Job Search Skills

help to go ahead

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About the Tutorial

Job search skills is a technique that is necessary to find a competent job. This tutorial is meant to help the readers develop this competent skill and find a job matching their qualification, experience, and interest.

Audience

This tutorial is designed primarily for professionals who are looking for a new opportunity/job as well as for students who have just graduated and are seeking a suitable job. Additionally, any interested reader can take advantage of this tutorial to update his/her knowledge about job search skills.

Prerequisites

There is no prerequisite for this tutorial; however, a cool and composed state of mind is essential to understand the concept of job search skills.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive world, job search is a challenging task. During such a phase, various intimidating questions keep on rebounding in your brain such as where to find a suitable job, how to get a lead, how to develop an impressive resume and cover letter, whom to contact, what and how to prepare for the interview, etc. To get the right answers, it requires a deep research and an intelligent strategy.

This chapter answers these questions and suggests the right way to develop job search skills. All you need to do is follow the following steps:

Self-Introspection

Self-introspection is the most fundamental question to deal with. Behavioral School of Psychology suggests that much of our behavior is influenced by self-concept. Therefore, you have not only to introspect yourself carefully, but also need to do it very honestly.
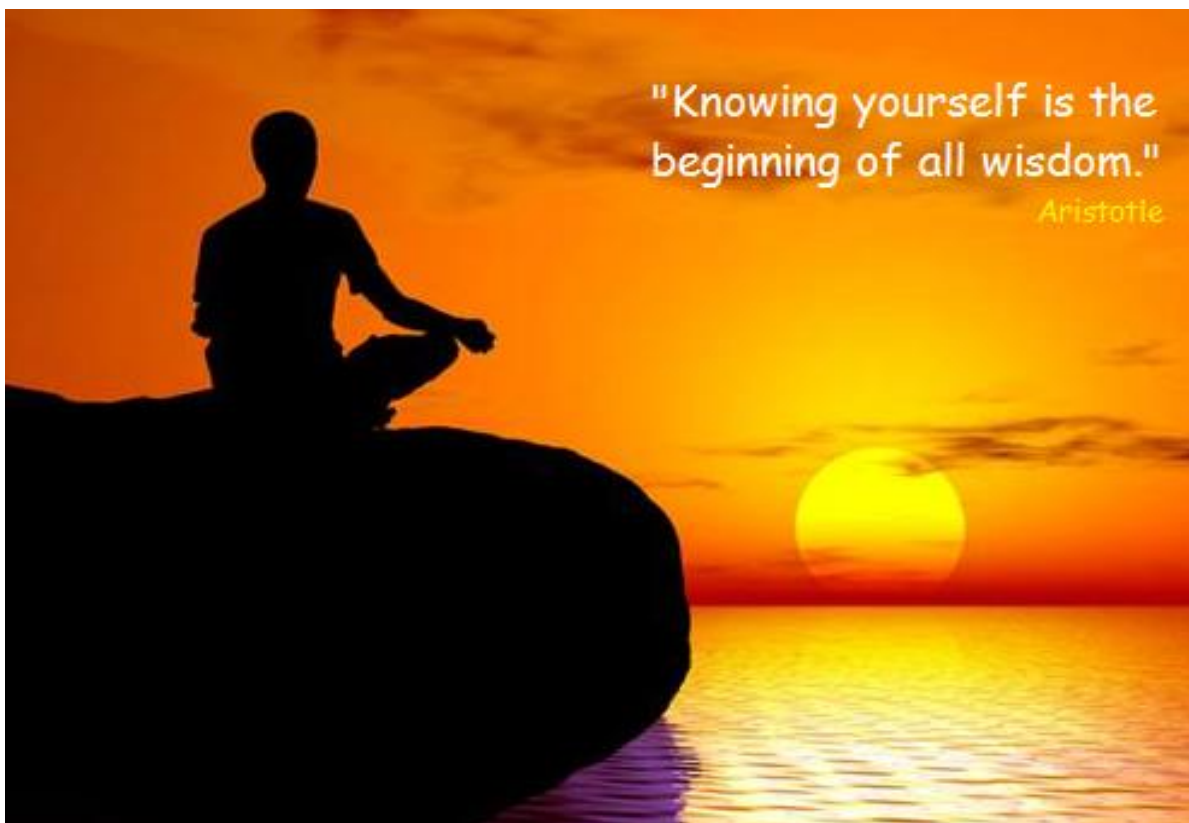
However, it is a very difficult task to ask the right question to yourself and get the right answer. But there is no reason to be alarmed; simply following the

steps described in this tutorial and honestly doing the exercises given at the end of the tutorial will help immensely. Answer the following questions:

- Who you are?

- What you want to be/what is your goal?

- What are the skill sets you have acquired?

- What are your values?

- What type of work do you enjoy doing?

- What are the strengths you have to attain your goal?

- What are the weaknesses that might be a potential impediment for you?

Self-Realization

Once you answer these questions honestly, you realize the real picture of your potential. Self-realization will help you greatly to further strengthen your concept and improve your goal-oriented skill sets.

Self-realization is such an aspect that helps in every point of your life, irrespective of your age and sex.

Self-Motivation

Once you introspect and realize your potential, it will become a source of motivation. Without self-motivation, it is very difficult to do even a simple task.

