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Figure B-1. Corporate Blog. "GM FastLane Blog." <http://fastlane.gmblogs.com>.  
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Figure D-3. Dictionary Entry for "regard." From *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2006 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

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Ninth Edition

# Handbook of Technical Writing

Gerald J. Alred

Charles T. Brusaw

Walter E. Oliu



ST. MARTIN'S PRESS

New York



## restrictive and nonrestrictive elements

Modifying **phrases** and **clauses** may be either restrictive or nonrestrictive. A *nonrestrictive phrase or clause* provides additional information about what it modifies, but it does not restrict the meaning of what it modifies. A nonrestrictive phrase or clause can be removed without changing the essential meaning of the sentence. It is a parenthetical element that is set off by **commas** to show its loose relationship with the rest of the sentence.

**NONRESTRICTIVE** This instrument, *which is called a backscatter gauge*, fires beta particles at an object and counts the particles that bounce back.

A *restrictive phrase or clause* limits, or restricts, the meaning of what it modifies. If it were removed, the essential meaning of the sentence would change. Because a restrictive phrase or clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it is never set off by commas.

**RESTRICTIVE** All employees *wishing to donate blood* may take Thursday afternoon off.

Writers need to distinguish between nonrestrictive and restrictive elements. The same sentence can take on two entirely different meanings depending on whether a modifying element is set off by commas (because it is nonrestrictive) or is not (because it is restrictive). A slip by the writer can not only mislead **readers** but also embarrass the writer.

**MISLEADING** He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members who protested to the Human Resources Department.  
[This suggests that he gave the poor evaluation because the staff members had protested.]

**ACCURATE** He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members, who protested to the Human Resources Department.  
[This suggests that the staff members protested because of the poor evaluation.]

## résumés

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A résumé is the key tool of the **job search** that itemizes your qualifications and serves as a foundation for your **application letter** (often referred to as a *cover letter*). A résumé\* should be limited to one page—or two pages if you have substantial experience. On the basis of the information in the résumé and application letter, prospective employers decide whether to ask you to come in for an interview. If you are invited to an interview, the interviewer can base specific questions on the contents of your résumé. See also **interviewing for a job**.

Because résumés affect a potential employer's first impression, make sure that yours is well organized, carefully designed, consistently

\*A detailed résumé for someone in an academic and a scientific area is often called a *curriculum vitae* (also *vita* or *c.v.*). It may include education, publications, projects, grants, and awards as well as a full work history. Outside the United States, the term *curriculum vitae* is often used to mean *résumé*.



formatted, easy to read, and free of errors. Consider first an organization that highlights your strengths and fits your goals, as suggested by the examples shown in this entry. Experiment to determine a layout and design that is attractive and uncluttered. Consistency is especially important on a résumé. Be sure to use, for example, the same date formats (5/2009 or May 2009), punctuation, and spacing throughout. Proof-reading is essential. Verify the accuracy of the information and have someone else review it. For hard-copy résumés, use a quality printer and high-grade paper.

❏ **ETHICS NOTE** Be truthful. The consequences of giving false information in your résumé are serious. In fact, the truthfulness of your résumé reflects not only on your own ethical stance but also on the integrity with which you would represent the organization. See also ethics in writing. ♦

## Sample Résumés

The sample résumés in this entry are provided to stimulate your thinking about how to tailor your résumé to your own job search. Before you design and write your résumé, look at as many samples as possible and then organize and format your own to best suit your previous experience and your professional goals and to make the most persuasive case to your target employers. See also persuasion.

- Figure R-5 presents a conventional student résumé in which the student is seeking an entry-level position.
- Figure R-6 shows a résumé with a variation of the conventional headings to highlight professional credentials.
- Figure R-7 presents a student résumé with a format that is appropriately nonconventional because this student needs to demonstrate skills in graphic design for his potential audience. This résumé matches the letter in Figure A-9.
- Figure R-8 shows a résumé that focuses on the applicant's management experience. This résumé matches the letter in Figure A-10.
- Figure R-9 focuses on how the applicant advanced and was promoted within a single company.
- Figure R-10 illustrates how an applicant can organize a résumé by combining functional and chronological elements.
- Figure R-11 presents an electronic résumé in ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) format. Notice how this résumé emphasizes keywords so that potential employers searching a database for applicants will be able to find it easily.

