended and education received

Professional Affiliations. If you belong to regional, national, or international clubs or have professional affiliations, you might want to mention these. Such memberships might include the Rotarians, Lions Club, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, or Junior League. Maybe you belong to the Society for Technical Communication, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, the National Office Machine Dealers Association, or the American Helicopter Society. Listing such associations emphasizes your social consciousness and your professional sincerity. Also include any offices you've held in these organizations.

References. Avoid a reference line that reads "Supplied on request," "Available on request," or "Furnished on request." Every employer knows that you will provide references if asked. Instead of wasting valuable space on your resume with unnecessary text, use this space to develop your summary of qualifications, education, work experience, or professional skills more thoroughly. Create a second page for references, and bring this reference page to your interview. On the reference page, list three or four colleagues, supervisors, teachers, or community individuals who will recommend you for employment (Note: Obtain their permission before listing them as references.). Provide their names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers. By bringing the reference page to your interview, you will show your prospective employer that you are proactive and organized.

Personal Data. Do not include any of the following information: birth date, race, gender, religion, height, weight, religious affiliation, marital status, or pictures of yourself. Equal opportunity laws disallow employers from making decisions based on these factors.

Effective Resume Style

The preceding information suggests *what* you should include in your resume. Your next consideration is *how* this information should be presented. As mentioned throughout this textbook, page layout is essential for effective technical communication. The same holds true for your resume.

Choose Appropriate Font Types and Sizes. As with most technical communication, the best font types are Times New Roman and Arial. These are readable and professional looking. Avoid designer fonts, such as Comic Sans, and cursive fonts, such as Shelley Vollante. In addition, use a 10- to 12-point font for your text. Smaller font sizes are hard to read; larger font sizes look unprofessional. Headings can be boldface and 14- to 16-point font size. Limit your resume to no more than two font types: one for headings and one for text.

Avoid Sentences. Sentences create three problems in a resume. First, if you use sentences, the majority of them will begin with the first-person pronoun *I*. You'll write, "I have . . . ," "I graduated . . . ," or "I worked. . . . " Such sentences are repetitious and egocentric. Second, if you choose to use sentences, you'll run the risk of committing grammatical errors: run-ons, dangling modifiers, agreement errors, and so forth. Third, sentences will take up room in your resume, making it longer than necessary.

Format Your Resume for Reader-Friendly Ease of Access. Instead of sentences, highlight your resume with easily accessible lists. Set apart your achievements by bulletizing your accomplishments, awards, unique skills, and so on. In addition to bullets, make your resume accessible by boldfacing headings and indenting subheadings to create white space. Avoid underlining headings or italicizing text. Studies show that most people find underlined text and italics hard to read (Vogt).

Begin Your Lists with Verbs. To convey a positive, assertive tone, use verbs when describing your achievements. Use present tense verbs for current jobs and education; use past tense verbs for past jobs and education. Following is a list of verbs you might use (Table 2).

TABLE 2 Active Verbs to Highlight Achievements

Accomplished	Designed	Initiated	Planned
Achieved	Developed	Installed	Prepared
Analyzed	Diagnosed	Led	Presented
Awarded	Directed	Made	Programmed
Built	Earned	Maintained	Reduced
Completed	Established	Managed	Resolved
Conducted	Expanded	Manufactured	Reviewed
Coordinated	Gained	Negotiated	Sold
Created	Implemented	Ordered	Supervised
Customized	Improved	Organized	Trained

Quantify Your Achievements. Your resume should not tell your readers how great you are; it should prove your worth. To do so, quantify by precisely explaining your achievements.

BEFORE	AFTER
Maintained positive customer relations with numerous clients.	Maintained positive customer relations with 5,000 retail and 90 wholesale clients.
Improved field representative efficiency through effective training.	Improved field representative efficiency by writing corporate manuals for policies and procedures.
Achieved production goals.	Achieved 95 percent production, surpassing the company's desired goal of 90 percent.
Trained employees.	Trained 20 employees annually in methods for safely removing hazardous waste from the workplace.

Make It Perfect. You cannot afford to have an error in your resume. Remember, your resume is the first impression you'll make on your prospective employer. Errors in your resume will create a poor first impression.

Portfolios

As an enhanced component for your job search, consider using a portfolio. Resumes tell; portfolios show. A resume tells an employer what you can do and how you'll benefit the company. Portfolios prove your resume's assertions by showing examples of

your skills, providing evidence of your accomplishments, and documenting your achievements.

If you are in technical writing, corporate communication, fashion merchandizing, heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC), engineering, drafting, architecture, nursing, accounting, or graphic design, for example, you might want to provide the best examples of your work. These examples could include any of the following:

Schematics	Published articles
Screenshots of PowerPoint presentations	Report samples
Outstanding performance reviews	Photographs
Outlines of presentations	Testimonials or letters of recommendation
CAD/CAM drawing	Brochures or fliers
Training and award certificates	Short video and audio files

Avoid sending an unsolicited portfolio to prospective employers. They will already be overwhelmed with resumes from job candidates and will not necessarily want to open additional documents. However, if an employer asks for a portfolio or when you go in for an interview, take your portfolio in hardcopy, on a CD, on a flash drive, or provide a URL link to an online site.

You can create a portfolio in at least four ways:

- Hardcopy
- PDF format
- PowerPoint format
- Web-based, online format (webfolios)

Hardcopy

You can place your documents in a binder and bring it to the interview. Make the contents accessible by providing a title page, cover letter, table of contents, and tabs. Be sure your hardcopy portfolio examples are printed clearly and neatly on good quality paper—no blurred images, no wrinkled certificates, no smeared text from a printer low on ink.

PDF Format

Portable document formats (PDFs) start with a Word document. To create a PDF portfolio, include all items you want to highlight (publications, schematics, outlines, etc.) in your order of preference. Then, convert the document to a PDF format. A PDF ensures that your readers see your document exactly as you see it; formatting, layout, visuals, and fonts will not change dependent upon your audience's software. Free PDF downloads include Adobe Reader, Cute PDF, PrimoPDF, PDFlite, Nitro PDF, and others.

Within your PDF portfolio, you can create links from portfolio tables of contents or resume items. Then, if you e-mail a PDF portfolio to potential employers, they can click on the links to access individual pages or sections of the portfolio without having to scroll through the entire document. Figure 2 illustrates how PDF links are created by simply highlighting relevant text and right-clicking.

PowerPoint Format

Your PowerPoint (PPT) portfolio can be dynamic with video, audio, and motion. Save your PPT portfolio on either a CD or flash drive so the audience gets the full benefit of PPT's capabilities. As with the PDF portfolio, you can add hypertext links to a PPT portfolio, which allows your audience to access examples as they choose. See Figure 3 to learn how to create a hyperlink in a PPT portfolio by highlighting relevant text and right-clicking.

FIGURE 2 Creating a PDF Link on a Resume
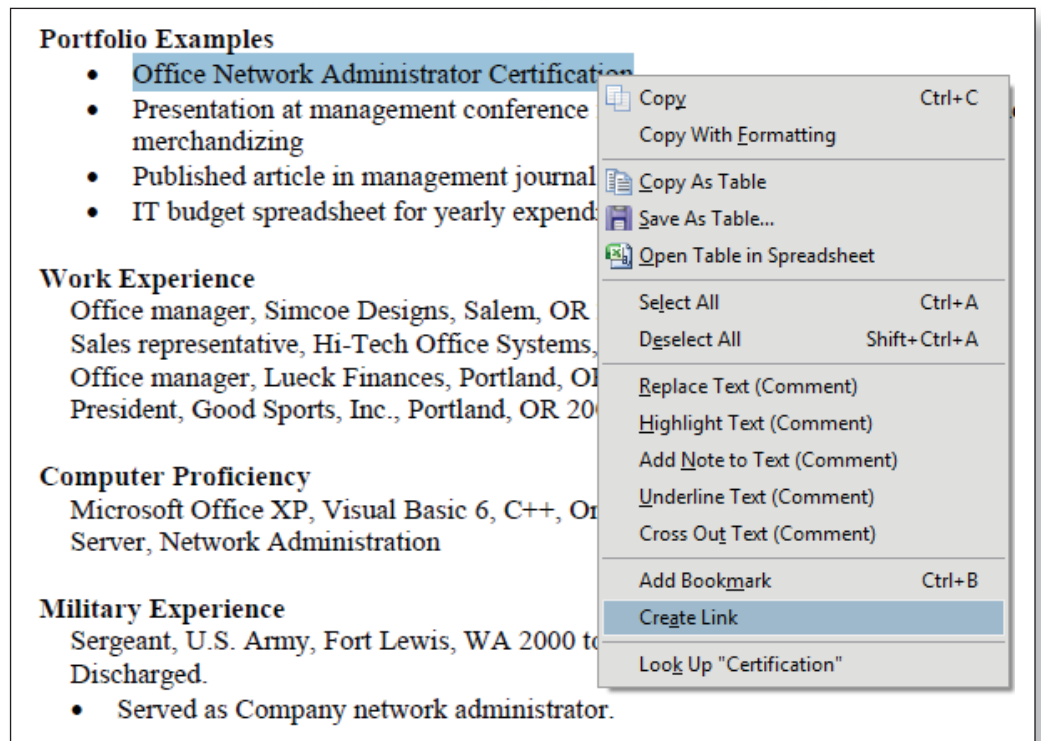
FIGURE 3 Hyperlink to Examples in a PowerPoint Portfolio
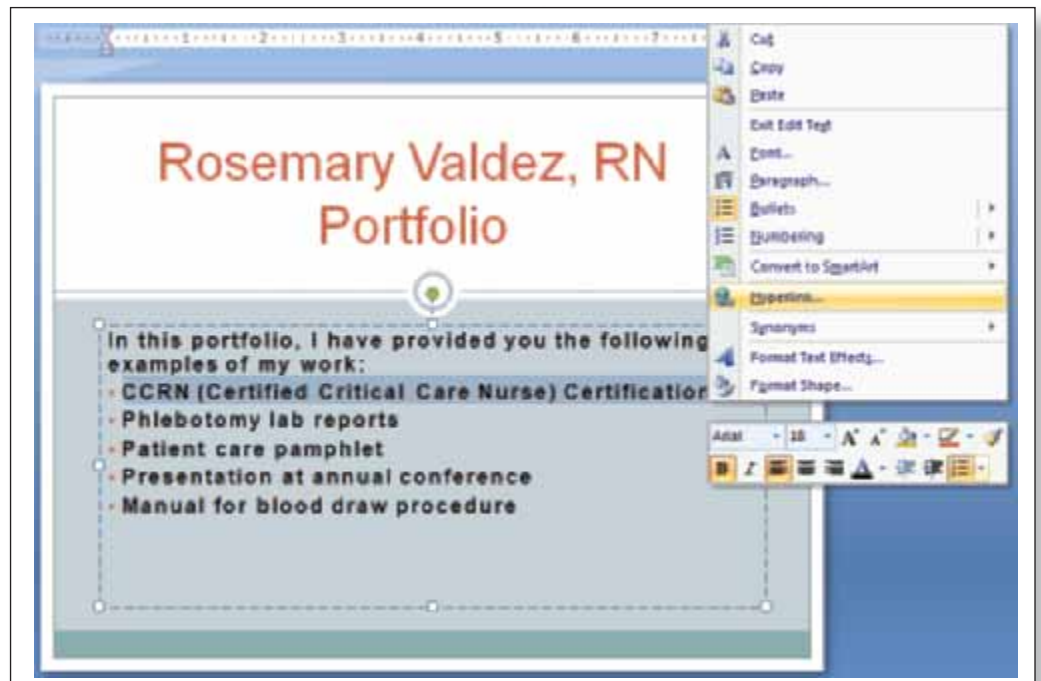
Web-based, Online Format

If you have a Web site or plan to create one, provide your audience a link to your online portfolio. With a Web-based portfolio, you can offer hypertext links to

- PDF files
- PowerPoint files
- Word documents
- Video and audio files (vesumes)
- Web pages

An online portfolio proves to an employer that you have valuable technology skills.

Methods of Delivery

When writing either a reverse chronological or a functional resume, you can deliver your document in several ways.

Mail Version

You can deliver a resume by mailing it through the United States Postal Service. This resume can be highly designed, using bullets, boldface, horizontal rules, indentations, and

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TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Using Resume Templates in Microsoft Word 2010

Microsoft Word 2010 provides you a resume template if you want help getting started.

1. Click on the **Office Button** located on the top left of your toolbar and scroll to **New**.
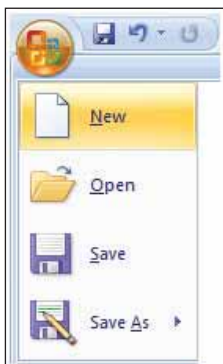
The following **New Document** window will pop up.
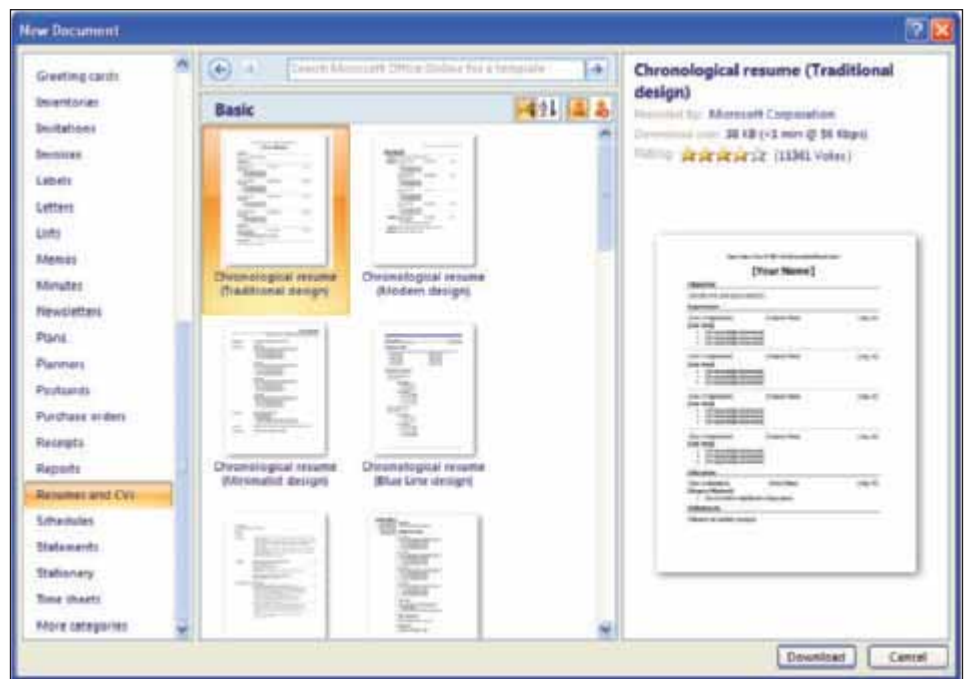
(Continued)

TECHNOLOGY TIPS *(Continued)*

2. Click on the **Resumes and CVs tab** to find optional resume layouts ("Traditional" chronological resume design, "Modern" chronological resume design, "Minimalist" chronological resume design, etc.).