Possibly, you may face rejection, setback, financial crisis, etc., but don't get discouraged rather keep yourself motivated. Self-motivation is the ultimate *mantra* (key) to success (watch the following video).
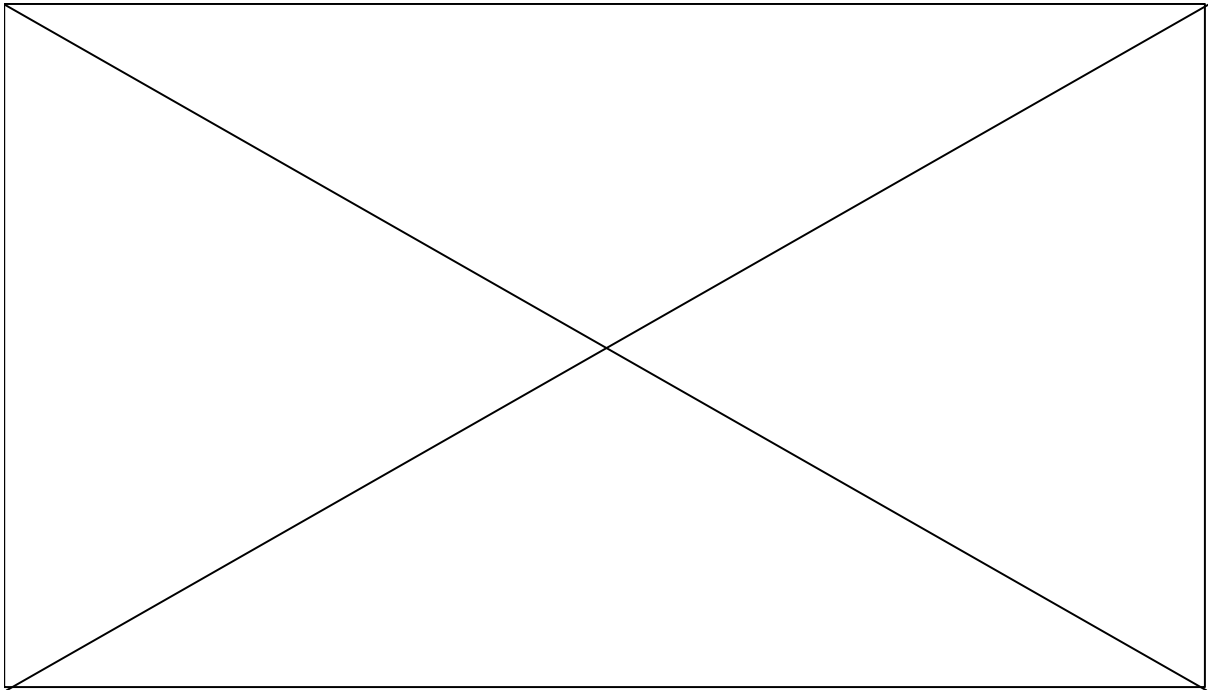
2. GOAL SETTING

Once there is self-realization, the next step is to set your goal. We will discuss in this chapter the importance of setting achievable goals.

What is a Goal?

A goal is your ultimate wish, desire, dream, and source of happiness that you want to attain. Goal can be decided only after thorough self-introspection. Remember, don't keep any confusion at this point, and don't make any error because all your activities will be solely goal oriented. Any mistake can cause a big problem for you.

Determine What you want and Why you want it. Once You Understand What's important, you can Utilize your Passions and Achieve Anything

Brooke Griffin
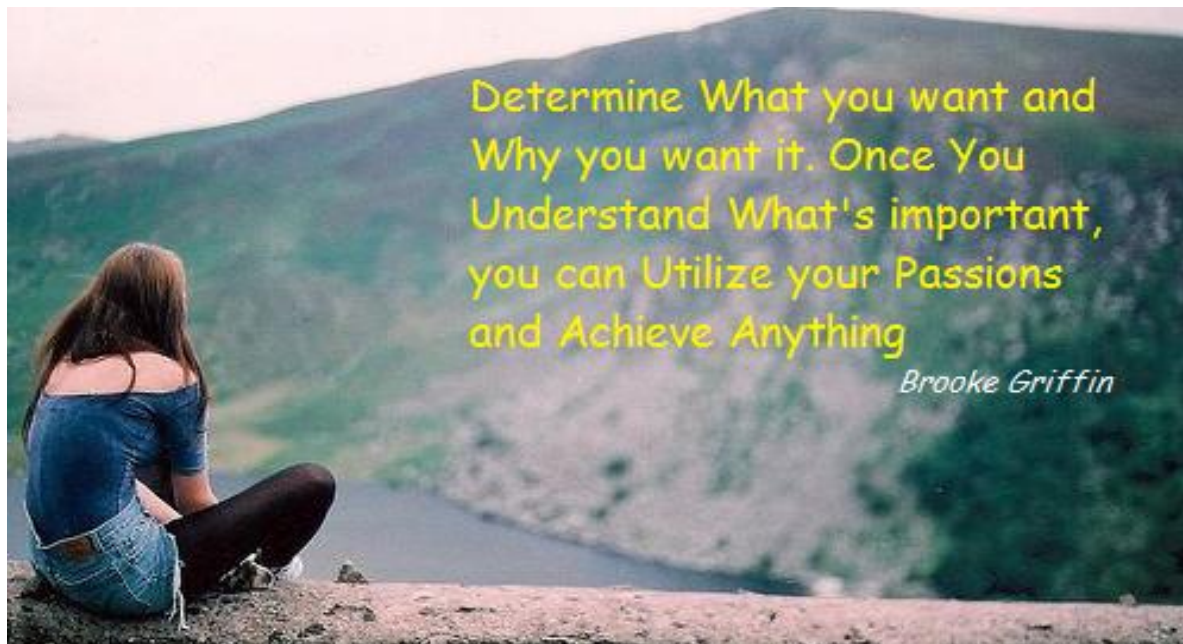
What is an Ideal Goal?

Before you set a goal, you need to pay attention to the following points. It will help you to choose a right and achievable goal:

- **Specific**: Your goal has to be specific. No confusion should remain in your mind. Once you set this, make a resolution to achieve it at any cost. For example, if your goal is to work for the Apple Company or be a CIA agent, stick with it.