## ANA MARÍA LÓPEZ

### CAMPUS ADDRESS

148 University Drive  
Bloomington, Indiana 47405  
(812) 652-4781  
aml@iu.edu

### HOME (after June 2009)

1436 West Schantz Avenue  
Laurel, Pennsylvania 17322  
(717) 399-2712  
aml@yahoo.com

## OBJECTIVE

Position as dental hygienist, with long-term goal of developing a community practice dental service.

## EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene**, expected June 2009  
Indiana University

Licensure: August 2008  
Grade Point Average: 3.88 out of possible 4.0  
Senior Honor Society  
Minor: Management Information Systems

## DENTAL EXPERIENCE

**NORTHPOINT DENTAL ASSOCIATES**, Bloomington, Indiana, 2008  
Dental Assistant, Summer and Fall Quarters  
Developed office and laboratory management system.

**RODRIGUEZ DENTAL ASSOCIATES**, Bloomington, Indiana, 2007  
Dental Assistant Intern

Prepared patients for exams; processed X-rays; maintained patient treatment records.

Associate Editor, *Community Health Newsletter*, 2006-2007

Wrote articles on good dental health practices; researched community health needs for editor; edited submissions.

## COMPUTER SKILLS

Software: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Lotus  
Hardware: Macintosh, IBM-PC  
Medical: Magnus Patient Database System, Dentrix

## REFERENCES

Available on request.

FIGURE R-5. Student Résumé (for an Entry-Level Position)



## CHRIS RENAULT, RN

3785 Raleigh Court, #46 • Phoenix, AZ 67903 •  
(555) 467-1115 • chris@resumepower.com

### Qualifications

- Recent Honors Graduate of Approved Nursing Program
- Current Arizona Nursing Licensure and BLS Certification
- Presently Completing Clinical Nurse Internship Program

### Education & Licensure

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Tempe, AZ  
**Bachelor of Science in Nursing  
(BSN), 2009**  
Graduated summa cum laude  
(GPA: 4.0)

MOHAVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Kingman, AZ  
**Associate Degree in Nursing (AN),  
2007**  
Graduated cum laude (GPA: 3.5)

**Coursework Highlights:** Family and Community Nursing, Health-Care Delivery Models, Health Assessment, Pathology, Microbiology, Nursing Research, Nursing of Older Adults, Health-Care Ethics

**Arizona RN License, 2009**  
**BLS Certification, 2009**

### Clinical Internship

CAMELBACK MEDICAL CENTER — Phoenix, AZ  
**Nurse Intern, 2008 to Present**

- Accepted into new graduate RN training program and completing in-depth, eight-month rotation working under a trained preceptor.
- Gaining valuable clinical experience to assume the role of a professional nurse within an acute-care setting. Rotating through all medical center areas, including Postsurgical, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Oncology, Emergency Department, Psychiatric Nursing, Cardiac Telemetry, and Critical Care.
- Developing speed and skill in the day-to-day functions of a staff nurse. Participating in patient assessment, treatment, medication disbursement, and surgical preparation as a member of the health-care team.
- Earned written commendations from preceptor for "excellent ability to interact with patients and their families, showing a high degree of empathy, medical knowledge, and concern for quality and continuity of patient care."

### Community Involvement

**Active Volunteer and Fundraising Coordinator,** The American Cancer Society — Scottsdale, AZ, Chapter (2007 to Present)  
**Participant,** Annual AIDS Walkathon (2004 to 2007) and "Find the Cure" Breast Cancer Awareness Marathon (2006, 2007)

FIGURE R-6. Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc.



Joshua S. Goodman  
222 Morewood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
cell: 412-555-1212  
jgoodman@aol.com

### OBJECTIVE

A position as a graphic designer with responsibilities in information design, packaging, and media presentations.

### GRAPHIC DESIGN EXPERIENCE

**Assistant Designer • Dyer/Khan,  
Los Angeles, California**  
**Summer 2007, Summer 2008**

Assistant Designer in a versatile design studio. Responsible for design, layout, comps, mechanicals, and project management.

*Clients: Paramount Pictures, Mattel Electronics, and Motown Records.*

**Photo Editor • Paramount Pictures  
Corporation, Los Angeles, California**  
**Summer 2006**

Photo Editor for merchandising department. Established art files for movie and television properties. Edited images used in merchandising. Maintained archive and database.