These resume templates provide benefits as well as create a few problems. On the positive side, the templates are great reminders of what to include in your resume, such as objectives, work experience, education, and skills. In contrast, the templates also limit you and perhaps suggest that you include information that isn't needed. First, the templates mandate font sizes and page layout. Second, a few of the templates suggest that you include information about "Interests" and "References." Rarely should you include "Interests," such as hobbies. Furthermore, most experts suggest that you omit the "References" line, saving valuable resume space for more important information. You can include references on a separate page, especially for interviews. More important, if you use the same templates that everyone else does, then how will your resume stand out as unique? A good compromise is to review the templates for ideas and then create your own resume with your unique layout.

different font sizes. Because this document will be a hard copy, what the reader sees will be exactly what you mail. Do not be tempted to over design your resume, however. For example, avoid decorative fonts, clip art, borders, or photos. Do not print your resume on unusual colors, like salmon, baby blue, tangerine, or yellow. Instead, stick to heavy white paper and standard fonts, like Times New Roman and Arial.

Figures 4 and 5 are excellent examples of traditional resumes, ready to be mailed.

E-mail Resume

Delivering your resume by mail can take several days. The quickest way to get your resume to the prospective employer is as an e-mail attachment. Speed isn't the only issue. "Hiring managers and recruiters have become as addicted to e-mail as everyone else. More than one-third of human-resource professionals reported a preference for e-mailed resumes, according to . . . the Society for Human Resource Management" (Dixson).

Scannable Resume

Many companies use computers to screen resumes with a technique called electronic applicant tracking. The company's computer program scans resumes as raster (or bitmap) images. Next, the software uses artificial intelligence to read the text, scanning for keywords. If your resume contains a sufficient number of these keywords, the resume will then be given to someone in the human resources department for follow-up.

A scannable resume can be e-mailed or sent through the mail. To create a scannable resume, type your text using Notepad for Windows, Simpletext for Macintosh, or Note Tab, which is available as freeware. You also could type your resume using Microsoft Word and save the document as a text file, with a *.txt* extension (Dikel 3).

To create a successful scannable resume, try these techniques:

- Use Courier, Helvetica, or Arial typeface (10- to14-point type).
- Place your name at the top of the page. "Scanners assume that whatever is at the top is your name. If your resume has two pages, place your name and a 'page two' designation on the second page, and attach with a paper clip—no staples" (Kendall).
- Avoid italics, underlining, colors, horizontal and vertical bars, and iconic bullets.
- White space is still important, but do not use your Tab key for spacing. Tabs will be interpreted differently in different computer environments. Use your space bar instead.
- Avoid organizing information in columns.
- Do not center text.
- Use headings and place your text below the headings, spacing for visual appeal.
- Create bullets using an asterisk (*) or a hyphen (-).
- Use keywords in your summary of qualifications, work experience, and professional skills.

FIGURE 4 Chronological Resume

Sharon J. Barenblatt

1901 Rosebud Avenue
Boston, MA 12987
Cell phone: 202-555-2121
E-mail: sharonbb@juno.com

Objective

Employment as an account manager in public relations, using my education, work experience, and interpersonal communication skills to generate business.

Summary of Qualifications

- Over five years customer service experience
- Experience in public relations, writing public service announcements
- Proven record of written and interpersonal communication abilities in technical writing
- Outstanding leadership skills, shown by my management background
- Fluent in Spanish

Education

BS, Business. Boston College. Boston, MA 2014

- 3.2 GPA
- Social Justice Chair, Sigma Delta Tau, 2014
- Study Abroad Program, Madrid, Spain 2012
- Internship, Ace Public Relations, Boston, MA 2012

Frederick Douglas High School. Newcastle, MA 2010

- 3.5 GPA
- Member, Honor Society
- Captain, Frederick Douglas High School tennis team

Work Experience

Salesperson/assistant department manager. Jessica McClintock Clothing Store. Boston, MA 2013 to present.

- Prepare nightly deposits, input daily receipts of up to $5,000
- Open and close the store
- Provide customer service to over 100 clients a day
- Trained six new employees

Salesperson. GAP Clothing. Newcastle, MA 2012 to 2013

- Assisted customers
- Stocked shelves

Professional Skills

- Made oral presentations to the Pan-Hellenic Council to advertise sorority philanthropic activities
- Helped plan community-wide "Paul Revere's Ride Day"
- Created advertising brochures and fliers for college-wide philanthropy netting over $25,000 donated to United Way

List your education and work experience in reverse chronological order.

List current jobs using present tense verbs and previous jobs using past tense verbs.

Do not only list where you worked and when you worked there. Also include your job responsibilities.

FIGURE 5 Functional Resume

JODY R. SEACREST

1944 W. 112th Street
Salem, OR 64925
(513) 451-4978
jseacrest12@hotmail.com

Objectives

Management position using my expertise in marketing, administration, interpersonal communication, and computer skills to help a company meet its revenue goals

Professional Skills

- Operated a sporting goods/sportswear mail-order house. Business began as home-based but experienced 125 percent growth and was purchased by a national retail sporting goods chain.
- Managed a retail design studio producing over $500,000 annually.
- Hired, trained, and supervised an administrative staff of 15 employees for a financial planning institution.
- Provided purchaser training for office equipment, reducing labor costs by 25 percent.

Work Experience

Office manager, Simcoe Designs, Salem, OR 2012 to present.
Sales representative, Hi-Tech Office Systems, Salem, OR 2008 to 2012.
Office manager, Lueck Finances, Portland, OR 2006 to 2008.
President, Good Sports, Inc., Portland, OR 2004 to 2006.

Computer Proficiency

Microsoft Office XP, Visual Basic 6, C++, Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server, Network Administration

Military Experience

Corporal, U.S. Army, Fort Lewis, WA 1998-2004. Honorably Discharged.
- Served as Company network administrator.
- Planned and budgeted all IT purchases.

Education

BA, General Studies, Portland State University, Portland, OR 1998.

In a functional resume, emphasize skills you have acquired which relate to the advertised position. Also quantify your accomplishments.

In a functional resume, list education and work experience in reverse chronological order.

A functional resume is organized by importance. Begin with the skills or accomplishments that will get you the job. Place less important information lower in the resume.

Keywords are the most important feature of scannable resumes. OCR (optical character recognition) searches focus on keywords and phrases specifically related to the job opening. The keywords include job titles, skills and responsibilities, corporate buzzwords, acronyms and abbreviations related to hardware and software, academic degrees, and certifications.

You can find which keywords to focus on by carefully reading the following:

- Job advertisements
- Your prospective employer's Web site
- Government job descriptions

- Industry-specific Web sites
- The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (found online at http://www.bls .gov/oco/)
- Career-related discussion groups or blogs
- Sample resumes found online

When using keywords, be specific; avoid vague words and phrases.

BEFORE	AFTER
Knowledge of various software products	Can create online help using Author-iT and have expertise with PageMaker and Quark

BEFORE	AFTER
Familiar with computer technology	Proficient in multimedia, HTML, and Windows and Macintosh platforms

Figure 6 shows an excellent example of a scannable resume.

Video Resume

Union Square Ventures, a venture-capital firm, had an opening for an investment analyst. The company requested "applicants to send links representing their 'Web presence,' such as a Twitter account or Tumblr blog. Applicants also had to submit short videos [vesumes] demonstrating their interest in the position. Union Square says its process nets better-quality candidates" when asking for video profiles (Silverman).

To create an effective video resume (or what some call a "vesume"), consider these five tips:

1. **Video Quality.** The video must have clear resolution, excellent sound, and no background distractions (noises or images).
2. **Appearance and Diction.** Just as you would strive to dress and behave professionally in an interview, you must also present a professional appearance in your video resume. See our tips for professional appearance discussed later in this chapter. In addition to appearance, prospective employers will judge you on the content of your comments, what you say, and how you say it. Speak with confidence, clarity, and professionalism. Avoid mumbling, looking down, shuffling notes, or checking smartphones.
3. **Content.** Your video resume, just like your hard-copy or electronic resume, must focus on your objectives, education, work history, and special skills. Begin your video with an introductory overview introducing yourself and your goals; end the video resume with a conclusion, summing up your value to the organization.
4. **Length.** A video resume isn't a movie. Limit your video resume to three to five minutes.
5. **Editing.** To achieve the desired length and to ensure that your video has a high quality, edit for errors, distractions, noises, and content. Review your video numerous times to make sure you haven't missed any problems. Then, if you need to, shoot the video again so you are an appealing job candidate (Nale).

FIGURE 6 Scannable Resume

Place your name at the top of a scannable resume and avoid centering text.

Rochelle J. Kroft
1101 Ave. L
Tuscaloosa, AL 89403
Home: (313) 690-4530
Cell: (313) 900-6767
E-mail: rkroft90@aol.com

Objectives

To use HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT experience and knowledge to ensure company compliance and employee safety.

Summary of Qualifications

* Hazardous waste management with skills in teamwork, end-user support, OSHA quality and written documentation (minimum of 10 reports weekly).
* Five years experience working with international and national businesses and regulatory agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.
* Skilled in assessing environmental needs and implementing hazardous waste improvement projects.
* Able to communicate effectively with multinational teams, consisting of clients, vendors, coworkers, and local and regional stakeholders.
* Excellent customer service (three-time winner of "Employee of the month").

Use key words to summarize your accomplishments.

Computer Proficiency

Microsoft Windows XP, PowerPoint, C++, Visual Basic, Java, CAD/CAM

Experience

Hazardous Waste Manager
Shallenberger Industries, Tuscaloosa, AL (2012 to present)

* Assess client needs for root cause analysis and recommend strategic actions.
* Oversee waste management improvements, using project management skills.
* Conduct and document follow-up quality assurance testing for over 25 clients monthly.
* Develop training manuals to ensure team and stakeholder safety. Shallenberger has had NO injuries throughout my management.
* Manage a staff of 25 employees.
* Achieved "Citizen's Recognition" Award from Tuscaloosa City Council for safety compliance record.

Type your scannable resume in Courier, Arial, Verdana, or Helvetica. Avoid designer fonts like Comic Sans, Lucida, or Corsiva.

Hazardous Waste Technician
CleanAir, Montgomery, AL (2010–2012)

* Developed innovative solutions to improve community safety, including presentation at local K-12 public schools.
* Created new procedure manuals to ensure regulatory compliance.

Education

B.S., Biological Sciences, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL (2010)

* Biotechnology Honor Society, President (2009)
* Golden Key National Honor Society

Affiliations

Member, Hazardous Waste Society International

Criteria for Effective E-mail Cover Messages or Letters of Application

Your resume, whether hard-copy or electronic, will be prefaced by an e-mail or letter of application. The letter or e-mail serves different purposes than the resume.

The resume is fairly generic. You'll write a resume, use it over and over again, modifying it for different positions. In contrast, the e-mail or letter of application is specific. Each e-mail or letter of application will be customized specifically for each job.

Content of Cover Messages

Letters contain certain mandatory components: your address, the date, your reader's address, a salutation, the letter's body, a complimentary close, your signed name, your typed name, and an enclosure notation if applicable. If you are submitting an electronic resume along with an e-mail cover message, you will not need these letter essentials. Both an e-mail message and letter of application include the following.

Introduction. In your introductory paragraph, include the following:

- Tell where you discovered the job opening. You might write, "In response to your advertisement in *CareerBuilder* . . ." or "Bob Ward, manager of human resources, informed me that . . . ."
- State which specific job you are applying for. Often, a company will advertise several jobs. You must clarify which of those jobs you're interested in. For example, you could write, "Your advertisement for a computer maintenance technician is just what I have been looking for."
- Sum up your best credentials. "My BS in chemistry and five years of experience working in a hazardous materials lab qualify me for the position."

Discussion. In the discussion paragraph(s), sell your skills. To do so, describe your work experience, your education, and your professional skills. This section of your e-mail or letter of application, however, is not meant to be merely a replication of your resume. In the discussion, follow these guidelines:

- State that you've attached a resume for the e-mail message or enclosed a hard-copy resume with the letter.
- Focus on your assets uniquely applicable to the advertised position. Select only those skills from your resume that relate to the advertisement and will benefit the prospective employer.
- Don't explain how the job will make you happy: "I will benefit from this job because it will teach me valuable skills." Instead, using the pronouns *you* and *your,* show reader benefit: "My work with governmental agencies has provided me a wide variety of skills from which your company will benefit."
- Quantify your abilities. Don't just say you're great ("I have outstanding customer service skills and communication abilities"). Instead, prove your assertions with quantifiable facts: "I won the 2012 Employee of the Year for providing solutions to customer concerns and working well with teammates."