- **Measurable and Achievable**: Your goal should not be abstract; it must be decided only after an analysis of your wish, skill sets, your education, and immediate circumstances. So that you can visualize your goal and can

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make the right strategy to achieve that. For example, you are a very good management student, but also like basketball; you have very good knowledge of basketball game, but you never played. In such a situation, do not get confused, basketball is your likeness, but your expertise lies in management area.

- **Relevant**: Some goals are of such kind that it is fascinating for certain period of time, but later on loses its relevancy. For example, generally an athlete girl cannot pursue her goal for a long time; future circumstances post marriage might create many problems in her personal as well as professional life.

- **Time Framework**: You have to fix a time period to attain your goal.

3. RESUME WRITING

No matter how smart you are until it properly reflects on your resume your skills will go unnoticed, because employers first see your resume not you. Therefore, being selected for an interview totally depends on your resume.

What is Resume Writing?

Resume Writing is writing about your personal and professional achievements in chronological order on a piece of paper. Since, this the first and the most important aspect of job search, your professionalism and skills have to be reflected on your resume. The language that you use on your resume should be simple, brief, and clear.

Elements of a Resume

Every resume has the following essential elements (without which it is incomplete):

Personal Data

It includes your name, address, and contact details (email ID and phone number).

Career Objective

Mention your career objective in such a way that explains how you will meet the demand of the job that you are applying for.
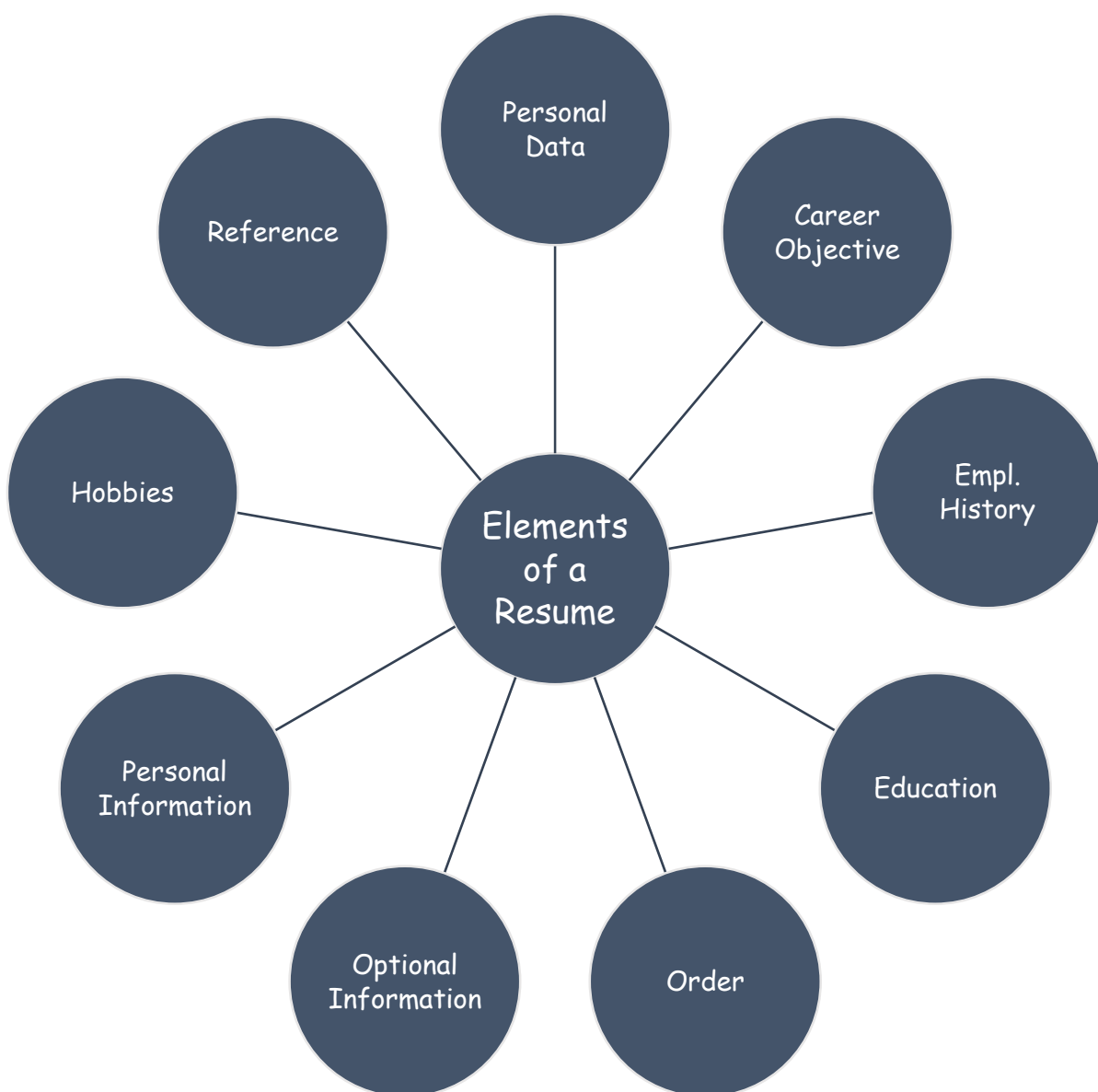
Employment History

No matter how versatile your work experience is - Write only the relevant work experience, which is in the interest of the company where you are applying. For example, if you are applying for the computer programming job, you write only the computer related work experience. Though, you have also worked as a salesperson, do not mention this because your sales experience is not at all relevant for the computer programming job. It might create a negative impression.

Education

Mention all your educational qualifications including name of the programs/diploma, subjects, grade, passing year, schools/institution's name.

Optional Information

It includes your other skill sets such as technical skills, and projects (that you have handled) relevant to the job and some other achievements including award and recognitions. For example, you are a state/national level sportsman, etc.

Personal Information

It includes personal details, such as sex, religion, marital status, etc. which is not mandatory to mention. Hence, it can be skipped.