**Production Assistant • Grafis,  
Los Angeles, California**  
**Summer 2005**

Production assistant at fast-paced design firm. Assisted with comps, mechanicals, and miscellaneous studio work.

*Clients: ABC Television, A&M Records, and Ortho Products Division.*

### EDUCATION

**Carnegie Mellon University,  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**  
**BFA in Graphic Design —  
May 2009**

*Graphic Design  
Corporate Identity  
Industrial Design  
Graphic Imaging Processes  
Color Theory  
Computer Graphics  
Typography  
Serigraphy  
Photography  
Video Production*

### COMPUTER SKILLS

XML, HTML, JavaScript,  
Forms, Macromedia  
Dreamweaver, Macromedia  
Flash Professional, Photo-  
shop, Illustrator, Image Ready  
(Animated GIFs), CorelDRAW,  
DeepPaint, iGrafx Designer,  
MapEdit (Image Mapping),  
Scanning, Microsoft Access/  
Excel, QuarkXPress.

### ACTIVITIES

Member, Pittsburgh  
Graphic Design Society;  
Member, The Design  
Group.

FIGURE R-7. Student Résumé (for a Graphic Design Job)



**ROBERT MANDILLO**  
7761 Shalamar Drive  
Dayton, Ohio 45424  
(937) 255-4137  
mand@juno.com

## OBJECTIVE

A management position in the aerospace industry with responsibility for developing new designs and products.

## MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

MANAGER, EXHIBIT DESIGN LAB—May 2002–Present  
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio

Supervise 11 technicians in support of engineering exhibit design and production. Develop, evaluate, and improve materials and equipment for the design and construction of exhibits. Write specifications, negotiate with vendors, and initiate procurement activities for exhibit design support.

SUPERVISOR, GRAPHICS ILLUSTRATORS—June 1999–April 2002  
Henderson Advertising Agency, Cincinnati, Ohio

Supervised five illustrators and four drafting mechanics after promotion from Graphics Technician. Analyzed and approved work-order requirements. Selected appropriate media and techniques for orders. Rendered illustrations in pencil and ink. Converted department to CAD system.

## EDUCATION

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, 2008  
University of Dayton, Ohio

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY, 1989  
Edison State College, Wooster, Ohio

ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE IN MECHANICAL DRAFTING, 1987  
Wooster Community College, Wooster, Ohio

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

National Association of Mechanical Engineers

## REFERENCES / WEB SITE

References, letters of recommendation, and a portfolio of original designs and drawings available online at <www.juno.com/mand>.

**CAROL ANN WALKER**  
1436 West Schantz Avenue  
Laurel, Pennsylvania 17322  
(717) 399-2712  
caw@yahoo.com

## FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE

KERFHEIMER CORPORATION, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Senior Financial Analyst*, June 2004–Present  
Report to Senior Vice President for Corporate Financial Planning. Develop manufacturing cost estimates totaling \$30 million annually for mining and construction equipment with Department of Defense.

*Financial Analyst*, November 2001–June 2004  
Developed \$50-million funding estimates for major Department of Defense contracts for troop carriers and digging and earth-moving machines. Researched funding options, resulting in savings of \$1.2 million.

FIRST BANK, INC., Bloomington, Indiana

*Planning Analyst*, September 1996–November 2001  
Developed successful computer models for short- and long-range planning.

## EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Finance: expected, June 2009  
The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

M.S. in Business Administration, 2000  
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee  
“Executive Curriculum” for employees identified as promising by their employers.

B.S. in Business Administration (*magna cum laude*), 1996  
Indiana University  
Emphasis: Finance      Minor: Professional Writing

## PUBLISHING AND MEMBERSHIP

Published “Developing Computer Models for Financial Planning,” *Midwest Finance Journal* 34.2 (2006): 126–36.

Association for Corporate Financial Planning, Senior Member.

## REFERENCES

References and a portfolio of financial plans are available on request.