Conclusion. Your final paragraph should be a call to action. You could say, "I am looking forward to discussing my application with you in greater detail. Then I can explain ways I could benefit your company." In addition, mention that you have enclosed a resume. You can do this either in the introduction, discussion, or conclusion. Select the place that best lends itself to doing so. See Figure 7 for a letter of application example, written to preface Jody Seacrest's functional resume shown in Figure 5.

FIGURE 7 Letter of Application

1944 W. 112th Street
Salem, OR 64925
(513) 451-4978
jseacrest12@hotmail.com

February 11, 2014

Bill Baker
Human Resources Department
Eazi Marketing
10289 Ocean View
Portland, OR 67440

Subject: Application for Marketing Manager

On your website, I saw the posting for the position of marketing manager. As a dedicated business professional with expertise in marketing, I was excited to see this opening.

While I have enclosed my resume, including education, work experience, and professional skills, allow me to elaborate on how I would be a positive addition to your organization.

- My marketing expertise is revealed through the 125 percent growth in revenues I helped achieve at my current job. In addition to face-to-face communication with customers and vendors, I also created and maintain the company's blog site and Facebook page.
- In my current position as manager at Simcoe Designs, I oversee 25 employees, a quarterly budget of $75,000, and a product line of over 1,000 different products. My job requires that I order, maintain stock, and troubleshoot delivery issues.
- My professional skill set includes proficiency with varied software languages, such as C++ and Visual Basic. I also have hardware management capabilities acquired through continuing education classes and workplace experience.
- At my current job, I recently won "Employee of the Month" for service exceeding the company's expectations.

Above all, I am a self-starter, dedicated to any task at hand, reliable, and knowledgeable about marketing and business. I would like to have the opportunity to discuss the position and my applicable attributes further. Additionally, I would be happy to provide the selection committee with further information if needed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jody Seacrest

Jody Seacrest
Enclosure: Seacrest Resume

Jody highlights the skill set and positive attributes that will benefit the company in this letter of application. Note the quantification such as "125 percent," "$75,000," and "Employee of the Month."

Online Application Etiquette

If you send your resume as an attachment to an e-mail message, be sure to follow online etiquette:

- **Do not use your current employer's e-mail system.** That clearly will tell your prospective employer that you misuse company equipment and company time.
- **Avoid unprofessional e-mail addresses.** Addresses such as Mustang65@aol.com, Hangglider@yahoo.com, or HotWheels@juno.com are inappropriate for business use. When you use e-mail to apply for a job, it is time to change your old e-mail address and become more professional. Use your initials or your name instead.
- **Send one e-mail at a time to one prospective employer.** Do not mass mail resumes. No employer wants to believe that he or she is just one of hundreds to whom you are writing.
- **Include a clear subject line.** Announce your intentions or the contents of the e-mail: "Resume—Vanessa Diaz" or "Response to Accountant Job Opening."
- **Tell the reader how you have saved the attached resume.** Specify whether the resume is a Word, Works, RTF, or PDF file, for example.

Figure 8 shows an effective e-mail message prefacing an attached resume.

FIGURE 8   Effective E-mail Message Prefacing an Attached Resume

| Send | | | | | | | | | | Options... | HTML | | ⃝ |

To...	CarTechJobs@CarTech.com
Cc...	
Subject:	Application for GM Automotive Service Representative Position	◄ — Subject line clarifying the purpose
Attach...	Heinrich Resume.docx (10 KB) [Open as Web Page]

Calibri 12 **B** *I* U

In response to your advertisement on CareerBuilder, please consider me for the automotive service representative position.   ◄ — Introduction stating where you found the job listing and what job you are applying for

Though I have attached a resume, saved as a Microsoft Word document, let me elaborate on the benefits I can bring to your dealership.   ◄ — Lead-in to body stating what software has been used for the attachment
- An AA in automotive technology (as required in your job listing)
- Expertise with state-of-the-art automotive diagnostic equipment, such as scan tools, power probes, and digital multimeters
- Outstanding customer service skills, achieved through three years employment in retail
- Knowledge of GM automobiles, attained through a GM corporate internship in Flint, MI
- GM certifications for work on air conditioning, electrical systems, and emissions control

I would be happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss ways in which I can be an asset to your company.   ◄ — A conclusion ending upbeat and positive

Carl Heinrich
913-555-1212
Cheinrich12@gmail.com

Job Package: Advertisement, E-mail, and Resume

The following examples (Figures 9, 10, and 11) show how one individual responded to a job advertisement found online by submitting a cover e-mail and attached resume. Note the ways in which the applicant customized his resume and e-mail to meet the advertisement's requirements.

FIGURE 9 Job Advertisement Found in an Online Site

Hi-Tech Industries
Employee Type: Full Time
Industry: Computer Software
Job Type: Entry Level

Description

Our company wants to hire a full-time Entry Level Software Engineer for the development of Aviation Engineering Tools.

Position Summary

Our company is looking for self-motivated, passionate, and creative software engineers to develop tools that will reduce manual overhead, improve processes, and automate where possible. As a member of this team, you will participate in planning, design, development, and testing. Our ideal candidate should be able to help us work even more efficiently and allow us to deliver the highest quality software products to our customers.

Responsibilities

- Develop and maintain tools to be used by product development engineers, including all phases of the SDLC
- Develop and maintain tools and plug-ins using C and C++
- Maintain servers used, including those for continuous builds

Skills & Qualifications Required

- Strong academics (cumulative GPA greater than or equal to 3.5 as a general rule)
- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, Math, or Physics from a four-year college or university, or a minimum of four years of work experience performing a role substantially similar to the essential functions of this job description
- Relevant experience and/or training in programming languages such as C and C++
- Some exposure to and coursework in Java, as well as scripting languages such as Python and Perl
- Detail-oriented, able to manage multiple tasks proactively and effectively with minimal supervision
- Demonstrated strong and effective verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills with a collaborative development style

Skills & Qualifications Preferred

- Previous experience working in a team environment
- More than two years of C/C++ and/or Java, and object oriented design experience
- Experience with software testing

FIGURE 10 E-mail Cover Message Prefacing Attached Resume in Response to Job Advertisement in CareerBuilder
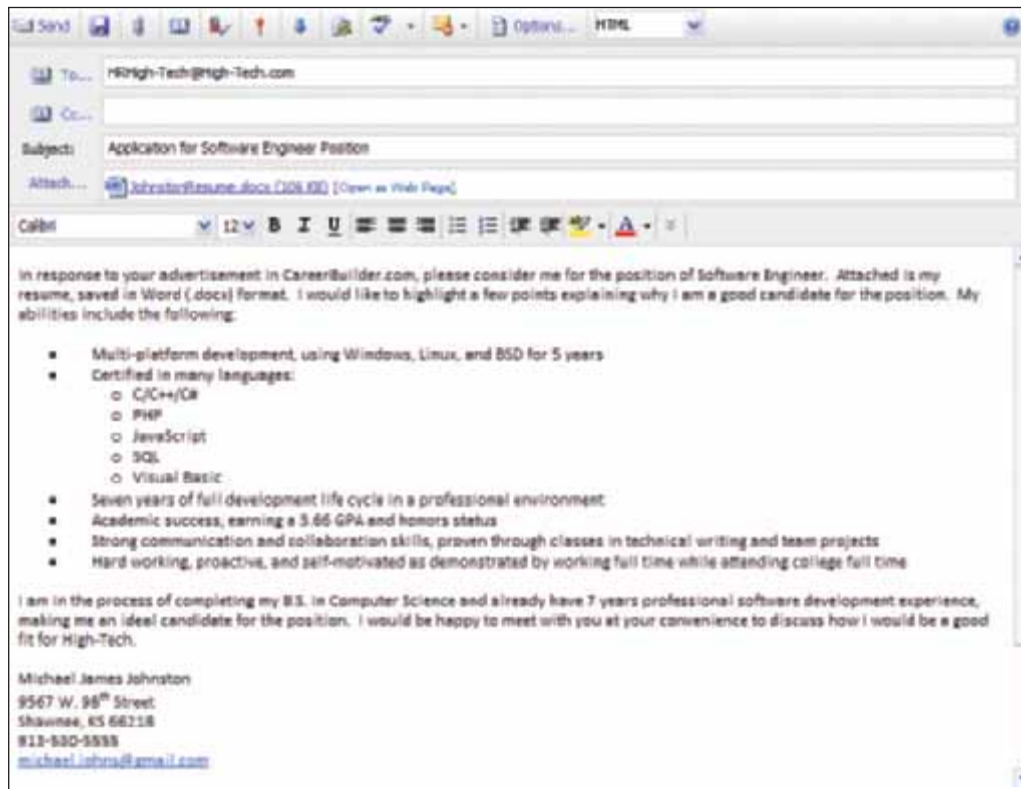
An applicant can rarely meet every job requirement listed in a job advertisement. However, Michael shows that he meets many of the advertised requirements.

Although Michael has not completed his bachelor of science, a requirement for the job, he explains that his years of experience and other attributes outweigh the issue.

FIGURE 11 Reverse Chronological Resume Responding to Job Advertisement in CareerBuilder

Michael J. Johnston
9567 W. 98th St.
Shawnee, KS 66218
913-530-5555
michael.johns@gmail.com

Objective

Employment in software development where I can use my work experience and computer language skills to help a company work efficiently and deliver high-quality software products to customers.

Summary of Qualifications

- Experienced developer, total of seven years in professional software development
- Capable of multi-platform development with five years programming for Windows, Linux, and BSD platforms
- Four years of experience with relational database programming and database table design

Michael's objective line uses words taken from the job advertisement to customize his resume.

(Continued)

FIGURE 11   *(Continued)*

- Proficient in over ten programming languages, including the following:
  - C/C++   Knowledge of procedural and object oriented paradigms with three years of experience
  - Java   Developed Android based applications for one year
  - C# .Net   Well-versed with five years of professional experience making various applications
  - PHP   Experience in conjunction with Android application development for one year
  - JavaScript   Self-taught
  - SQL   Over five years of professional experience of T-SQL for MS-SQL server experience
  - Visual Basic   One year of experience in an ASP.Net environment
- Seven years of full development life cycle in a professional environment

Employment

Lead Developer

Harken Law Group   Kansas City, MO   2007 to present

- Independently design, develop, document, and deploy applications including the following:
  - More than 30 applications for data extraction, transform, and load (ETL)
  - Over 20 applications for data manipulation and reporting
- Promoted to Lead Developer after three years as an EDI Programmer
- Managed two programmers during the last three years

Refurbish Specialist

Tech and U Lenexa, KS   2004 to 2007

- Upgraded existing software for printer testing
- Built, repaired, and cleaned corporate class printers, including Hewlett Packard, Lexmark, and Epson

Education

A.S., General Science

Kingston Community College Overland Park, KS Anticipated Date of Graduation 2013

- GPA of 3.66
- Member, Dean's List
- Member, Phi Theta Kappa honor society
- Working 40 hours weekly while attending college full time (6 to 15 credit hours)

Professional Skills

- Proficient with Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Microsoft SQL Server Manager, and Visual Studio
- Capable of writing technical documentation due to acquired college education in technical writing
- Two years of experience teaching basic C# programming to three coworkers
- One year of working with network penetration testing

His qualifications accent the ways in which he meets the company's advertised needs.

Techniques for Interviewing Effectively

The goal of writing an effective resume and letter of application or cover e-mail message is to get an interview. The resume and letter of application or e-mail may open the door; only a successful interview will win you the job. In fact, some sources suggest that the interview is the most important stage of your job search. The Society for Human Resource Management states that 95 percent of respondents ranked "interview performance" as a "very influential" factor when deciding to hire an employee. "Interview performance [is] more influential than 17 other criteria, including years of relevant work experience, resume quality, education levels, test scores or references" (Stafford, L1). To interview successfully, consider the following suggestions.

Dress professionally. Professionalism starts with your appearance. The key to successful dressing is to wear clean, conservative clothing. No one expects you to spend money on high-fashion, stylish clothes, but everyone expects you to look neat and acceptable. Business suits are still best for both men and women.

Be on time. Plan to arrive at your interview at least twenty to thirty minutes ahead of schedule. That way, you won't have to worry about unexpected traffic, crowded parking lots, or finding the correct building.

Watch your body language. To make the best impression, don't slouch, chew your fingernails, play with your hair or jewelry, or check your watch. These actions will make you look edgy and impatient. Sit straight in your chair, even leaning forward a little to show your enthusiasm and energy. Look your interviewer in the eye. Smile and shake your interviewer's hand firmly.

Don't chew gum, smoke, or drink beverages during the interview. The gum might distort your speech; the cigarette will probably offend the interviewer, particularly if he or she is a non-smoker; and you might spill the beverage.

Turn off your smartphone. Today, smartphones are commonplace. However, the interview room is one place where this device must be avoided. Taking a call while you are being interviewed is rude and will ensure that you will not be hired. Reading a text message or sending one during an interview is not appropriate. Your interviewer will not appreciate it if your smartphone rings during your meeting.

Watch what you say and how you say it. Speak slowly, focus on the conversation, and don't ramble. Once you have answered the questions satisfactorily, stop.

Bring supporting documents to the interview. Supporting documents can include extra copies of your resume, a list of references, letters of recommendation, employer performance appraisals, a portfolio (hard copies and electronic version), or transcripts.

Research the company. Show the interviewer that you are sincerely interested in and knowledgeable about the company. Dr. Judith Evans, Vice President of Right Management Consultants of New York, says that the most successful job candidates show interviewers that they "know the company inside and out" (Kallick D1).