Hobbies

Not imperative, but worth mentioning on your resume. Many companies across the world consider it positively.

References

Put at least two persons' name, designation, address, contact details, and your relationship with them. Mention only those people who know you very well and can speak positively about you; preferably, your professor or your boss from a previous company or one from each category.

Chronological Order

Your work experience and education should be arranged in chronology. You need to start with the current job and the last study program and then previous to that and so on.

However, for detailed information, check the tutorial "**Effective Resume Writing**."

How to Deal with Awkward Points on Resume?

Awkward points on your resume refers to employment gaps or short stints during your career span. You have to be very careful while mentioning these in your resume.

It is suggested to acknowledge gaps in employment in such a manner so as to not create a negative impression. This can be done by being honest and mentioning the reason for gap. If you did some volunteer work or took up a course to enhance your skills during the gap, it is always worth mentioning in your resume. However, it is advised to always do away with short stints in jobs. Mentioning these suggests instability.

Organizing Your Resume

Once you complete your resume, do not forget to:

- Review it.
- Check it twice (to see if all the points included are in order).
- Organize it (to check in terms of order, font, color, spacing, etc.).

4. FORMAT OF A RESUME

As such, there is no specific format of a resume; largely, it depends upon the nature of job you are applying for. Further, it also varies greatly from one geographic region to another. For example, America has totally different style of resume writing in comparison to Europe and Asia.

Following are a few samples that will help you develop a proper resume:

Resume Format in European Countries

'**europass**' is one of the most preferred sources to develop resume for European countries:

europass Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION	**Betty Smith**

- 32 Reading rd, Birmingham B26 3QJ United Kingdom
- +44 2012345679   +44 7123456789
- smith@kotmail.com
- AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) betty.smith

Sex Female | Date of birth 01 March 1975

JOB APPLIED FOR	European project manager

WORK EXPERIENCE

August 2002 – Present

Independent consultant
British Council
123, Bd Ney, 75023 Paris (France)

Evaluation of European Commission youth training support measures for youth national agencies and young people

March 2002 – July 2002

Internship
European Commission, Youth Unit, DG Education and Culture
200, Rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels (Belgium)

- evaluating youth training programmes for SALTO UK and the partnership between the Council of Europe and European Commission
- organizing and running a 2 day workshop on non-formal education for Action 5 large scale projects focusing on quality, assessment and recognition
- contributing to the steering sroup on training and developing action plans on training for the next 3 years. Working on the Users Guide for training and the support measures

Business or sector European institution

October 2001 – February 2002

Researcher / Independent Consultant
Council of Europe, Budapest (Hungary)

Working in a research team carrying out in-depth qualitative evaluation of the 2 year Advanced Training of Trainers in Europe using participant observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups. Work carried out in training courses in Strasbourg, Slovenia and Budapest.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1997 – 2001

PhD - Thesis Title: 'Young People in the Construction of the Virtual University', Empirical research on e-learning
Brunel University, London United Kingdom

1993 – 1997

Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Psychology
Brunel University, London United Kingdom

- sociology of risk
- sociology of scientific knowledge / information society
- anthropology
E-learning and Psychology
- research methods

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europass — Curriculum Vitae — Betty Smith

PERSONAL SKILLS

| Mother tongue(s) | English |

Other language(s)	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
French	C1	C2	B2	C1	C2
German	A2	A2	A2	A2	A2

Levels: A1/A2: Basic user - B1/B2: Independent user - C1/C2: Proficient user
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Communication skills
- team work: I have worked in various types of teams from research teams to national league hockey. For 2 years I coached my university hockey team
- mediating skills: I work on the borders between young people, youth trainers, youth policy and researchers, for example running a 3 day workshop at CoE Symposium 'Youth Actor of Social Change', and my continued work on youth training programmes
- intercultural skills: I am experienced at working in a European dimension such as being a rapporteur at the CoE Budapest 'youth against violence seminar' and working with refugees.

Organisational / managerial skills
- whilst working for a Brussels based refugee NGO 'Convivial' I organized a 'Civil Dialogue' between refugees and civil servants at the European Commission 20th June 2002
- during my PhD I organised a seminar series on research methods

Computer skills
- competent with most Microsoft Office programmes
- experience with HTML

Other skills
Creating pieces of Art and visiting Modern Art galleries. Enjoy all sports particularly hockey, football and running. Love to travel and experience different cultures.

Driving licence   A, B

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Publications
'How to do Observations: Borrowing techniques from the Social Sciences to help Participants do Observations in Simulation Exercises' Coyote EU/CoE Partnership Publication, (2002).

Resume Format in America

<div style="border:1px solid">

Your Name
youremail@hostname.com
Your phone number (011)-52-55.....

Permanent Contact Info: \<Home town address\>
School Contact Info: \<address while you are attending school if different than above\>

EDUCATION

\<Your School\> & \<Campus\>
Bachelor of Science in Computer Systems Engineering
Graduating in December 2007
Cumulative GPA: 95/100

WORK EXPERIENCE

12/05- Present   ABC Bank
                        Software Developer/Tester, Mexico DF, Mexico
                        Design and code modules for client/server applications to enable communication and transactions among bank branches across the country (C#, SQL). Test techniques include white box testing and stress testing.

1/05 – 5/05   Web Interactive, Mexico DF, Mexico
                        Web Developer
                        Website designer/coder. Create proposals, site design and implementation as well as support on additional sites. ImplementingE-commerce sites as well as scaleable intranets. Site link: www.yourcompany.com

9/04 - 12/04   Acme de Mexico
                        IT Intern
                        Designed and implemented components for a web-based system for scheduling conference rooms using Java. Designed part of the database and did some routine maintenance tasks on the server (SQL Server, Windows 2000). Performed functional and workload testing.

MAJOR SCHOOL PROJECTS

Fall 2005   Thesis Project: (In Progress) Model-based tool for testing query languages. Developed by a team of 3. Responsible for designing and implementing in C++ the derivation engine used to generate queries from a formal grammar specified in XML.