FIGURE R-8. Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience)

FIGURE R-9. Advanced Résumé (Showing Promotion Within a Single Company)



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CAROL ANN WALKER

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1436 West Schantz Avenue • Laurel, PA 17322  
(717) 399-2712 • caw@yahoo.com

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**Award-Winning Senior Financial Analyst**

*Astute senior analyst and corporate financial planner with 11 years of experience and proven success enhancing P&L scenarios by millions of dollars. Demonstrated ability to apply critical thinking and sound strategic/economic analysis to multidimensional business issues. Advanced computer skills include Hyperion, SQL, MS Office, and Crystal Reports.*

**Financial Analyst of the Year, 2007**

*Recipient of prestigious national award from the Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR)*

**Areas of Expertise**

- Financial Analysis & Planning
- Forecasting & Trend Projection
- Trend/Variance Analysis
- Comparative Analysis
- Expense Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- SEC & Financial Reporting
- Risk Assessment

**Career Progression**

KERFHEIMER CORPORATION — Philadelphia, PA 2001 to Present

Senior Financial Analyst, June 2004 to Present

Financial Analyst, November 2001 to June 2004

Rapidly promoted to lead team of 15 analysts in the management of financial/SEC reporting and analysis for publicly traded, \$2.3-billion company. Develop financial/statistical models used to project and maximize corporate financial performance. Support nationwide sales team by providing financial metrics, trends, and forecasts.

**Key Accomplishments:**

- Developed long-range funding requirements crucial to firm's subsequent capture of \$1 billion in government and military contracts.
- Facilitated a 45% decrease in company's long-term debt during several major building expansions through personally developed computer models for capital acquisition.
- Jointly led large-scale systems conversion to Hyperion, including personal upload of database in Essbase. Completed conversion without interrupting business operations.

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CAROL ANN WALKER

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Résumé • Page Two

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**Career Progression (continued)**

FIRST BANK, INC. — Bloomington, IN

1996 to 2001

Planning Analyst, September 1996 to November 2001

Compiled and distributed weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual closings/financial reports, analyzing information for presentation to senior management. Prepared depreciation forecasts, actual-vs.-projected financial statements, key-matrix reports, tax-reporting packages, auditor packages, and balance-sheet reviews.

**Key Accomplishments:**

- Devised strategies to acquire over \$1 billion at 3% below market rate.
- Analyzed financial performance for consistency to plans and forecasts, investigated trends and variances, and alerted senior management to areas requiring action.
- Achieved an average 23% return on all personally recommended investments. Applied critical thinking and sound financial and strategic analysis in all funding options research.

**Education**

THE WHARTON SCHOOL of the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
(Philadelphia)

Ph.D. in Finance Candidate, Expected June 2009

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—MILWAUKEE

M.S. in Business Administration, May 2000

INDIANA UNIVERSITY (Bloomington)

B.S. in Business Administration, Emphasis in Finance  
(*magna cum laude*), May 1996

**Affiliations**

- Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR), Member, 2003 to Present
- Association for Corporate Financial Planning (ACFP), Senior Member, 2001 to Present

Portfolio of Financial Plans Available on Request  
(717) 399-2712 • caw@yahoo.com

FIGURE R-10. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc.

FIGURE R-10. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) (continued)



DAVID B. EDWARDS  
6819 Locustview Drive  
Topeka, Kansas 66614  
(913) 233-1552  
dedwards@cpu.fairview.edu

#### JOB OBJECTIVE

Programmer with writing, editing, and training responsibilities, leading to a career in information design management.

#### KEYWORDS

Programmer, Operating Systems, Unipro, Newsletter, Graphics, Listserv, Professional Writer, Editor, Trainer, Instructor, Technical Writer, Tutor, Designer, Manager, Information Design.

#### EDUCATION

\*\* Fairview Community College, Topeka, Kansas  
\*\* Associate's Degree, Computer Science, June 2006  
\*\* Dean's Honor List Award (six quarters)

#### RELEVANT COURSE WORK

\*\* Operating Systems Design  
\*\* Database Management  
\*\* Introduction to Cybernetics  
\*\* Technical Writing

#### EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

\*\* Computer Consultant: September 2006 to Present  
Fairview Community College Computer Center: Advised and trained novice users; wrote and maintained Unipro operating system documentation.  
\*\* Tutor: January 2005 to June 2006  
Fairview Community College: Assisted students in mathematics and computer programming.