Be familiar with typical interview questions. You want to anticipate questions you will be asked and be ready with answers. Some typical questions include the following:

What are your strengths and weaknesses?	Can you travel for work-related activities?
Why do you want to work for this company?	Will you relocate?
Why are you leaving your present employment?	What do you want to be doing in five years? Ten years?
What did you like least about your last job?	How would you handle this (hypothetical) situation?
What computer hardware are you familiar with, and what computer languages do you know?	What was your biggest accomplishment in your last job or while in college?

What machines can you use?	What about this job appealed to you?
What special techniques do you know, or what special skills do you have?	What starting salary would you expect?
What did you like most about your last job?	How do you get along with colleagues and with management?

When answering questions, focus on the company's specific need. For example, if the interviewer asks if you have experience using RoboHelp or C++, explain your expertise in that area, focusing on recent experiences or achievements. Be specific. In fact, you might want to tell a brief story to explain your knowledge. This is called "behavioral description interviewing" (Ralston, et al. 9). It allows an interviewer to learn about your speaking abilities, organization, and relevant job skills. To respond to a behavioral description interview question, answer as follows (Ralston, et al. 11):

- Organize your story chronologically.
- Tell who did what, when, why, and how.
- Explain what came of your actions (the result of the activity).
- Depict scenes, people, and actions.
- Make sure your story relates exactly to the interviewer's needs.
- Stop when you are through—do not ramble. Get to the point, develop it, and conclude. If, however, you do not have the knowledge required, then "explain how you can apply the experience you *do* have" (Hartman 24). You could say, "Although I've never used RoboHelp, I have created online help using HTML coding. Plus, I'm a quick learner. I was able to learn FlashHelp and XML well enough to create online help screens in only a week. Our customer was very happy with the results." This will show that you understand the job and can adapt to any task you might be given.

SPOTLIGHT

How Do Human Resource Professionals Conduct a Job Search?

Maria Levit, Human Resources Director, says that for each open staff position at DeVry University, Kansas City, over 100 people apply. How do you find the best applicant out of so many possibilities?

Maria follows a step-by-step approach, which includes

- reviewing the resumes
- following with a prescreen telephone call to the top 10 to 15 applicants
- inviting between six and eight individuals to face-to-face interviews
- calling references

Ms. Levit looks for two strengths above all others in the resumes. First, she wants to see "evidence of skills and credentials applicable to the job." Next, Maria needs proof. "I look for evidence of success. I want concrete examples that prove the applicant's accomplishments. For example, I want a resume to read something like, 'reduced turnover by a specific percent within such and such a time.'"

If an applicant's resume meets the job's criteria, Maria conducts the phone prescreen. In these phone calls, she wants evidence of good communication skills and a positive attitude. Maria wants to hear that the applicant "cares about people, wants to make a positive impact on students and coworkers, and has a passion" for the job. Most importantly, Maria uses the phone prescreen to detect "red flags." She is wary of applicants who make negative comments about current coworkers, bosses, or work environment.

In the face-to-face interview, Maria looks for applicants who come prepared with extra copies of resumes, names and telephone numbers of references, or transcripts. In contrast, if they "have poor posture, speak in a monotone, don't make eye contact, and dress inappropriately," then their general day-to-day job preparedness might be lacking as well. Maria's most challenging activity is the follow-up reference call. Current and past employers are cautious about discussing employees. To overcome this reticence, Maria begins with a non-threatening question: "What was John's basic job description?" Next, she moves on to more challenging probes, like "identify two to three of John's strengths and weaknesses." Whatever Maria does, it must be working. Many faculty and staff have worked at the Kansas City DeVry for over ten years. Hiring the right person for the right job leads to continuity in the workplace.

Criteria for Effective Follow-Up Correspondence

Once you have interviewed, don't just sit back and wait, hoping that you will be offered the job. Write a follow-up letter or e-mail message. This follow-up accomplishes three primary goals: It thanks your interviewers for their time, keeps your name fresh in their memories, and gives you an opportunity to introduce new reasons for hiring you.

A follow-up letter or e-mail message contains an introduction, discussion, and conclusion.

- **Introduction.** Tell the readers how much you appreciated meeting them. Be sure to state the date on which you met and the job for which you applied.
- **Discussion.** In this paragraph, emphasize or add important information concerning your suitability for the job. Add details that you forgot to mention during the interview, clarify details that you covered insufficiently, and highlight your skills that match the job requirements. In any case, sell yourself one last time.
- **Conclusion.** Thank the readers for their consideration, or remind them how they can get in touch with you for further information. Don't, however, give them any deadlines for making a decision.

Thank you for allowing me to interview with Acme Corporation on July 8. I enjoyed meeting you and the other members of the team to discuss the position of account representative.

You stated in the interview that Acme is planning to expand into international marketing. With my Spanish speaking ability and my study-abroad experience, I would welcome the opportunity to become involved in this exciting expansion.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you. Please e-mail me at gfiefer21@aol.com.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

For an e-mail follow-up, you would include your reader's e-mail address and a subject line, such as "Thank You for the July 8 Interview" or "Follow-up to July 8 Interview."

For a hard-copy follow-up letter, you would include all letter components: writer's address, date, reader's address, salutation, complimentary close, and signature.

This example succeeds for several reasons. First, it is short, merely reminding the reader of the writer's interest, instead of overwhelming him or her with too much new information. Second, the message is positive, using words such as *enjoyed, ability, welcome, opportunity, exciting*, and *thank you*. Finally, the correspondence provides the reader an e-mail address for easy follow-up.

Job Acceptance Letter or E-mail Message

Great news! After working hard to find a job, your efforts have paid off. You've just received a job offer. Now what? Sometimes, accepting the offer over the phone isn't enough. Your new employer might want you to write and sign an official acceptance letter or submit an e-mail message. In this brief correspondence, you will want to accomplish the following goals:

- Thank the company for the job opportunity
- Officially accept the job offer
- Restate the terms of employment (salary, benefits, location, position, job responsibilities, and/or start date)

Address the letter or e-mail to the individual who offered you the position for a more personalized touch. Be sure to include your phone number, e-mail address, or mailing address, just in case the company needs to contact you. This acceptance correspondence actually could be seen as your first day on the job. Therefore, take as much care in writing this letter or e-mail as you did in applying for the job. Make sure your letter or e-mail is

grammatically correct, well organized, and conveys a positive tone. Show your new boss or colleagues that you are a professional asset to the company. Figure 12 provides a sample job acceptance letter.

FIGURE 12 Job Acceptance Letter

Amy Zhang
9103 Stonefield Rd.
Georgetown, TX 77829

May 15, 2014

George Smithson
Dell Computers
2134 Silicon Way
Round Rock, TX 77112

Dear Mr. Smithson:

In response to your phone call yesterday (5/14/14), I am happy to accept the position as a Technical Sales Representative II at Dell Computers. I know that with my education, experience, and energy, I will be an asset to your workforce.

As we discussed, my salary will be $35,000 with health and life insurance benefits provided after 90 days of employment. I will work in your Round Rock, Texas, facility, where my job will entail working with a team to meet the schedules, budgets, product costs, and production ramp rates for projects assigned to my team and me. In addition, I will manage small to medium platform/peripheral development programs.

I look forward to joining the Dell team on June 10, 2014. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know. Thank you, Mr. Smithson, for this outstanding opportunity.

Sincerely,

Amy Zhang

Amy Zhang
713-555-0112
azhang@gt.edu

The Writing Process at Work

Effective communication in the job search follows a process of prewriting, writing, and rewriting. To illustrate the importance of the writing process in the job search, look at how LaShanda E. Brown used prewriting, writing, and rewriting to create an effective resume so she could apply for a job in the field of human resources.

Prewriting

Before writing a resume, use prewriting to help you begin a job search and determine your objectives. Beginning with a list of goals, audience, channels of communication, and material to include will get you started. LaShanda used reporter's questions to plan her job search (Figure 13):

FIGURE 13 LaShanda's Reporter's Questions

- **Who** should I send my resume to?
- **What** should I include about my experience in human resources? What should I include about education?
- **When** is the resume due?
- **Where** should I send the resume (what's the city/state address, e-mail address, or URL)?
- **Why** am I interested in this job posting?
- **What** have I learned about the company's culture?
- **How** should I send the resume—by e-mail, online form, or hard copy?
- **How** can I show benefit to the company hiring me?

JOB SEARCH CHECKLIST

Job Openings

_____ 1. Did you visit your college or university job placement center?

_____ 2. Did you talk to your professors about job openings?

_____ 3. Have you networked with friends or previous employers, and have you considered using social media for networking?

_____ 4. Have you checked with your professional affiliations or looked for job openings in trade journals?

_____ 5. Did you search the Internet for job openings?

Resume

_____ 1. Are your name, address, and phone number correct?

_____ 2. Is your job objective specific?

_____ 3. Have you included a summary of qualifications?

_____ 4. Is all information within your education, work experience, and military experience sections accurate?

_____ 5. Have you used lists beginning with verbs?

_____ 6. Have you quantified each of your achievements?

_____ 7. Have you avoided using sentences and the word *I*?

_____ 8. Does your resume use bullets, headings, and no more than two different font types and sizes to make it reader friendly?

_____ 9. Have you proofread your resume to find grammatical and mechanical errors?

_____ 10. Have you decided whether you should write a reverse chronological resume or a functional resume?

Cover Letter or E-mail Message

_____ 1. Have you included all of the letter essentials for a cover letter?

_____ 2. Does your introductory paragraph state where you learned of the job, which job you are applying for, and your interest in the position?

_____ 3. Does your message's discussion unit pinpoint the ways in which you will benefit the company?

_____ 4. Does your letter or e-mail message concluding paragraph end cordially and explain what you hope your reader will do next?

_____ 5. Is your cover letter or e-mail free of all errors?

Interview

_____ 1. Will you dress appropriately?

_____ 2. Will you arrive ahead of time?

_____ 3. Have you practiced answering potential questions?

_____ 4. Have you researched the company so you can ask informed questions?

_____ 5. Will you bring to the interview additional examples of your work or copies of your resume? Will you bring either an electronic or hard-copy portfolio?

Follow-up Letter or E-mail Message

_____ 1. Have you included all the letter essentials if you wrote a letter?

_____ 2. Does your introductory paragraph remind the readers when you interviewed and what position you interviewed for?

_____ 3. Does the discussion unit highlight additional ways in which you might benefit the company?

_____ 4. Does the concluding paragraph thank the readers for their time and consideration?

_____ 5. Does your letter or e-mail avoid all errors?

(Continued)

Job Acceptance Letter or E-mail Message

_____ 1. Have you included all the letter essentials if you wrote a letter?

_____ 2. Does your introductory paragraph explain why you are writing (in response to a job offer) and what you are writing about (accepting the job)?

_____ 3. Does the discussion unit confirm the particulars of the offer (salary, benefits, job duties, location, start date, and so on)?

_____ 4. Does the concluding paragraph thank the reader for the job opportunity?

_____ 5. Does your letter or e-mail message avoid errors and show your professionalism?

Writing

After determining objectives by prewriting, you can begin drafting your resume. LaShanda went to her husband's military career center for help writing her resume. They told her to use a functional resume because that's what they tended to suggest for people leaving the military. LaShanda drafted her resume, creating a functional resume that used information she discovered in prewriting (Figure 14).

Rewriting

Editing and revising a resume will help you make it look professional and achieve the desired result of getting an interview. After getting no job interviews, LaShanda realized that her functional resume wasn't working. She had to consider the following aspects of her resume that needed revision:

- Her career objective's line did not match her new search for a job in human resources.
- The functional resume listed jobs in one part of the resume and then responsibilities in another part of the text.
- Directors of human resources could not match dates and duties.
- The functional resume did not clarify her achievements and education.
- She needed to delete information from past employment that was not relevant for her current job search.
- She needed to include courses and professional development that proved she was up to date in the field of human resources.

She changed strategies and restructured the functional resume into a reverse chronological resume. With the revised resume (Figure 15), LaShanda got an interview. Today she works in her desired field of human resources and gets to review job applicants' resumes and interview them.

FIGURE 14 Draft of a Functional Resume

LaShanda E. Brown
833 Hampton Rd., Apt. 1
Virginia Beach, VA 23460
757-555-5555
labrown10@yahoo.com

Objective: Retail Management

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 2 years retail management and recruiting experience.
- Expertise in oral and written communications. Able to present ideas and goals clearly.
- Motivated team player that thrives in a fast-paced, multi-faceted environment.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access), as well as basic office hardware (fax, copiers, cash registers)
- Familiar with most video game consoles (PS1, PS2, Xbox, NES, etc.)

EXPERIENCE

Management

- Supervised 5 management trainees and taught them all aspects of the rental car industry to include accounts receivable, marketing accounts as well as competition, managing a rental fleet, etc.
- Oversee 4 telemarketers and 2 sales representatives. Managed training and quality customer service when representing the company via telephone.
- Improved loss prevention programs within a retail setting by breaking the store up into teams and zones so that all areas were covered at all times. Loss prevention decreased 6% in 3 months.
- Earned All-stars sales award 4 months in a row. Average of 91% optional coverage sales on rentals within that four-month period.

Customer Service

- Implemented new strategies for customer satisfaction, such as interactive games to give customers an opportunity to win coupons on current and future rentals. Customer satisfaction increased 15%.
- Greeted customers enthusiastically and efficiently to provide a positive company image and impression.
- Researched and provided solutions to customer service issues, ensuring customer needs were met and they were satisfied.
- Coordinated customer follow-ups, ensuring they had a good rental experience with us and would return if they needed our rental services again.