Spring 2004   Tutoring Online: Prototype of website for tutoring. Worked on the browser – database communication, using Java and MySQL.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages:
C/C++/C#   3 years
Java   2 years
SQL, XML   6 months

Platforms: Win 2003 (administrator), Win XP (user), Linux (user)
RDBMS: SQL Server (9 months), MySQL (4 month)
Applications: FrontPage (advanced), AutoCAD (intermediate)

AWARDS AND LEADERSHIP

1st prize in ITESM Programming Contest, Spring 2005
2nd prize in ACM Programming Contest, Spring 2004
Recipient of Excellence Scholarship for academic merit, 2003
1st place in Regional Mathematic Olympiad, 2003
2nd place in National Mathematic Olympiad, 2003

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Resume Format in India

MANOJ KUMAR

Email : mkumar123@gmail.com
Address: A2/84/6, Janakpuri
Delhi-11XXXX
Contact : 99XXXXXX78

CAREER OBJECTIVE

Seeking a position in the organization that provides me ample opportunity to explore & excel in the field of Finance and Accounts while carving out the niche for personal, Professional as well as organizational goals.

WORK EXPERIENCE

JINDAL STEEL & POWER LIMITED, ANGUL PROJECT, ODISHA

Management Trainee (Finance & Accounts),   **July 2012-Present**

- Preparing Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Financial Statement under IGAAP.
- Passing Accounting entries in SAP related to Purchases of Raw Material & Capital goods and Sale.

ABC PVT. LTD.

Article Assistant, **December 2009 – June 2012**

- Audit of Financial Statements ensuring compliance with Indian GAAP, Standards of Auditing etc.
- Statutory Audit in accordance with Companies Act and Rules there under.
- Stock Audit
- Service Tax

ARTICLESHIP

- Has undergone 3.5 years intensive full time training.

EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS

Chartered Accountancy- 56.63%   2008-2012
Institute of Chartered Accountants Of India

Bachelor of Commerce- 66.75%   2008-2011
Chaudhary Charan Singh University

Class XII – 92.60%   2008
J.P. Academy

Class X- 78.67%   2006
St. Thomas Girls Inter College

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Ranked 3rd in CA Final in District (Meerut)
- Ranked 2nd in PCC in District (Meerut)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Operating Systems   :Windows 2000/ XP/ 2007
- MS Office   :MS Word, MS Excel
- Accounting Package :Tally, Computax, SAP

STRENGTHS

- Sincerity and Punctuality
- Self Motivated
- Positive Attitude
- Hardworking Nature
- Dedication for committed work

PERSONAL DOSSIER

Father's Name   : Mr. Manoj Kumar
Date of Birth   : 3 Sep. 1990
Gender   : Male
Marital Status   : Single
Languages Known : English, Hindi
Hobbies   : Listening to music, Hanging out with friends
Permanent Address: Flat No-398, XXXXXXXXXXX, U.P.

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the above mentioned information is true to the best of my knowledge. I promise to abide by all the norms laid down by your esteemed organization.

Date   Signature

5. COVER LETTER

The main purpose of a cover letter is to convince an employer to know more about you and check out your resume. It is as important as your resume.
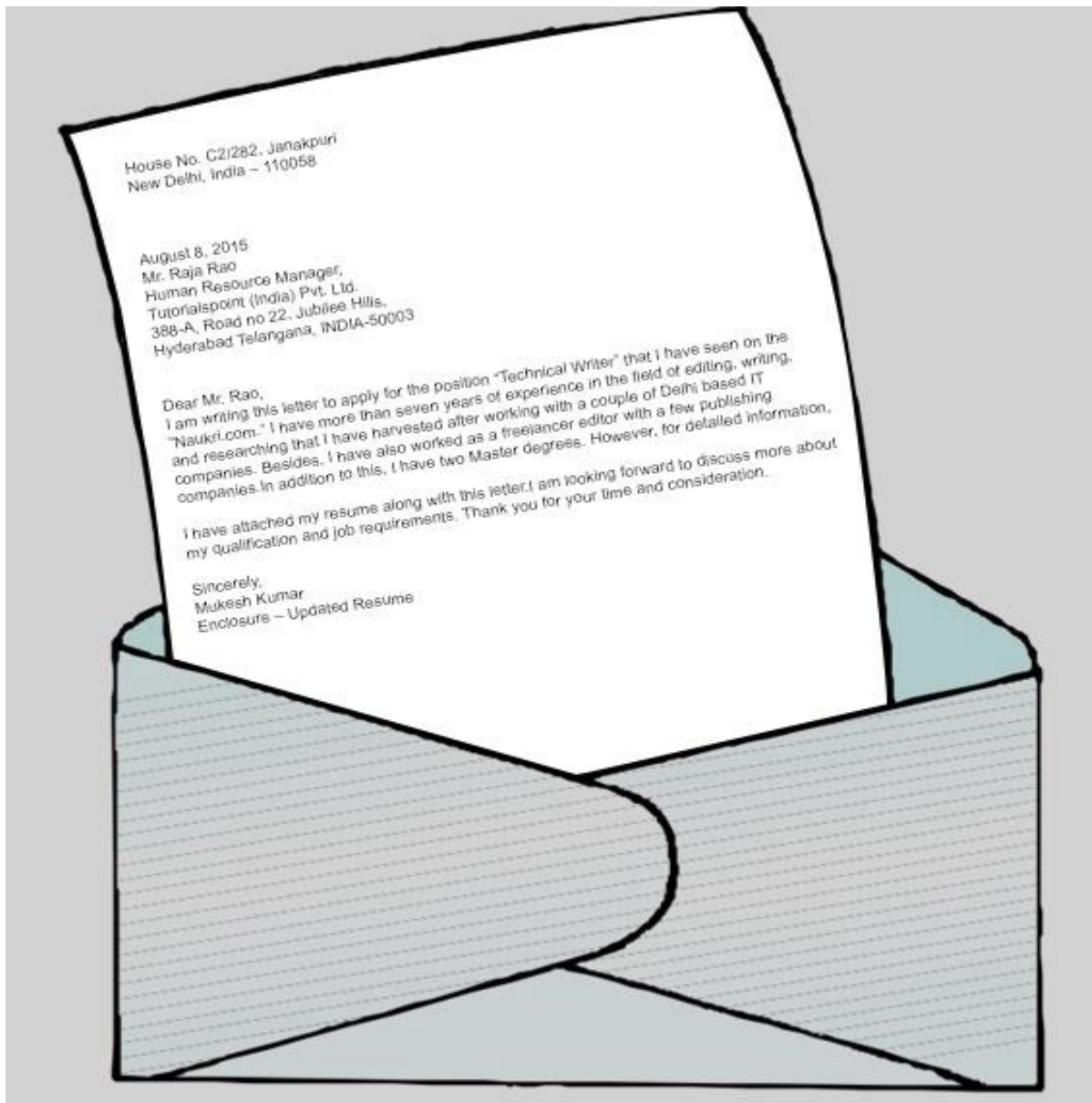
What is a Cover Letter?