#### SKILLS AND ACTIVITIES

\*\* Unipro Operating System: Thorough knowledge of word-processing, text-editing, and file-formatting programs.  
\*\* Writing and Editing Skills: Experience in documenting computer programs for beginning programmers and users.  
\*\* Fairview Community Microcomputer Users Group: Cofounder and editor of monthly newsletter ("Compuclub"); listserv manager.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

\*\* References, college transcripts, a portfolio of computer programs, and writing samples available on request.

For more examples of résumés with helpful annotations, see [bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech](http://bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech) and select *Model Documents Gallery*.

## Analyzing Your Background

In preparing to write your résumé, determine what kind of job you are seeking. Then ask yourself what information about you and your background would be most important to a prospective employer. List the following:

- Schools you attended, degrees you hold, your major field of study, academic honors you were awarded, your grade point average, particular academic projects that reflect your best work
- Jobs you have held, your principal and secondary duties in each job, when and how long you held each job, promotions, skills you developed in your jobs that potential employers value and seek in ideal job candidates, projects or accomplishments that reflect your important contributions
- Other experiences and skills you have developed that would be of value in the kind of job you are seeking; extracurricular activities that have contributed to your learning experience; leadership, interpersonal, and communication skills you have developed; any collaborative work you have performed; computer skills you have acquired

Use this information to brainstorm any further key details. Then, based on all the details, decide which to include in your résumé and how you can most effectively present your qualifications.

## Organizing Your Résumé (Sections)

A number of different organizational patterns can be used effectively. The following sections are typical—which you choose should depend on your experience and goals, the employer's needs, and any standard practices in your profession.

- Heading (name and contact information)
- Job Objective
- Qualifications Summary
- Education
- Employment Experience

FIGURE R-11. Electronic Résumé (in ASCII Format)



- Related Skills and Abilities
- Honors and Activities
- References and Portfolios

Whether you place “education” before “employment experience” depends on the job you are seeking and on which credentials would strengthen your résumé the most. If you are a recent graduate without much work experience, list education first. If you have years of job experience, including jobs directly related to the kind of position you are seeking, list employment experience first. In your education and employment sections, use a reverse chronological sequence: List the most recent experience first, the next most recent experience second, and so on.

**Heading.** At the top of your résumé, include your name, address, telephone number (home or cell), and a professional e-mail address.\* Make sure that your name stands out on the page. If you have both a school address and a permanent home address, place your school address on the left side of the page and your permanent home address on the right side of the page. Place both underneath your name, as shown in Figure R-5. Indicate the dates you can be reached at each address (but do not date the résumé itself).

**Job Objective.** Some potential employers prefer to see a clear employment objective in résumés. An objective introduces the material in a résumé and helps the reader quickly understand your goal. If you decide to include an objective, use a heading such as “Objective,” “Employment Objective,” “Career Objective,” or “Job Objective.” State your immediate goal and, if you know that it will give you an advantage, the direction you hope your career will take. Try to write your objective in no more than three lines, and tailor it to the specific job for which you are applying, as illustrated in the following examples:

- A full-time computer-science position aimed at solving engineering problems and contributing to a management team.
- A position involving meeting the concerns of women, such as family planning, career counseling, or crisis management.
- Full-time management of a high-quality local restaurant.
- A summer research or programming position providing opportunities to use software-development and software-debugging skills.

\*Do not use a clever or hobby-related e-mail address in employment correspondence; e-mail addresses that are based on your last name work well.

**Qualifications Summary.** You may wish to include a brief summary of your qualifications to persuade hiring managers to select you for an interview. Sometimes called a *summary statement* or *career summary*, a qualifications summary can include skills, achievements, experience, or personal qualities that make you especially well suited to the position. You may wish to give this section a heading such as “Profile,” “Career Highlights,” or simply “Qualifications.” Or you may use a headline, as shown on the first page of the résumé in Figure R-10 (“Award-Winning Senior Financial Analyst”).

**Education.** List the school(s) you have attended, the degree(s) you received and the dates you received them, your major field(s) of study, and any academic honors you have earned. Include your grade point average only if it is 3.0 or higher—or include your average in your major if that is more impressive. List courses only if they are unusually impressive or if your résumé is otherwise sparse (see Figures R-6 and R-7). Consider including the skills developed or projects completed in your course work. Mention your high school only if you want to call attention to special high school achievements, awards, projects, programs, internships, or study abroad.

