RESUME PREPARATION

The resume is an integral part of your job search campaign. Its purpose it to get you invited to interviews while carrying your message, highlighting your assets and minimizing your limitations to prospective employers. Today's resumes are accomplishment and achievement oriented. You want the resume to screen you in – not out! It needs to be accurate, descriptive, brief, easy-to-read, graphically pleasant, and word processed.

ANALYZING YOUR SKILLS:

Remember, there are three types of skills, all of which are important to recruiters. Throughout your lifetime, you have been developing functional/transferable skills, work-content skills, and self-management skills. All of these can be quite relevant to you career, even if the experience in which you developed a skill was not relevant. Your resume should reflect all three types of skills:

- **Job Content Skills** are generally expressed as nouns. They are things you know or know about and have studied, practiced, or memorized to learn. Job content skills are abilities that are needed to fulfill specific job responsibilities as determined by the employer and the career field. These skills are generally not transferable to other types of jobs. (Examples of job content skills include knowledge of the properties of materials, speaking German, and knowledge of EPA regulations).
- **Functional/transferable** skills are generally expressed as verbs, as things you can do. Because you have done them successfully in one situation, you should be able to demonstrate to employers that you will be able to do them successfully in another situation, even if it's a totally different type of situation. (Examples include organizing, designing, analyzing, negotiating).
- **Self-management skills** are generally expressed as adjectives or adverbs. Many people think of self-management skills (also referred to as adaptive skills) as traits or qualities because they are usually evident in any aspects of life. (Examples of self-management skills include being dependable, independent, and energetic)

FORMATTING TIPS:

The appearance of the resume is as important as the content. The length depends upon your experience. Most recent graduates should able to incorporate this information on one page. Your use of underlining, white space, bold type, italics and capitalizations will enhance your resume appearance and facilitate its reading.

REMEMBER:

- use a format that best displays your unique background
- be positive in what you say about yourself
- be complete and thorough about relevant information, not vague
- ask others to read your resume and relate to you what they learned about you from it
- try to keep it to one page, unless you have had significant experiences related to your career goals
- use action verbs which clearly describe your skills and experience (supervising, organizing, analyzed, etc.)
- be consistent in use of indentation, <u>underlining</u>, CAPITALIZATION, and spacing

- use a dictionary when in doubt about spelling --mistakes indicate carelessness and a lack of concern
- focus your resume towards particular types of careers
- your resume should be as accurate, neat and complete as possible
- there is absolutely no excuse for spelling or typographical errors!

CHOOSING YOUR RESUME FORMAT:

There is no one right style or format. The right format for you is one that works and gets you an interview. What works for you may be totally unsuitable for someone else. Before examining the resume samples take a moment to remind yourself of the major objective of your resume: to get you interviews. The three most common resume formats are chronological, functional, or a style that combines aspects of both.

- **The Chronological Resume-** This is the most widely accepted format and the one with which employers are most familiar. It also is the easiest to write. Education and jobs are listed in chronological order, starting with most recent (which generally receives the greatest emphasis) and working back through the years.
- **The Functional Resume**- The functional resume is organized to highlight your qualifications with little emphasis on specific dates. You can stress selected skill areas, which are marketable or in demand, within a functional resume, but you are not able to highlight companies or organizations for which you have worked.
- **The Combination Format**- This resume is similar in format to the functional resume. Company names and dates, however, are included in a separate section, usually called "Employment History". It allows you to emphasize your most relevant skills and abilities while also listing the specific jobs you have held.

RESUME CONTENT:

The following are typical categories and/or headings we encourage students to use to organize their resume. Remember that organization and presentation are critical in writing an effective resume.

- **Identification -** This information should go at the very beginning of your resume and includes your name, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail address. Omit information such as marital status, height, weight, age, gender, religion, and national origin.

- **Career or Job Objective -** The objective statement, prominently displayed on your resume, tells the reader a glance what you would like to do. This well-constructed phrase or sentence is a brief description of your goals, specifying the responsibilities and activities you want to assume. At the simplest level, you may choose to state a professional field followed by specialty areas. Your resume content should revolve around supporting this statement. Avoid using words such as "challenging" and "rewarding". Do not start the objective statement with "To obtain…".

- **Education -** In this section, include the degree, starting with most recent degree received, name of university, date of graduation and grade point average. A strong grade point average, 3.5 or higher, should definitely be highlighted on your resume. It is recommended that a GPA of 2.5 or above be included. In addition, any concentration of course work in subjects outside your major field of study should be mentioned. Graduate students should list their thesis topic. Depending on the number, you may choose to include your academic honors in the Education section.

- **Projects/Labs -** Due to the project-based environment at Clarkson, it is critical that you emphasize your projects and lab experience. List your projects, making sure that you use key words such as leader and team, and that you emphasize the process involved including any applications such as the software used.

- **Experience -** Employers are very interested in your past experience and want to know:
  - When and where did you work?
  - What did you do/achieve?
  - What were the results of your efforts?
  - How does this experience support your career (and your candidacy for this position)?

  Explain in detail those job assignments which most effectively qualify you for your stated career objective. If you received successively more responsible assignments, emphasize that growing responsibility. In addition, note any supervisory positions you have held and instances when you were hired.

  If you have experience related to your field you may want to have a special section called Professional or Relevant Experience; other suggested titles include Technical Experience, Business Experience, Research Experience, etc.

  Employers like to know that you have had work experience even though they are not related to your career objective. While detail is not required, part-time or summer work experience can be organized in paragraphs. Example: Summer Jobs 2000-03 included: Cashier, K-Mart, Syracuse, NY; Laborer, Evergreen Nursery, Liverpool, NY; Counter person, Wendy's, Dewitt, NY.

- **Skills/Certifications -** Include any language, technical, computer, laboratory skill or professional certification you have in this section.

- **Extracurricular/Leadership and Community/Volunteer Activities -** These activities can indicate leadership, sociability, and energy level. If you have had little work experience, this may be an especially important section. List activities which demonstrate your campus involvement and your ability to take positions of responsibility. Also include hobbies and athletic interests. Volunteer work in the community is also very favorably looked upon by employers. If you have worked your way through school and that has hampered your chances to participate in extracurricular activities, be sure, at some point in the resume, to point out the percent of educational expenses you earned.

- **Honors/Achievements -** List accomplishments such as Presidential Scholar, Dean's List, scholarships, awards, academic honoraries, etc.

- **Other Information -** You may want to include the following items in your resume:
  - Foreign language ability
  - Military experience
  - Publications, Professional Presentations (PhD resumes should include these items)
  - Patents held
  - Professional associations

- **References and/or Availability –** You may want to indicate that "References are available upon request" or that they are on file at the Career Center. Do not include names and addresses of references in the resume unless a job listing requests them.