Cover letter is an introductory remark that generally accompanies the resume. It captures the recruiter's/employer's attention. So, it is an opportunity for you to stand out from the crowd and fascinate the employer to call you for an interview.

Features of a Cover Letter

Following are the salient features of a cover letter:

- **Personalized**: Necessarily address a specific person in your letter. However, if you do not know whom to address, then research about the company/organization and find the concerned person.

- **Relevant**: Research the company thoroughly and collect the information so that you can co-relate your experience and qualification with the company's work and vision/mission. And, understand the role well that you are applying for.
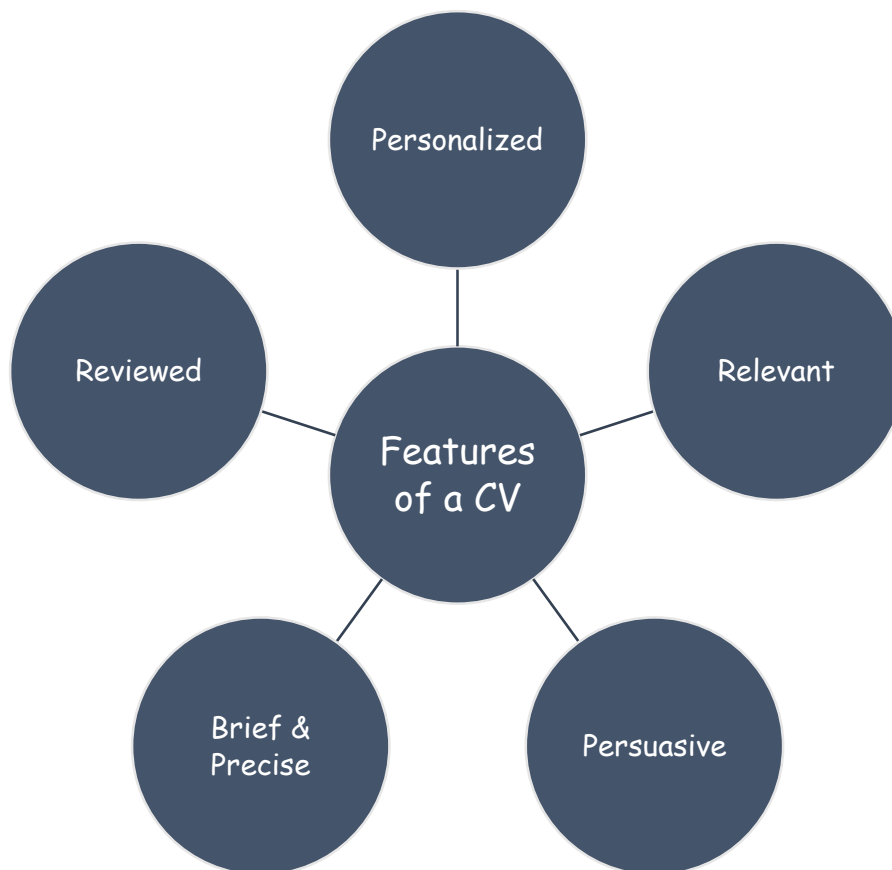
- **Persuasive**: Convey how your acquired skills, experience, and qualification distinctively qualify you for the position. Explain why and how you fit the profile and commit how you could be beneficial for the company.

- **Brief and Precise**: Your cover letter should be brief and clear. You should limit your cover page to one page (roughly 300 to 350 words). While doing this, also ensure that you maintain the professional pitch in your language.

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- **Reviewed**: Even a minor error can spoil your all efforts. Therefore, before you click on 'send' do not forget to proofread it twice or thrice. Ensure it is free from grammar and spelling errors.

Elements of a Cover Letter

- **The Heading**: It includes the return address and date.