**Employment Experience.** Organize your employment experience in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent job and working backward under a single major heading called “Experience,” “Employment,” “Professional Experience,” or the like. You could also organize your experience functionally by clustering similar types of jobs into one or several sections with specific headings such as “Management Experience” or “Major Accomplishments.”

One type of arrangement might be more persuasive than the other, depending on the situation. For example, if you are applying for an accounting job but have no specific background in accounting, you would probably do best to list past and present jobs in chronological order, from most to least recent. If you are applying for a supervisory position and have had three supervisory jobs in addition to two nonsupervisory positions, you might choose to create a single section called “Supervisory Experience” and list only your three supervisory jobs. Or you could create two sections—“Supervisory Experience” and “Other Experience”—and include the three supervisory jobs in the first section and the nonsupervisory jobs in the second section.

The functional résumé groups work experience by types of workplace activities or skills rather than by jobs in chronological order. However, many employers are suspicious of functional résumés because they can be used to hide a poor work history, such as excessive job hopping or extended employment gaps. Functional elements can be



combined with a chronological arrangement by using a qualifications summary or skills section, as shown in Figure R-10.

In general, follow these conventions when working on the “Experience” section of your résumé.

- Include jobs or internships when they relate directly to the position you are seeking. Although some applicants choose to omit internships and temporary or part-time jobs, including such experiences can make a résumé more persuasive if they have helped you develop specific related skills.
- Include extracurricular experiences, such as taking on a leadership position in a college organization or directing a community-service project, if they demonstrate that you have developed skills valued by potential employers.
- List military service as a job; give the dates served, the duty specialty, and the rank at discharge. Discuss military duties if they relate to the job you are seeking.
- For each job or experience, list both the job and company titles. Throughout each section, consistently begin with either the job or the company title, depending on which will likely be more impressive to potential employers.
- Under each job or experience, provide a concise description of your primary and secondary duties. If a job is not directly relevant, provide only a job title and a brief description of duties that helped you develop skills valued in the position you are seeking. For example, if you were a lifeguard and now seek a management position, focus on supervisory experience or even experience in averting disaster to highlight your management, decision-making, and crisis-control skills.
- Focus as much as possible on your achievements in your work history (“Increased employee retention rate by 16 percent by developing a training program”). Employers want to hire doers and achievers.
- Use action verbs (for example, “managed” rather than “as the manager”) and state ideas succinctly, as shown in Figure R-8. Even though the résumé is about you, do not use “I” (for example, instead of “I was promoted to Section Leader,” use “Promoted to Section Leader”). For electronic résumés that will be scanned for keywords, however, replace such verbs with nouns (instead of “managed” use *manager*, as in Figure R-11).

**Related Skills and Abilities.** Employers are interested in hiring applicants with a variety of skills or the ability to learn new ones quickly. Depending on the position, you might list in a skills section items such

as fluency in foreign languages, writing and editing abilities, specialized technical knowledge, or computer skills (including knowledge of specific languages, software, and hardware).

**Honors and Activities.** If you have room on your résumé, list any honors and unique activities near the end. Include items such as student or community activities, professional or club memberships, awards received, and published works. Be selective: Do not duplicate information given in other categories, and include only information that supports your employment objective. Provide a heading for this section that fits its contents, such as “Activities,” “Honors,” “Professional Affiliations,” or “Publications and Memberships.”

**References and Portfolios.** Avoid listing references unless that is standard practice in your profession or your résumé is sparse. If you create a separate list of references for prospective employers, you can include a phrase such as “References available on request” to signal the end of a résumé, or write “Available on request” after the heading “References” as a design element to balance a page. Always seek permission from anyone you list as a reference.

A portfolio is a collection of samples in a binder or on the Web of your most impressive work and accomplishments. The portfolio can include successful documents you have written, articles, letters of praise from employers, and copies of awards and certificates. If you have developed a portfolio, you could also include the phrase “Portfolio available on request.” If portfolios are standard in your profession, you might even include a small section that lists the contents of your portfolio.

## Salary and Advice for Returning Job Seekers

**Salary.** Avoid listing the salary you desire in the résumé. On the one hand, you may price yourself out of a job you want if the salary you list is higher than a potential employer is willing to pay. On the other hand, if you list a low salary, you may not get the best possible offer. See salary negotiations.