EMPLOYMENT

2012–Present	Office Manager	Best Value Remodeling
2010–2012	Insurance Sales Agent	Geico Direct
2010	Management Assistant	Enterprise Rent-A-Car

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- **Bachelors in Communication, emphasis in Public Relations**
  Missouri Western State College, St. Joseph, MO
- Elite Sales Training, Enterprise Rent-a-car
- Effective Management Training, Best Value Remodeling

FIGURE 15 Revised Reverse Chronological Resume

LaShanda E. Brown
833 Hampton Rd., Apt. 1
Virginia Beach, VA 23460
757-555-5555
labrown10@yahoo.com

Career Objective

To work in the field of human resources management, using my communication skills to help an organization meet its goals

Summary of Qualifications
- Screened and hired over two dozen applicants for employment
- Conducted annual performance reviews as an office manager
- Presented at college job fairs as a management assistant
- Made PowerPoint presentations
- Proficient at interpersonal communication and public speaking, as evident from my coursework in communication studies

LaShanda emphasizes her skills as they relate to a job search in human resources.

Education

Bachelor of Science in Communication, Public Relations emphasis, May 2012
Missouri Western State College,   St. Joseph, MO
- Related courses: small group communication, presentational communication, consumer marketing, persuasive speech, media in communications, public relations communication analysis, human resources management, nonverbal communication, advertising, desktop publishing

The education section highlights human resource experience, allowing the city's human resources department to see that LaShanda meets the requirements for a position.

Employment
Office Manager
Best Value Remodeling   Virginia Beach, VA   2012–Present
- Make spreadsheets using MS Excel to track sales by outside sales teams and manage commissions
- Update Microsoft Access database to track results from sales calls
- Create PowerPoint presentations for general manager to use when going on corporate sales leads
- Oversee 4 telemarketers and 2 sales representatives

Insurance Sales Agent
Geico Direct   Virginia Beach, VA   2010–2012
- Provided excellent customer service on the phone
- Performed data entry by setting up insurance policies

Management Assistant
Enterprise Rent-a-Car   Oklahoma City, OK   2010
- Won award as "Best New Hire 2010"
- Supervised 5 management trainees
- Created advertisements locally for the branch
- Improved loss prevention programs by 6% in 3 months
- Earned All-stars sales award 4 months in a row. Average of 91% optional coverage sales on rentals within that four-month period

Software Knowledge
- Proficient with Microsoft Office programs, including MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, MS PowerPoint, MS Outlook, and MS Project
- Proficient with PeopleSoft program (HR module)
- Proficient with Lotus programs, including Lotus Notes, Lotus 1-2-3

The reverse chronological resume better suits her needs in that it matches job responsibilities with specific jobs and dates.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

1. Use many different resources to locate possible jobs, such as college placement centers, instructors, friends, professional affiliations, want ads, social media, and the Internet.
2. Over 60 percent of jobs are found through networking.
3. Use the Internet to help you job search.
4. Use either a reverse chronological resume or a functional resume.
5. Write a traditional hard-copy resume, a resume attached to an e-mail message, or a scannable resume.
6. Include a summary of qualifications on your resume.
7. On your resume, place education first if that is your strongest asset, or begin with work experience if this will help you get the job.
8. Write your letter of application or cover e-mail message so that it targets a specific job.
9. Prepare before your interview so you can anticipate possible questions.
10. Your follow-up letter or e-mail message will impress the interviewer and remind him or her of your strengths.

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

CASE STUDY

DiskServe, a St. Louis-based company, is hoping to hire a customer service representative for their computer technology department. In addition to DiskServe's CEO, Sarah Beske, the hiring committee will consist of two managers from other DiskServe departments and two coworkers in the computer technology department.

The position requires a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology (or a comparable degree) and/or four years of experience working with computer technology. Candidates must have knowledge of C++, Visual Basic, SQL, Oracle, and Microsoft Office applications. In addition, customer service skills are mandatory. Four candidates were invited to DiskServe's work site for personal interviews—Macy Heart, Aaron Brown, Rosemary Lopez, and Robin Scott.

Macy has a Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems. He has worked two years part time in his college's technology lab helping faculty and students with computer hardware and software applications, including Microsoft Office and Visual Basic. He worked for two years at a computer hardware/software store as a salesperson. His supervisor considers Macy to be an outstanding young man who works hard to please his supervisors and to meet customer needs. According to the supervisor, Macy's greatest strength is customer service, since Macy is patient, knowledgeable, and respectful.

Aaron has an Information Technology certificate from Microsoft, where he has worked for five years. Aaron began his career at Microsoft as a temporary office support assistant, but progressed to a full-time salesperson. When asked where he saw himself in five years, Aaron stated, "The sky's the limit." References proved Aaron's lofty goals by calling him "a self-starter, very motivated, hardworking, and someone with excellent customer service skills." He is taking programming courses at night from the local community college, focusing on C++, Visual Basic, and SQL.

Rosemary has an Associate's degree in Information Technology. She has five years of experience as the supervisor of Oracle application. Prior to that, Rosemary worked with C++, Visual Basic, and SQL. She also has extensive knowledge of Microsoft Office. Rosemary was asked "How have you handled customer complaints in the past?" and responded "I rarely handle customer complaints. In my last job, I assigned that work to my subordinates."

Robin has a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology. To complete her degree, Robin took courses in C++, Visual Basic, Oracle, and SQL. She is very familiar with Microsoft Office. Since Robin just graduated from college, she has no full-time experience in the computer industry. However, she worked in various retail jobs (food services, clothing stores, and book stores) during high school, summers, and in her senior year. She excelled in customer service, winning the "Red Dragon Employee of the Month Award" from her last job as a server in a Chinese Restaurant.

Assignment

Who would you hire? Give an oral presentation or write an e-mail or memo to Sarah Beske, Disk-Serve's CEO, explaining which of the candidates she should hire.

INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM PROJECTS

1. Practice a job search. To do so, find examples of job openings. Bring these job possibilities to class for group discussions. From this job search, you and your peers will get a better understanding of what employers want in new hires.

2. An informational interview can help you learn about the realities of a specific job or work environment. Interview a person currently working in your field of interest. Once you find an employee willing to help, visit with him or her and find out the following:

   - What job opportunities exist in your field?
   - What does a job in your field require, in terms of writing, education, interpersonal communication skills, teamwork, and so on? What are the primary job responsibilities?

   After gathering this information, write a thank-you letter or e-mail to the employee who helped you. Then, write an e-mail to your professor, documenting your findings, and give an oral presentation to your classmates.

3. Write a resume. To do so, follow the suggestions provided in this chapter. Once you have constructed this resume, bring it to class for peer review. In small groups, discuss each resume's successes and areas needing improvement.

4. Write a letter of application or cover e-mail message according to the suggestions provided in this chapter. Next, in small groups, review your correspondence for suggested improvements.

5. Practice a job interview in small groups, designating one student as the job applicant and other students as the interview committee. Ask the applicant the sample interview questions provided in this chapter or any others you consider valid. This will give you and your peers a feel for the interviewing process.

PROBLEM-SOLVING THINK PIECES

1. You need to submit a resume for a job opening. However, you have problems with your work history, such as the following:

   - You have had no jobs.
   - You have been fired from a job.
   - You've been out of the workforce for five years raising a family.
   - You have had three (or more) jobs in one year.
   - You want to apply for a job that requires a degree but you have not earned one yet.

   Consider how you would meet the challenges of your job history.

2. During an interview, you are asked to describe a problem you encountered at work and explain how you handled that challenge. How do you answer this typical question, but avoid giving an answer that paints a negative picture of a boss, coworker, or your work environment?

WEB WORKSHOP

1. Using an Internet search engine, find job openings in your area of interest. Which companies are hiring, what skills do they want from prospective employees, and what keywords are used to describe preferred skills in this work field? Report your findings to your instructor by writing a memo or e-mail or give an oral presentation to your class about the job market in your field.

2. Research your career field by going to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (http://www.bls .gov/oco/ooh_index.htm). Learn about your field's educational requirements, salary range, job requirements, and job opportunities. Report the findings to your instructor by writing a memo or e-mail, or give an oral presentation to your class.

3. Social media is a resource for the job search. Go to a search engine and type in "social media+job search" or "social networking+job search." Find articles related to the importance of social media and employment. Summarize your findings in an e-mail message to your instructor or in an oral presentation to your class.

GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, MECHANICS, AND SPELLING

Correct organization and development of your memos, letters, or reports is important for the success of your technical communication. However, no one will be impressed with the quality of your work, or with you, if your writing is riddled with errors in sentence construction or punctuation. Your written correspondence is often your first contact with business associates. Many people mistakenly believe that only English teachers notice grammatical errors and wield red pens, but businesspeople as well take note of such errors and may see the writer as less competent.

We were working recently with a young executive who is employed by a branch of the federal government. This executive told us that whenever his supervisor found a spelling error in a subordinate's report, this report was paraded around the office. Everyone was shown the mistake and had a good laugh over it, and the report was then returned to the writer for correction. Our acquaintance assured us that all of this was in good-natured fun. However, he also said that employees quickly learned to edit and proofread their written communication to avoid such public displays of their errors.

Your writing at work may not be exposed to such scrutiny by coworkers. Instead, your writing may go directly to another firm, and those readers will see your mistakes. To avoid this problem, you must evaluate your writing for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. If you don't, your customers, bosses, and colleagues will.

Grammar Rules

To understand the fundamentals of grammar, you must first understand the basic components of a sentence.

A correctly constructed sentence consists of a subject and a predicate (some sentences also include a phrase or phrases).

EXAMPLE ▶

The meeting	began	at 4:00 A.M.
subject	predicate	phrase

Subject: The *doer* of the action; the subject usually precedes the predicate.
Predicate: The *action* in the sentence

EXAMPLE ▶

He	ran	to the office to avoid being late.
doer	action	phrases

If the subject and the predicate (a) express a complete thought and (b) can stand alone, you have an *independent clause*.

EXAMPLE ▶

The meeting began	at 4:00 P.M.
independent clause	phrase

A *phrase* is a group of related words that does not contain a subject and a predicate and cannot stand alone or be punctuated as a sentence. The following are examples of phrases:

at the house
in the box
on the job
during the interview

If a clause is dependent, it cannot stand alone.

> Although he tried to hurry, he was late for the meeting.
> dependent clause   independent clause

◀ **EXAMPLE**

> He was late for the meeting although he tried to hurry.
> independent clause   dependent clause

◀ **EXAMPLE**

NOTE: When a dependent clause begins a sentence, use a comma before the independent clause. However, when an independent clause begins a sentence, do not place a comma before the dependent clause.

Agreement between Pronoun and Antecedent (Referent)

A pronoun has to agree in gender and number with its antecedent.

Susan went on *her* vacation yesterday.
The *people* who quit said that *they* deserved raises.

Problems often arise when a singular indefinite pronoun is the antecedent. The following antecedents require singular pronouns: *anybody, each, everybody, everyone, somebody,* and *someone.*

incorrect

Anyone can pick up *their* applications at the job placement center.

correct

Anyone can pick up *his* or *her* application at the job placement center.

Problems also arise when the antecedent is separated from the pronoun by numerous words.

incorrect

Even when the best *employee* is considered for a raise, *they* often do not receive it.

correct

Even when the best *employee* is considered for a raise, *he* or *she* often does not receive it.

Agreement between Subject and Verb

Writers sometimes create disagreement between subjects and verbs, especially if other words separate the subject from the verb. To ensure agreement, ignore the words that come between the subject and verb.

incorrect

Her *boss* undoubtedly *think* that all the employees want promotions.

correct

Her *boss* undoubtedly *thinks* that all the employees want promotions.

incorrect

The *employees* who sell the most equipment *is* going to Hawaii for a week.

correct

The *employees* who sell the most equipment *are* going to Hawaii for a week.

If a sentence contains two subjects (a compound subject) connected by *and,* use a plural verb.

incorrect

Joe and Tiffany *was* both selected employee of the year.

correct

Joe and Tiffany *were* both selected employees of the year.

incorrect

The bench workers and their supervisor *is* going to work closely to complete this project.

correct

The bench workers and their supervisor *are* going to work closely to complete this project.

Add a final *s* or *es* to create most plural subjects or singular verbs, as follows:

PLURAL SUBJECTS	SINGULAR VERBS
bos*s*e*s* hire	a boss hire*s*
employee*s* demand	an employee demand*s*
experiment*s* work	an experiment work*s*
attitude*s* change	the attitude change*s*

If a sentence has two subjects connected by *either . . . or, neither . . . nor,* or *not only . . . but also,* the verb should agree with the closest subject. This also makes the sentence less awkward.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Either the salespeople or the warehouse worker deserv*es* raises.
> Not only the warehouse worker but also the salespeople deserv*e* raises.
> Neither the salespeople nor the warehouse worker deserv*es* raises.

Singular verbs are used after most indefinite pronouns such as the following:

another	everything
anybody	neither
anyone	nobody
anything	no one
each	nothing
either	somebody
everybody	someone
everyone	something

Anyone who works here *is* guaranteed maternity leave.
Everybody want*s* the company to declare a profit this quarter.

Singular verbs often follow collective nouns such as the following:

class	organization
corporation	platoon
department	staff
group	team

The *staff is* sending the boss a bouquet of roses.

Comma Splice

A *comma splice* occurs when two independent clauses are joined by a comma rather than separated by a period or semicolon.

incorrect

Sue was an excellent employee, she got a promotion.

Several remedies will correct this error.

1. Separate the two independent clauses with a semicolon.

correct

Sue was an excellent employee; she got a promotion.

2. Separate the two independent clauses with a period.

correct

Sue was an excellent employee. She got a promotion.

3. Separate the two independent clauses with a comma and a *coordinating conjunction* (*and, but, or, for, so, yet*).

correct

Sue was an excellent employee, *so* she got a promotion.

4. Separate the two independent clauses with a semicolon (or a period), a conjunctive adverb, and a comma. *Conjunctive adverbs* include *also, additionally, consequently, furthermore, however, instead, moreover, nevertheless, therefore*, and *thus*.

correct

Sue was an excellent employee; *therefore,* she got a promotion.

or

Sue was an excellent employee. *Therefore,* she got a promotion.