- **The Inside Address**: Name of the person to whom you are writing and name and address of the company.
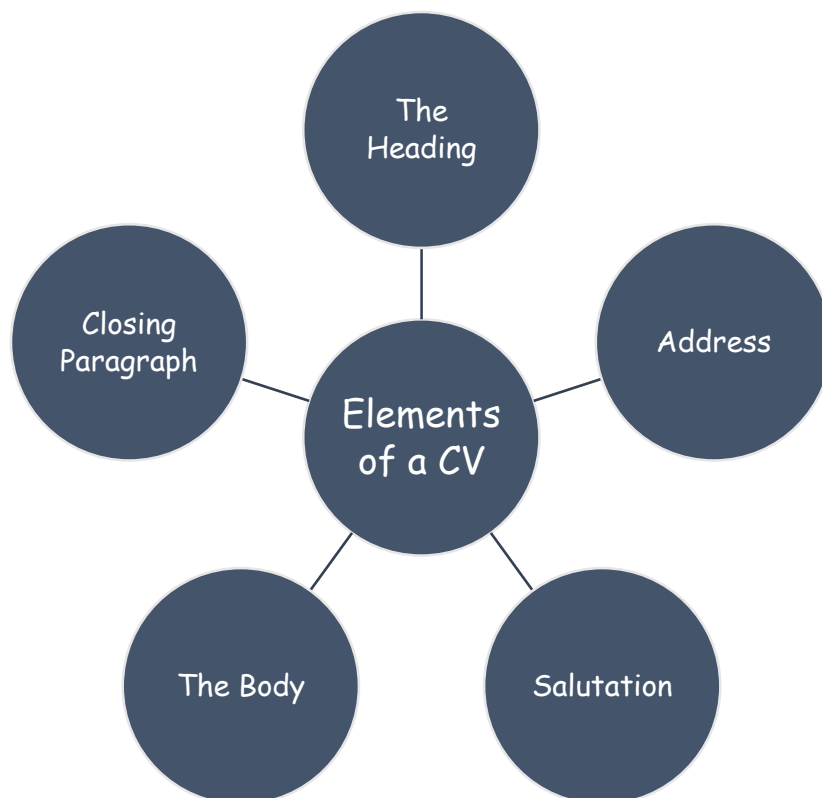
- **Salutation/Greeting**: Preferably, address by a particular name. Remember, do not use the first name rather use the last name. For example, if the name is Richard William, then address like Dear Mr. William.

- **The Body**: Start with the position you are applying for and how you came to know about it. And then describe yourself such as your qualification, experience, and other skills and achievements. Further, write the relevancy of your expertize and company's requirements.

- **Closing Paragraph**: Inform the employer about your availability for a personal interview. Remember, always close your letter by thanking the addressee for his/her time and consideration.

Format of a Cover Letter

Following is an ideal format of a cover letter recommended by "American University:"

Your **address**
City, state, zip code
Your cell phone number
Your e-mail address

Date: August 8, 2015

Ms./Mr./Dr. recipient's first and last name
Title
Organization name
Street address
City, state, zip code

Dear Ms./Mr./Dr. Last Name:

Paragraph 1: State why you are writing, how you learned of the organization or position, and basic information about yourself. If you are writing at the suggestion of someone who knows the recipient, say so.

Paragraph 2: Demonstrate your knowledge and interest in the organization, and use specific examples to show how your background and skills qualify you for the position.

Paragraph 3: This paragraph is optional and is recommended for elaborating on particularly relevant or impressive details included in your resume.

Paragraph 4: Indicate that your resume and other supporting materials are enclosed. Reiterate your interest in the position and your desire to meet for an interview. State your plans to follow up via e-mail or phone within a certain period of time and invite the employer to contact you to request additional information. Lastly, thank the employer for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature/name

Enclosure(s)

6. PORTFOLIO

Portfolio is the collection of one's best work samples and experience in an artistic way. It is a great way to describe yourself to a prospective employer and prove your capability. However, a portfolio is not necessarily required for all professionals; for example, a person of an IT field, normally does not need to create a portfolio, but professionals related of fashion technology, architect, photographer, etc. essentially need to create their portfolio.

The Need for Portfolio

Normally, neither will you have the time to filter and explain your all important projects nor an employer will have time to listen to you for long. Therefore, the best way to describe your work experience and achievements is to create a portfolio.

A smartly and artistically created portfolio is a substantial attraction and helps to convince the prospective employer to think about you.

Essentials of Portfolio

Following are some of the important features of a portfolio:

- Properly indexed.

- Information in order.

- Important points highlighted.

- Font and color perfectly matched.

- Only relevant images used and placed properly.

- Compact structure and not bulky.

- Overall balance in look and quality.

Once, you are ready with your job search kit, which includes your resume, cover letter, and portfolio (if required), then the next strategy is to search for the vacancy of your interest.

Where to Search?

There are various sources where you can get the job vacancies; important of them are:

Newspaper Classified & Supplements

Every newspaper has a classified section for jobs. Some newspapers have supplements in which vacancies for jobs are advertised. Such supplements are usually published once a week. Find the day and follow up.

Employment News

Employment news is a weekly/fortnightly/monthly job newspaper. It gives details of all sorts of job vacancies including public/government and private sector jobs.

Internet

There are dozens of job portal websites on the Internet these days; all you need to do is create your profile on some of the popular job portal websites, browse through the jobs, apply and keep your eyes on the email inbox.
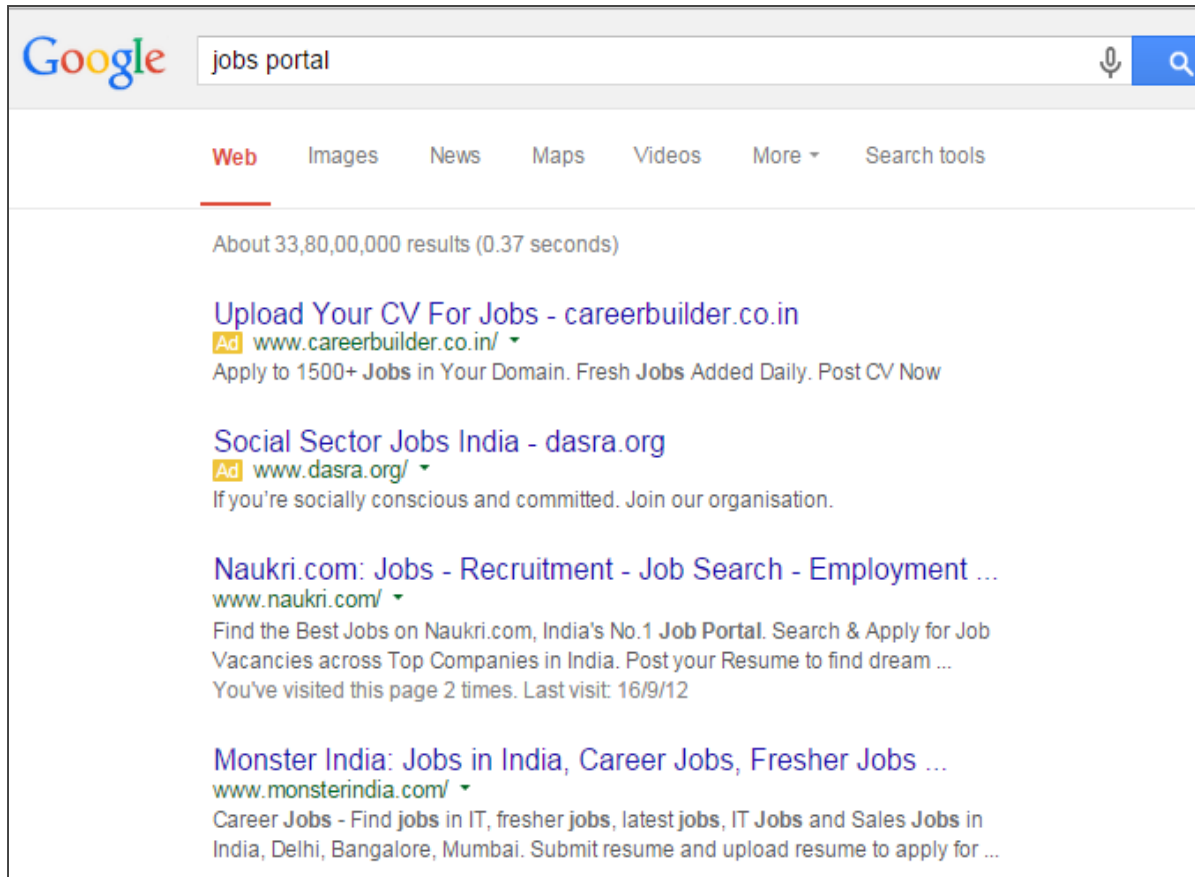
Social Networking Sites

You can build compelling profiles on various social media websites to look for a job of your choice. Earlier, only LinkedIn was thought to be the obvious place to connect for jobs; however, recently this kind of platform is also provided by Facebook, Twitter and Google+.

Friend's Reference

Let friends know that you are hunting for a job. Ask them to let you know if there is any compatible opening in their company.

Make a List of Relevant Companies

Prepare a list of all relevant companies where you think you can fit. Browse through their career section on the website and see if there is any vacancy of your interest.

Consultancy

Contact consultancy agencies and other job support groups with your updated resume.

Now you are at a stage where interview calls keep flowing in. Interviews can be a nerve-wrecking experience for many, so it is always good to be thoroughly prepared to minimize the chances of failure or disappointment.

Preparing for an Interview

You need to make an interview strategy and for this, you need to pay attention to the following points:

Keep Your Documents Ready

Get two photocopies of all the documents that the company has asked for such as your degree certificates, experience certificates, resume, ID proof, photograph, etc.

Research about the Company

Research and read in detail about the company - what is the company all about, what are the services it offers, about its client base, market, annual turnover, employees, etc. Be sure to check on your job role too.

Rehearsal

Before attending the interview, rehearse for two or three times. Check your voice, intonation, diction, etc. Assume probable questions, most likely which can be asked and prepare a balanced answer. This will help you face the actual interview confidently.

Prepare Yourself

Your attire gives the first impression. Dress to impress. Wear formals. Choose colors that make you feel confident. Take care to groom yourself well. Avoid wearing too many accessories and those that are meant for party wear are a complete no-no. Use cologne or perfume sparingly. Last but not the least, always be on time. You can reach the interview venue a little ahead of time schedule but being late for an interview is never advisable.

In the Interview Room

Remember, the key to your success lies in your ability to communicate smartly and reflect a confident appearance. So, in the interview room, you must indicate that you are:

- Relaxed and confident

- Enthusiastic

- Flexible

- Humble

- Eager to face the challenges

- Ready to take risks

- Willing to improve your skills

While Answering the Questions:

- Approach your prospective employer/interviewer with respect.

- Be pleasant and friendly.

- Make a good start.

- Maintain eye contact.

- Do not slouch in your chair. Don't get nervous.

- Remain calm and composed with a smile on your face.

- Show interest that you are always open for a new lesson and ready to learn.

- Answer questions professionally, but honestly. Do not be dishonest or try to mislead.

- Give specific answers and do not answer more than required.

- Use simple language while answering.

- If you don't know the answer to any question, rather than giving false or indirect answer, politely make it clear that you don't know the answer.

- Do not get anxious on any sort of question, rather remain courteous and polite throughout your interview.

- Reply politely even to tricky and irritating questions.

- While leaving, remember to thank the interviewers for the opportunity.

9. EXERCISE

The following exercise will help you identify and develop your professional skills and choices; all you need to do is – read and answer them correctly and honestly.

What are the five values or satisfaction levels important for you?

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2. ....
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3. ....
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4. ....
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5. ....
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Why are these values important to you?

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What are the things that you want to avoid being in a job?

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What is it that you are expecting from your new job?

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What level of opportunity are you looking for (learning, advanced, or money-oriented)?

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What is your plan – are you ready to travel/relocate or do you want a job in a specific location?

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Can you relocate if you get a very good opportunity?

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What is most important for you – salary, location, position, company, or something else (please specify)?

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What are the types of jobs where you can use your strengths?

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Make a list of the companies, which offer such kind of jobs.

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Do you need any training to prepare yourself for the job of your choice?

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What is your backup plan in case a particular job area does not interest you?

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