5. Use a *subordinating conjunction* to make one of the independent clauses into a dependent clause. Subordinating conjunctions include *after, although, as, because, before, even though, if, once, since, so that, though, unless, until, when, where*, and *whether*.

correct

Because Sue was an excellent employee, she got a promotion.

Faulty or Vague Pronoun Reference

A pronoun must refer to a specific noun (its antecedent). Problems arise when (a) there is an excessive number of pronouns (causing vague pronoun reference) and (b) there is no specific noun as an antecedent. Notice that there seems to be an excessive number of pronouns in the following passage, and the antecedents are unclear.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Although Bob had been hired over two years ago, *he* found that *his* boss did not approve *his* raise. In fact, *he* was also passed over for *his* promotion. The boss appears to have concluded that *he* had not exhibited zeal in *his* endeavors for their business. Instead of being a highly valued employee, *he* was not viewed with pleasure by those in authority. Perhaps it would be best if *he* considered *his* options and moved to some other company where *he* might be considered in a new light.

The excessive and vague use of *he* and *his* causes problems for readers. Do these words refer to Bob or to his boss? You are never completely sure. To avoid this problem, limit pronoun usage, as in the following revision.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Although Bob had been hired over two years ago, he found that his boss, Joe, did not approve his raise. In fact, Bob was also passed over for promotion. Joe appears to have concluded that Bob had not exhibited zeal in his endeavors for their business. Instead of being a highly valued employee, Bob was not viewed with pleasure by those in authority. Perhaps it would be best if Bob considered his options and moved to some other company where he might be considered in a new light.

To make the preceding paragraph more precise, we have replaced vague pronouns (*he* and *his*) with exact names (*Bob* and *Joe*).

Fragments

A *fragment* occurs when a group of words is incorrectly used as an independent clause. Often the group of words begins with a capital letter and has end punctuation but is missing either a subject or a predicate.

incorrect

Working with computers.
(lacks a predicate and does not express a complete thought)

The group of words may have a subject and a predicate but be a dependent clause.

incorrect

Although he enjoyed working with computers.

(has a subject, *he,* and a predicate, *enjoyed,* but is a dependent clause because it is introduced by the subordinate conjunction *although*)

It is easy to remedy a fragment by doing one of the following:

- Add a subject.
- Add a predicate.
- Add both a subject and a predicate.
- Add an independent clause to a dependent clause.

correct

Joe found that working with computers used his training.
(subject, *Joe,* and predicate, *found,* have been added)

correct

Although he enjoyed working with computers, he could not find a job in a computer-related field.

(independent clause, *he could not find a job,* added to the dependent clause, *Although he enjoyed working with computers*)

Fused Sentence

A *fused sentence* occurs when two independent clauses are connected with no punctuation.

incorrect

The company performed well last quarter its stock rose several points.

There are several ways to correct this error.

1. Write two sentences separated by a period.

correct

The company performed well last quarter. Its stock rose several points.

2. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to separate the two independent clauses.

correct

The company performed well last quarter, *so* its stock rose several points.

3. Use a subordinating conjunction to create a dependent clause.

correct

Because the company performed well last quarter, its stock rose several points.

4. Use a semicolon to separate the two independent clauses.

correct

The company performed well last quarter; its stock rose several points.

5. Separate the two independent clauses with a semicolon, a conjunctive adverb or a transitional word or phrase, and a comma.

correct

The company performed well last quarter; *therefore,* its stock rose several points.

correct

The company performed well last quarter; *for example,* its stock rose several points.

The following are transitional words and phrases, listed according to their use.

TO ADD

again	in addition
also	moreover
besides	next
first	second
furthermore	still

TO COMPARE/CONTRAST

also	nevertheless
but	on the contrary
conversely	still
in contrast	

TO PROVIDE EXAMPLES

for example	of course
for instance	put another way
in fact	to illustrate

TO SHOW PLACE

above	here
adjacent to	nearby
below	on the other side
elsewhere	there
further on	

To Reveal Time

afterward	second
first	shortly
meanwhile	subsequently
presently	thereafter

To Summarize

all in all	last
finally	on the whole
in conclusion	therefore
in summary	thus

Modification

A *modifier* is a word, phrase, or clause that explains or adds details about other words, phrases, or clauses.

Misplaced Modifiers.   A *misplaced modifier* is one that is not placed next to the word it modifies.

incorrect

He had a heart attack *almost* every time he was reviewed by his supervisor.

correct

He almost had a heart attack every time he was reviewed by his supervisor.

incorrect

The worker had to *frequently* miss work.

correct

The worker frequently had to miss work.

Dangling Modifiers.   A *dangling modifier* is a modifier that is not placed next to the word or phrase it modifies. To avoid confusing your readers, place modifiers next to the word(s) they refer to. Don't expect your readers to guess at your meaning.

incorrect

While working, tiredness overcame them.
(Who was working? Who was overcome by tiredness? *While working* should modify *staff,* but the word *staff* does not appear in the sentence.)

correct

While working, the staff became tired.

incorrect

After soldering for two hours, the equipment was ready for shipping. (Who had been soldering for two hours? Not the equipment!)

correct

After soldering for two hours, the technicians prepared the equipment for shipping.

Parallelism

All items in a list should be parallel in grammatical form. Avoid mixing phrases and sentences (independent clauses).

incorrect

We will discuss the following at the department meeting:

1. Entering mileage in logs (phrase)
2. All employees have to enroll in a training seminar. (sentence)
3. Purpose of quarterly reviews (phrase)
4. Some data processors will travel to job sites. (sentence)

correct

We will discuss the following at the department meeting:

1. Entering mileage in logs
2. Enrolling in training seminars
3. Reviewing employee performance quarterly
4. Traveling to job sites

    phrases

correct

At the department meeting, you will learn how to do the following:

1. Enter mileage in logs.
2. Enroll in training seminars.
3. Review employee performance quarterly.
4. Travel to job sites.

    sentences

Punctuation

Apostrophe (')

Place an *apostrophe* before the final *s* in a singular word to indicate possession.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Jim's tool chest is next to the furnace.

Place the apostrophe after the final *s* if the word is plural.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The employees' reception will be held next week.

Don't use an apostrophe to make singular abbreviations plural.

incorrect

The EXT's will be shipped today.

correct

The EXTs will be shipped today.

Colon (:)

Use a *colon* after a salutation.

> Dear Mr. Harken:

In addition, use a colon after an emphatic or cautionary word if explanations follow.

> **Note:** Hand-tighten the nuts.
> **Caution:** Wash thoroughly if any mixture touches your skin.

Finally, use a colon after an independent clause to precede a quotation, list, or example.

> She said the following: "No comment."
> These supplies for the experiment are on order: a plastic hose, two batteries, and several chemicals.
> The problem has two possible solutions: Hire four more workers, or give everyone a raise.

NOTE: In the preceding examples, the colon follows an independent clause.

A common mistake is to place a colon after an incomplete sentence. Except for salutations and cautionary notes, whatever precedes a colon *must* be an independent clause.

incorrect

The two keys to success are: earning money and spending wisely.

correct

The two keys to success are earning money and spending wisely.

or

The two keys to success are as follows: earning money and spending wisely.

or

The two keys to success are as follows:

1. Earning money
2. Spending wisely

Comma (,)

Writers often get in trouble with *commas* when they employ one of two common words of wisdom.

- When in doubt, leave it out.
- Use a comma when there is a pause.

Both rules are inexact. Writers use the first rule to justify the complete avoidance of commas; they use the second rule to sprinkle commas randomly throughout their writing. On the contrary, commas have several specific conventions that determine usage.

1. Place a comma before a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, for, so, yet*) linking two independent clauses.

EXAMPLE ▶

> You are the best person for the job, *so* I will hire you.
> We spent several hours discussing solutions to the problem, *but* we failed to decide on a course of action.

2. Use commas to set off introductory comments.

EXAMPLE ▶

> First, she soldered the components.
> In business, people often have to work long hours.
> To work well, you need to get along with your coworkers.
> If you want to test equipment, do so by 5:25 P.M.

3. Use commas to set off sentence interrupters.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The company, started by my father, did not survive the last recession.
> Mrs. Patel, the proprietor of the store, purchased a wide array of merchandise.

4. Set off parenthetical expressions with commas.

EXAMPLE ▶

> A worker, it seems, should be willing to try new techniques.
> The highway, by the way, needs repairs.

5. Use commas after each item in a series of three or more.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Prakash, Mirren, and Justin were chosen as employees of the year.
> We found the following problems: corrosion, excessive machinery breakdowns, and power failures.

6. Use commas for long numbers.

EXAMPLE ▶

> She earns $100,000 before taxes.

NOTE: Very large numbers are often written as words.

EXAMPLE ▶

> Our business netted over $2 million in 2014.

7. Use commas to separate the day and year when they are part of a sentence.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The company hired her on September 7, 2014, to be its bookkeeper.

NOTE: If the year is used as an adjective, do not follow it with a comma.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The 2014 corporate report came out today.

8. Use commas to separate the city from the state and the state from the rest of the sentence.

> The new warehouse in Austin, Texas, will promote increased revenues.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

NOTE: If you omit either the city or the state, you do not need commas.

> The new warehouse in Austin will promote increased revenues.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Dash (—)

A *dash,* typed as two consecutive hyphens with no spaces before or after, is a versatile punctuation mark. Most word processing programs now include an em dash character. Use dashes in the following ways.

1. After a heading and before an explanation.

> Forecasting—Joe and Joan will be in charge of researching fourth-quarter production quotas.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

2. To indicate an emphatic pause.

> You will be fired—unless you obey company rules.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

3. To highlight a new idea.

> Here's what we can do to improve production quality—provide on-the-job training, salary incentives, and quality controls.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

4. Before and after an explanatory or appositive series.

> Three people—Sue, Luci, and Tom—are essential to the smooth functioning of our office.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Ellipses (…)

Ellipses (three spaced periods) indicate omission of words within quoted materials.

> "Six years ago, prior to incorporating, the company had to pay extremely high federal taxes."
> "Six years ago, . . . the company had to pay extremely high federal taxes."

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Exclamation Point (!)

Use an *exclamation point* after strong statements, commands, or interjections.

> You must work harder!
> Do not use the machine!
> Danger!

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Hyphen (-)

A *hyphen* is used in the following ways.

1. To indicate the division of a word at the end of a typed line. Remember, this division must occur between syllables.
2. To create a compound adjective.

EXAMPLE ▶

He is a well-known engineer.
Until her death in 2014, she was a world-renowned chemist.
Tom is a 24-hour-a-day student.

3. To join the numerator and denominator of fractions.

EXAMPLE ▶

Four-fifths of the company want to initiate profit sharing.

4. To write out two-word numbers.

EXAMPLE ▶

Twenty-six people attended the conference.

Parentheses ( )

Parentheses enclose abbreviations, numbers, words, or sentences for the following reasons.

1. To define a term or provide an abbreviation for later use.

EXAMPLE ▶

We belong to the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

2. To clarify preceding information in a sentence.

EXAMPLE ▶

The people in attendance (all regional sales managers) were proud of their accomplishments.

3. To number items in a series.

EXAMPLE ▶

The company should initiate (1) new personnel practices, (2) a probationary review board, and (3) biannual raises.

Period (.)

A *period* must end a declarative sentence (independent clause).

EXAMPLE ▶

I found the business trip rewarding.

Periods are often used with abbreviations.

D.C.	Mrs.	A.M. or a.m.
e.g.	Ms.	P.M. or p.m.
Mr.		

It is incorrect to use periods with abbreviations for organizations and associations.

incorrect

S.T.C. (Society for Technical Communication)

correct

STC (Society for Technical Communication)

State abbreviations do not require periods if you use two capital letters. (Continue to use a period after a capital letter and a lowercase letter such as Tx., Ks., or Mo.)

incorrect

KS. (Kansas)
MO. (Missouri)
TX. (Texas)

correct

KS
MO
TX

Question Mark (?)

Use a *question mark* after direct questions.

Do the lab results support your theory?
Will you work at the main office or at the branch?

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Quotation Marks (" ")

Quotation marks are used in the following ways.

1. When citing direct quotations.

He said, "Your division sold the most compressors last year."

◄ **EXAMPLE**

NOTE: When you are citing a quotation within a quotation, use double quotation marks (" ") and single quotation marks (' ').

Kim's supervisor, quoting the CEO, said the following to explain the new policy regarding raises: "'Only employees who deserve them will receive merit raises.'"

◄ **EXAMPLE**

2. To note the title of an article or a subdivision of a report.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The article "Robotics in Industry Today" was an excellent choice as the basis of your speech.
> Section III, "Waste Water in District 9," is pertinent to our discussion.

When using quotation marks, abide by the following punctuation conventions:

- Commas and periods always go *inside* quotation marks.

EXAMPLE ▶

> She said, "Our percentages are fixed."

- Colons and semicolons always go *outside* quotation marks.

EXAMPLE ▶

> He said, "The supervisor hasn't decided yet"; however, he added that the decision would be made soon.

- Exclamation points and question marks go inside the quotation marks if the quoted material is either exclamatory or a question. However, if the quoted material is not exclamatory or a question, then these punctuation marks go outside the quotation marks.

EXAMPLE ▶

> John said, "Don't touch that liquid. It's boiling!"

(Although the sentence isn't exclamatory, the quotation is. Thus, the exclamation point goes inside the quotation marks.)

EXAMPLE ▶

> How could she say, "We haven't purchased the equipment yet"?

(Although the quotation isn't a question, the sentence is. Thus, the question mark goes outside the quotation marks.)

Semicolon (;)

Semicolons are used in the following instances.

1. Between two independent clauses *not* joined by a coordinating conjunction.

EXAMPLE ▶

> The light source was unusual; it emanated from a crack in the plastic surrounding the cathode.

2. To separate items in a series containing internal commas.

EXAMPLE ▶

> When the meeting was called to order, all members were present, including Susan Johnson, the president; Jewel Smith, the vice president; Harold Holbert, the treasurer; and Linda Hamilton, the secretary.

Mechanics

Abbreviations

Never use an abbreviation that your reader will not understand. A key to clear technical writing is to write on a level appropriate to your reader. You may use the following familiar abbreviations without explanation: *Mrs., Dr., Mr., Ms.,* and *Jr.*

A common mistake is to abbreviate inappropriately. For example, some writers abbreviate *and* as follows:

I quit my job & planned to retire young.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

This is too colloquial for professional technical writing. Spell out *and* when you write.

The majority of abbreviation errors occur when writers incorrectly abbreviate states and technical terms.

States.   Writers often abbreviate the names of states incorrectly. Use the U.S. Postal Service abbreviations in addresses.

Abbreviations for States

AL	Alabama	MT	Montana
AK	Alaska	NC	North Carolina
AZ	Arizona	ND	North Dakota
AR	Arkansas	NE	Nebraska
CA	California	NV	Nevada
CO	Colorado	NH	New Hampshire
CT	Connecticut	NJ	New Jersey
DE	Delaware	NM	New Mexico
FL	Florida	NY	New York
GA	Georgia	OH	Ohio
HI	Hawaii	OK	Oklahoma
IN	Indiana	OR	Oregon
IA	Iowa	PA	Pennsylvania
ID	Idaho	RI	Rhode Island
IL	Illinois	SC	South Carolina
KS	Kansas	SD	South Dakota
KY	Kentucky	TN	Tennessee
LA	Louisiana	TX	Texas
ME	Maine	UT	Utah
MD	Maryland	VT	Vermont
MA	Massachusetts	VA	Virginia
MI	Michigan	WA	Washington
MN	Minnesota	WV	West Virginia
MS	Mississippi	WI	Wisconsin
MO	Missouri	WY	Wyoming

Technical Terms.   Units of measurement and scientific terms must be abbreviated accurately to ensure that they will be understood. Writers often use such abbreviations incorrectly. For example, "The unit measured 7.9 cent." is inaccurate. The correct abbreviation for centimeter is *cm*, not *cent*. Use the following abbreviation conventions.

Technical Abbreviations for Units of Measurement and Scientific Terms

absolute	abs	current (electric)	I
alternating current	AC	cycles per second	CPS
American wire gauge	AWG	decibel	dB
ampere	amp	decigram	dg
ampere-hour	amp-hr	deciliter	dl
amplitude modulation	AM	decimeter	dm
angstrom unit	Å	degree	deg
atmosphere	atm	dekagram	dkg
atomic weight	at wt	dekaliter	dkl
audio frequency	AF	dekameter	dkm
azimuth	az	dewpoint	DP
barometer	bar.	diameter	dia
barrel, barrels	bbl	direct current	DC
billion electron volts	BeV	dozen	doz (or dz)
biochemical oxygen demand	BOD	dram	dr
board foot	bdft	electromagnetic force	emf
Brinell hardness number	BHN	electron volt	eV
British thermal unit	Btu	elevation	el (or elev)
bushel	bu	equivalent	equiv
calorie	cal	Fahrenheit	F
candela	cd	farad	F
Celsius	C	faraday	f
center of gravity	cg	feet, foot	ft
centimeter	cm	feet per second	ft/sec
circumference	cir	fluid ounce	floz
cologarithm	colog	foot board measure	fbm
continuous wave	CW	foot-candle	ft-c
cosine	cos	foot-pound	ftlb
cotangent	cot	frequency modulation	FM
cubic centimeter	cc	gallon	gal
cubic foot	cu ft (or ft^2)	gallons per day	GPD
cubic feet per second	cfs	gallons per minute	GPM
cubic inch	cu in. (or in.^{3})	grain	gr
cubic meter	cu m (or m^3)	grams	g (or gm)
cubic yard	cu yd (or yd^3)	gravitational acceleration	g

(continued)

hectare	ha	maximum	max
hectoliter	hl	megacycle	mc
hectometer	hm	megahertz	MHz
henry	H	megawatt	MW
hertz	Hz	meter	m
high frequency	HF	microampere	µamp
horsepower	hp	microinch	µin.
horsepower-hours	hp-hr	microsecond	µsec
hour	hr	microwatt	µw
hundredweight	cwt	miles per gallon	mpg
inch	in.	milliampere	mA
inch-pounds	in.-lb	millibar	mb
infrared	IR	millifarad	mF
inner diameter or inside dimensions	ID	milligram	mg
		milliliter	ml
intermediate frequency	IF	millimeter	mm
international unit	IU	millivolt	mV
joule	J	milliwatt	mW
Kelvin	K	minute	min
kilocalorie	kcal	nautical mile	NM
kilocycle	kc	negative	neg or –
kilocycles per second	kc/sec	number	no.
kilogram	kg	octane	oct
kilohertz	kHz	ounce	oz
kilojoule	kJ	outside diameter	OD
kiloliter	kl	parts per billion	ppb
kilometer	km	parts per million	ppm
kilovolt	kV	pascal	pas
kilovolt-amperes	kVa	positive	pos or +
kilowatt-hours	kWH	pound	lb
lambert	L	pounds per square inch	psi
latitude	lat	pounds per square inch absolute	psia
length	l	pounds per square inch gauge	psig
linear	lin	quart	qt
linear foot	linft	radio frequency	RF
liter	l	radian	rad
logarithm	log.	radius	r
longitude	long.	resistance	r
low frequency	LF	revolution	rev
lumen	lm	revolutions per minute	rpm
lumen-hour	lm-hr	second	s (or sec)

Technical Abbreviations for Units of Measurement and Scientific Terms (continued)

secant	sec	ultra high frequency	UHF
specific gravity	sp gr (or SG)	vacuum	vac
square foot	ft^2	very high frequency	VHF
square inch	$in.^2$	volt-ampere	VA
square meter	m^2	volt	V
square mile	mi^2	volts per meter	V/m
tablespoon	tbs (or tbsp)	volume	vol
tangent	tan	watt-hour	whr
teaspoon	tsp	watt	W
temperature	t	wavelength	WL
tensile strength	ts	weight	wt
thousand	m	yards	y (or yd)
ton	t	years	y (or yr)

Capital Letters

Capitalize the following:

1. Proper nouns.

EXAMPLE ▶

people	cities	countries	companies	schools	buildings
Susan	Houston	Italy	Bendix	Harvard	Oak Park Mall

2. People's titles (only when they precede the name).

EXAMPLE ▶

Governor Sally Renfro
or
Sally Renfro, governor
Technical Supervisor Todd Blackman
or
Wes Schneider, the technical supervisor

3. Titles of books, magazines, plays, movies, television programs, and CDs (excluding the prepositions and all articles after the first article in the title).

EXAMPLE ▶

Mad Men
The Colbert Report
The Catcher in the Rye
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn
American Idol

4. Names of organizations.

Girl Scouts
Phoenix, AZ, Regional Home Care Association
Kansas City Regional Council for Higher Education
Programs for Technical and Scientific Communication
American Civil Liberties Union
Students for a Democratic Society

◄ **EXAMPLE**

5. Days of the week, months, and holidays.

Monday
December
Thanksgiving

◄ **EXAMPLE**

6. Races, religions, and nationalities.

American Indian
Jewish
Polish

◄ **EXAMPLE**

7. Events or eras in history.

the Gulf War
the Vietnam War
World War II

◄ **EXAMPLE**

8. North, South, East, and West (when used to indicate geographic locations).

Atlanta is one of the fastest growing cities in the South.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

NOTE: Don't capitalize these words when giving directions.

We were told to drive south three blocks and then to turn west.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

9. The first word of a sentence.
10. Don't capitalize any of the following:

Seasons—spring, fall, summer, winter
Names of classes—sophomore, senior
General groups—middle management, infielders, surgeons

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Numbers

Write out numbers one through nine. Use numerals for numbers 10 and above.

10	12
104	2,093
536	5,550,286

Although the preceding rules cover most situations, there are exceptions.

1. Use numerals for all percentages.

EXAMPLE ▶

> 2 percent   18 percent   25 percent

2. Use numerals for addresses.

EXAMPLE ▶

> 12 Elm   935 W. Harding

3. Use numerals for miles per hour.

EXAMPLE ▶

> 5 mph   225 mph

4. Use numerals for time.

EXAMPLE ▶

> 3:15 A.M.

5. Use numerals for dates.

EXAMPLE ▶

> May 31, 2014

6. Use numerals for monetary values.

EXAMPLE ▶

> $45 $.95 $2 million

7. Use numerals for units of measurement.

EXAMPLE ▶

> 14 feet   6 3/4 inches   16 mm 10 V

8. Do not use numerals to begin sentences.

incorrect

568 people were fired last August.

correct

Five hundred sixty-eight people were fired last August.

9. Do not mix numerals and words when writing numbers. When two or more numbers appear in a sentence and one of them is 10 or more, figures are used.

> We attended 4 meetings over a 16-day period.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

10. Use numerals and words in a compound number adjective to avoid confusion.

> The worker needed six 2-inch nails.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

Spelling

The following is a list of commonly misspelled or misused words. You can avoid many common spelling errors if you familiarize yourself with these words. Remember to run spell check; also remember that spell check will not understand context. The incorrect word contextually could be spelled correctly.

accept, except	council, counsel	personal, personnel
addition, edition	desert, dessert	principal, principle
access, excess	disburse, disperse	quiet, quite
advise, advice	fiscal, physical	rite, right, write
affect, effect	forth, fourth	stationery, stationary
all ready, already	incite, insight	their, there, they're
assistants, assistance	its, it's	to, too, two
bare, bear	loose, lose	whose, who's
brake, break	miner, minor	your, you're
coarse, course	passed, past	
cite, site, sight	patients, patience	

Apply Your Knowledge

Spelling

In the following sentences, circle the correctly spelled words within the parentheses.

1. Each of the employees attended the meeting (accept except) the line supervisor, who was out of town for job-related travel.
2. The (advise advice) he gave will help us all do a better job.
3. Management must (affect effect) a change in employees' attitudes toward absenteeism.
4. Let me (site cite sight) this most recent case as an example.
5. (Its It's) too early to tell if our personnel changes will help create a better office environment.
6. If we (lose loose) another good employee to our competitor, our production capabilities will suffer.
7. I'm not (quite quiet) sure what she meant by that comment.
8. (Their There They're) budget has gotten too large to ensure a successful profit margin.
9. We had wanted to attend the conference (to too two), but our tight schedule prevented us from doing so.
10. (You're Your) best chance for landing this contract is to manufacture a better product.

In the following letter, correct the misspelled words.

March 5, 2014

Joanna Freeman
Personel Director
United Teletype
1111 E. Street
Kansas City, MO 68114

Dear Ms. Freeman:

Your advertizmemt in the Febuary 18, 2014, Kansas City Star is just the opening I have been looking for. I would like to submit my quallifications.

As you will note in the inclosed resum, I recieved an Enginneering degree from the Missouri Institute of Technology in 2005 and have worked in the electronic enginneering department of General Accounts for three years. I have worked a great deal in design electronics for microprocesors, controll systems, ect.

Because your company has invented many extrordinary design projects, working at your company would give me more chances to use my knowlege aquired in school and through my expirences. If you are interested in my quallifications, I would be happy to discuss them futher with you. I look foreward to hearing from you.

Sincerly,

Bob Cottrell

Bob Cottrell

Fragments and Comma Splices

In the following sentences, correct the fragments and comma splices by inserting the appropriate punctuation or adding any necessary words.

1. She kept her appointment with the salesperson, however, the rest of her staff came late.
2. When the CEO presented his fiscal year projections, he tried to motivate his employees, many were not excited about the proposed cuts.
3. Even though the company's sales were up 25 percent.
4. The supervisor wanted the staff members to make suggestions for improving their work environment, the employees, however, felt that any grievances should be taken directly to their union representatives.
5. Which he decided was an excellent idea.
6. Because their machinery was prone to malfunctions and often caused hazards to the workers.
7. They needed the equipment to complete their job responsibilities, further delays would cause production slowdowns.
8. Their client who was a major distributor of high-tech machinery.
9. Robotics should help us maintain schedules, we'll need to avoid equipment malfunctions, though.
10. The company, careful not to make false promises, advertising their product in media releases.

In the following letter, correct the fragments and comma splices.

May 12, 2014

Maurene Pierce
Dean of Residence Life
Mann College
Mannsville, NY 10012

Subject: Report on Dormitory Damage Systems

Here is the report you authorized on April 5 for an analysis of the current dormitory damage system used in this college.

The purpose of the report was to determine the effectiveness of the system. And to offer any concrete recommendations for improvement. To do this, I analyzed in detail the damage cost figures for the past three years, I also did an extensive study of dormitory conditions. Although I had limited manpower. I gathered information on all seven dormitories, focusing specifically on the men's athletic dorm, located at 1201 Chester. In this dorm, bathroom facilities, carpeting, and air conditioning are most susceptible to damage. Along with closet doors.

Nonetheless, my immediate findings indicate that the system is functioning well, however, improvements in the physical characteristics of the dormitories, such as new carpeting and paint, would make the system even more efficient.

I have enjoyed conducting this study, I hope my findings help you make your final decision. Please contact me. If I can be of further assistance.

Rob Harken

Rob Harken

Punctuation

In the following sentences, circle the correct punctuation marks. If no punctuation is needed, draw a slash mark through both options.

1. John took an hour for lunch (, ;) but Joan stayed at her desk to eat so she could complete the project.
2. Sally wrote the specifications (, ;) Randy was responsible for adding any needed graphics.
3. Manufacturing maintained a 93.5 percent production rating in July (, ;) therefore, the department earned the Golden Circle Award at the quarterly meeting.
4. In their year-end requests to management (, ;) supervisors asked for new office equipment (, ;) and a 10 percent budget increase for staffing.
5. The following employees attended the training session on stress management (, :) Steve Janasz, purchasing agent (, ;) Jeremy Kreisler, personnel director (, ;) and Prakash Patel, staff supervisor.
6. Promotions were given to all sales personnel (, ;) secretaries, however, received only cost-of-living raises.
7. The technicians voted for better work benefits (, ;) as an incentive to improve morale.
8. Although the salespeople were happy with their salary increases (, ;) the technicians felt slighted.
9. First (, ;) let's remember that meeting schedules should be a priority (, ;) and not an afterthought.
10. The employee (, ;) who achieves the highest rating this month (, ;) will earn 10 bonus points (, ;) therefore (, ;) competition should be intense.

In the letter below, no punctuation has been added. Instead, there are blanks where punctuation might be inserted. First, decide whether any punctuation is needed (not every blank requires punctuation). Then, insert the correct punctuation—a comma, colon, period, semicolon, or question mark.

January 8_ 2014

Mr_ Ron Schaefer
1324 Homes
Carbondale_ IL_ 34198

Dear Mr_ Schaefer_

Yesterday_ my partners_ and I read about your invention in the Herald Tribune_ and we want to congratulate you on this new idea_ and ask you to work with us on a similar project_

We cannot wait to begin our project_ however_ before we can do so_ I would like you to answer the following questions_

• Has your invention been tested in salt water_
• What is the cost of replacement parts_
• What is your fee for consulting_

Once_ I receive your answers to these questions_ my partners and I will contact you regarding a schedule for operations_ We appreciate your design concept_ and know it will help our business tremendously_ We look forward to hearing from you_

Sincerely_

Elias Agamenyon

Elias Agamenyon

Agreement (Subject/Verb and Pronoun/Antecedent)

In the following sentences, circle the correct choice to achieve agreement between subject and verb or pronoun and antecedent.

1. The employees, though encouraged by the possibility of increased overtime, (was were) still dissatisfied with their current salaries.
2. The supervisor wants to manufacture better products, but (they he) doesn't know how to motivate the technicians to improve their work habits.
3. The staff (was were) happy when the new manager canceled the proposed meeting.
4. Anyone who wants (his or her their) vote recorded must attend the annual board meeting.
5. According to the printed work schedule, Susan and Tom (work works) today on the manufacturing line.
6. According to the printed work schedule, either Susan or Tom (work works) today on the manufacturing line.
7. Although Tamara is responsible for distributing all monthly activity reports, (she they) failed to mail them.
8. Every one of the engineers asked if (he or she they) could be assigned to the project.
9. Either the supervisor or the technicians (is are) at fault.
10. The CEO, known for her generosity to employees and their families, (has have) been nominated for the humanitarian award.

In the following memo, find and correct the errors in agreement.

MEMO

DATE: October 30, 2014
TO: Tammy West
FROM: Susan Lisk
SUBJECT: REPORT ON AIR HANDLING UNIT

There has been several incidents involving the unit which has resulted in water damage to the computer systems located below the air handler.

The occurrences yesterday was caused when a valve was closed creating condensation to be forced through a humidifier element into the supply air duct. Water then leaked from the duct into the room below causing substantial damage to four disc-drive units.

To prevent recurrence of this type of damage, the following actions has been initiated by maintenance supervision:

• Each supervisor must ensure that their subordinates remove condensation valves to avoid unauthorized operation.
• Everyone must be made aware that they are responsible for closing condensation valves.
• The supply air duct, modified to carry away harmful sediments, are to be drained monthly.

Maintenance supervision recommend that air handlers not be installed above critical equipment. This will avoid the possibility of coil failure and water damage.

Capitalization

In the following memo, nothing has been capitalized. Capitalize those words requiring capitalization.

date: december 5, 2014
to: jordan cottrell
from: richard davis
subject: self-contained breathing apparatus (scba) and negative pressure respirator
            evaluation and fit-testing report

the evaluation and fit-testing have been accomplished. the attached list identifies the following:

• supervisors and electronic technicians who have used the scba successfully.
• the negative pressure respirators used for testing in an isoamyl acetate atmosphere.

fit-testing of waste management personnel will be accomplished annually, according to president chuck carlson. new supervisors and technicians will be fit-tested when hired.

all apex corporation personnel located in the new york district (12304 parkview lane) must submit a request form when requesting a respirator or scba for use. any waste management personnel in the north and south facilities not identified on the attached list will be fit-tested when use of scba is required. if you have any questions, contact chuck carlson or me (richard davis, district manager) at ext. 4036.

Grammar Quiz

The following sentences contain errors in spelling, punctuation, verb and pronoun agreement, sentence structure (fragments and fused sentences), and modification. Circle the letter corresponding to the section of the sentence containing the error.

◄ **EXAMPLE**

> When you recieve the salary increase, your family will celebrate the occasion.
>   A   B   C

1. Each department manager should <u>his</u> tell subordinates to <u>advise</u> of any negative
                                      A   B

   <u>occurrences</u> regarding <u>in-house</u> training.
      C   D

2. The <u>lawyers'</u> new offices were similar to <u>their</u> former ones _____ the offices
       A   B   C

   were on a <u>quiet</u> street.
           D

3. New York City is <u>divided</u> into five <u>boroughs</u> <u>;</u> Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens,
                   A   B   C

   Brooklyn, <u>and</u> Staten Island.
           D

4. Fashion consultants explain that <u>clothes</u> create a strong impression _____ so
                                 A   B

   they advise executives _____ to <u>choose</u> wardrobes carefully.
                        C   D

5. Everyone should make sure that <u>they are</u> well represented in union meetings <u>;</u>
                              A   B

   otherwise <u>,</u> management could become <u>too</u> powerful.
          C   D

6. The employment agency <u>,</u> <u>too</u> busy to return the telephone calls from prospective
                           A B

   clients <u>,</u> <u>are</u> harming business opportunities.
         C D

7. The supervisory staff <u>are</u> making decisions based on scheduling <u>,</u> but all <u>employees</u>
                    A   B   C

   want to <u>ensure</u> quality control.
          D

8. Because the price of cars has risen dramatically _____ most people
                                             A

   keep <u>their</u> cars longer _____ to save <u>capital</u> expenditures.
        B   C   D

9. The <u>department's</u> manager heard that a merger was possible _____ but he
        A   B

   decided <u>to</u> keep the news <u>quiet.</u>
         C   D

10. The manager of the department believed that her <u>employee's</u> were excellent <u>,</u> but she
                                        A   B

    decided that no raises could be given _____ because the price of stocks <u>was</u> falling.
                            C   D

11. The detailed report from the audit _____ of the department gave good advise
       A B

    about how to restructure , so we are all ready to do so.
     C D

12. When my boss and I looked at the books , we found these problems ; lost invoices,
     A B C

    unpaid bills , and late payments.
     D

13. The most dedicated staff members are accepted for the on-site training sessions
     A B

    because : they are responsive to criticism, represent the company's future, and strive
     C D

    for improvements.

14. Despite her assurances to the contrary , there is still three unanswered questions : who
     A B C

    will make the payments, when will these payments occur, and why is there a delay?
     D

15. The reputation of many companies often depend on one employee who represents
     A B C D

    that company.

16. Either my monthly activity report or my year - end report are due today , but my
     A B C

    computer is broken ; therefore, I need to use yours.
     D

17. Today's American manpower , according to many foreign governments, suffers
     A B C D

    from lack of discipline.

18. Rates are increasing next year because : fuel, maintenance, and insurance are
     A B C

    all higher than last year.
     D

19. Many colleges have long-standing football rivalries , one of the most famous ones
     A B

    is between KU and KSU (two universities in Kansas).
    C D

20. Everyone who wants to enroll in the business school should do so before June
    A B

    if they can to ensure getting the best classes.
     C D

21. Because John wanted high visibility for his two business , he paid top dollar
     A B

    _____ and spent long hours looking for appropriate cites.
     C D

22. Many people apply for jobs at Apex , however , only a few are accepted.
     A B C D

23. Because most cars break down <u>occasionally</u> , all drivers should know how to change
$$ \text{A} \qquad \text{B}$$

a flat tire , and how to signal for <u>assistance.</u>
$$ \text{C} \text{D}$$

24. Arriving on time, working <u>diligently,</u> and closing the office securely — everyone
$$ \text{A} \text{B}$$

<u>needs</u> to know that <u>they are</u> responsible for these job duties.
$$ \text{C} \text{D}$$

25. Mark McGwire not only hit the ball <u>further</u> <u>than</u> other players, but also he hit
$$ \text{A} \text{B}$$

more dingers than other players <u>who</u> hit <u>fewer</u> homers.
$$ \text{C} \text{D}$$

LETTER FORMATS

Three common types of letter formats include **full block** (Figure 1)**, full block with subject line** (Figure 2)**,** and **simplified** (Figure 3)**.** Two popular and professional formats used in business are full block and full block with subject line. With both formats, you type all information at the left margin without indenting paragraphs, the date, the complimentary close, or signature. The full block with subject line differs only with the inclusion of a subject line.

Another option is the simplified format. This type of letter layout is similar to the full block format in that all text is typed margin left. The two significant omissions include no salutation ("Dear _____:") and no complimentary close ("Sincerely,"). Omitting a salutation is useful in the following instances:

- You do not know your reader's name (NOTE: Avoid the trite salutation, "To Whom It May Concern:").
- You are writing to someone with a non-gender specific name (Jesse, Terry, Stacy, Chris, etc.) and you do not know whether to use "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Ms."

The Administrative Management Society (AMS) suggests that if you omit the salutation, you also should omit the complimentary close. Some people feel that omitting the salutation and the complimentary close will make the letter cold and unfriendly. However, the AMS says that if your letter is warm and friendly, these omissions will not be missed. More importantly, if your letter's content is negative, beginning with "Dear" and ending with "Sincerely" will not improve the letter's tone or your reader's attitude toward your comments. The simplified format includes a subject line to aid the letter's clarity.

FIGURE 1 Full Block Format

State Health Department
1890 Clark Road
Jefferson City, MO 67220

June 6, 2014

Dale McGraw, Manager
Elmwood Mobile Home Park
Elmwood, MO 64003

Dear Mr. McGraw:

On April 19, 2014, Ryan Duran and I, environmental specialists from the Health Department, conducted an inspection of the Elmwood Mobile Home Park Wastewater Treatment Facility. The purpose was to assess compliance with the following: the state's Clean Water Law, Clean Water Commission regulations, and your facility's plan for pollution control. The inspection also would allow the state to promote proper operation of Wastewater Facilities and to provide technical assistance where needed to the Elmwood Mobile Homes management.

Though the Elmwood Mobile Home pollution control plan had expired in 2013, a consent judgment was issued by the state's Attorney General's Office. The county court stipulated a timeline for correction by connection to an available sewer system. Your mobile home park's wastewater system has continually discharged to the Little Osage River. A copy of the abatement order, which requires that monthly discharge monitoring reports (DMRs) be submitted by the 28th of the month following the reporting periods, is attached. All DMRs for the previous twelve months have been received, and reported pollution parameters are not within limits. Due to the plant's performance, the stream was placed on the 2012 303 (d) stream for impairment by the Elmwood Mobile Home.

As part of the inspection, a review of the facility's DMR was conducted. Twenty-four-hour composite samples were collected using a composite sampler. Attached are the results of the 24-hour composite samples collected on April 20, 2014. Every one of the problems documented is an infraction that must be addressed.

Within 30 days of receipt of this letter, please submit to the Health Department written documentation describing steps taken to correct each of the concerns identified in the attachments. Also include engineering reports, and submit a timeframe to eliminate the problems. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Harvey Haddix

Harvey Haddix
Environmental Manager

Attachment

1 to 1½ in margins on all sides of the letter

Two to four spaces above and below the date

Two to four spaces above and below the salutation

Single space within the paragraphs.

Double space between the paragraphs.

Two spaces before "Sincerely"

Four spaces between "Sincerely" and the typed signature

FIGURE 2   Full Block Format with Subject Line

State Health Department
1890 Clark Road
Jefferson City, MO 67220

June 6, 2014

Dale McGraw, Manager
Elmwood Mobile Home Park
Elmwood, MO 64003

Subject: Pollution Control Inspection

Dear Mr. McGraw:

On April 19, 2014, Ryan Duran and I, environmental specialists from the Health Department, conducted an inspection of the Elmwood Mobile Home Park Wastewater Treatment Facility. The purpose was to assess compliance with the following: the state's Clean Water Law, Clean Water Commission regulations, and your facility's plan for pollution control. The inspection also would allow the state to promote proper operation of Wastewater Facilities and to provide technical assistance where needed to the Elmwood Mobile Homes management.

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Sincerely,

Harvey Haddix

Harvey Haddix
Environmental Manager

Attachment

FIGURE 3 Simplified Format Omitting "Dear . . ." and "Sincerely"

State Health Department
1890 Clark Road
Jefferson City, MO 67220

June 6, 2014

Dale McGraw, Manager
Elmwood Mobile Home Park
Elmwood, MO 64003

Subject: Pollution Control Inspection

On April 19, 2014, Ryan Duran and I, environmental specialists from the Health Department, conducted an inspection of the Elmwood Mobile Home Park Wastewater Treatment Facility. The purpose was to assess compliance with the following: the state's Clean Water Law, Clean Water Commission regulations, and your facility's plan for pollution control. The inspection also would allow the state to promote proper operation of Wastewater Facilities and to provide technical assistance where needed to the Elmwood Mobile Homes management.

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Harvey Haddix

Harvey Haddix
Environmental Manager

Attachment

TEXT CREDIT

Credits are listed in order of appearance.

Figure 1 — Jobs by CareerBuilding App. Courtesy CareerBuilding. © vgstudio / Shutterstock

PHOTO CREDITS

Credits are listed in order of appearance.

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