**Returning Job Seekers.** If you are returning to the workplace after an absence, most career experts say that it is important to acknowledge the gap in your career. That is particularly true if, for example, you are reentering the workforce because you have devoted a full-time period to care for children or dependent adults. Do not undervalue such work. Although unpaid, it often provides experience that develops important time-management, problem-solving, organizational, and interpersonal skills. Although gaps in employment can be explained in the application letter, the following examples illustrate how you might reflect such



experiences in a résumé. They would be especially appropriate for an applicant seeking employment in a field related to child or health care.

► **Primary Child-Care Provider, 2006 to 2008**

Provided full-time care to three preschool children at home. Instructed in beginning academic skills, time management, basics of nutrition, arts, and swimming. Organized activities, managed household, and served as neighborhood-watch captain.

► **Home Caregiver, 2006 to 2008**

Provided 60 hours per week in-home care to Alzheimer's patient. Coordinated medical care, developed exercise programs, completed and processed complex medical forms, administered medications, organized budget, and managed home environment.

If you have performed volunteer work during such a period, list that experience. Volunteer work often results in the same experience as does full-time, paid work, a fact that your résumé should reflect, as in the following example.

► **School Association Coordinator, 2006 to 2008**

Managed special activities of the Briarwood High School Parent-Teacher Association. Planned and coordinated meetings, scheduled events, and supervised fund-drive operations. Raised \$70,000 toward refurbishing the school auditorium.

## Electronic Résumés

In addition to the traditional paper résumé, you can post a Web-based résumé. You may also need to submit a scannable, plain-text résumé through e-mail or an online form to a potential employer to be included in an organization's database. As Internet and database technologies converge, remain current with the forms and protocols that employers prefer by reviewing popular job-search sites, such as HotJobs at <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com> and Monster.com at [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com).

**Web Résumés.** If you plan to post your résumé on your own Web site, keep the following points in mind.

- Follow the general advice for **Web design**, such as viewing your résumé on several browsers to see how it looks.
- Just below your name, you may wish to provide a series of internal page links to such important categories as "experience" and "education."
- Consider building a multipage site for displaying a work portfolio, publications, reference letters, and other related materials.
- If privacy is an issue, include an e-mail link ("mailto") at the top of the résumé rather than your home address and phone number.

The disadvantage of posting a résumé at your own Web site is that you must attract the attention of employers on your own. For that reason, commercial services may be a better option because they can attract recruiters with their large databases.

**Scannable and Plain-Text Résumés.** A scannable résumé is normally mailed to an employer in paper form, scanned, and downloaded into a company's searchable database. Such a résumé can be well formatted, but it should not contain decorative fonts, underlining, shading, letters that touch each other, and other features that will not scan easily. Scan such a résumé yourself to make sure there are no problems.

Some employers request ASCII or plain-text résumés via e-mail, which can be added directly into the résumé database without scanning. The ASCII résumés also allow employers to read the file no matter what type of software they are using. You can copy and paste such a résumé directly into the body of the e-mail message.

### DIGITAL TIP

#### Preparing an ASCII Résumé

When preparing an ASCII document, proper formatting is critical. For example, you need to insert manual line breaks at 65 characters to prevent long, single lines when the documents are opened in various systems. Further, many word-processing elements such as bullets, underlining, and boldface are incompatible with ASCII, which is limited to letters, numbers, and basic punctuation. For more on this topic, see [bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech](http://bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech) and select *Digital Tips*, "Preparing an ASCII Résumé."

For résumés that will be downloaded into databases, it is better to use nouns than verbs to describe experience and skills (*designer* and *management* rather than *designed* and *managed*). You may also include a section in such a résumé titled "Keywords" (or perhaps give a descriptive name, such as "Areas of Expertise"). Keywords, also called *descriptors*, allow potential employers to search the database for qualified candidates. So be sure to use keywords that are the same as those used in the employer's descriptions of the jobs that best match your interests and qualifications. This section can follow the main heading or appear near the end of your résumé. Figure R-11 is an example of an electronic résumé that demonstrates the use of keywords.

**E-mail-Attached Résumés.** An employer may request, or you may prefer to submit, a résumé as an e-mail attachment to be printed out by the employer. If so, consider using a relatively plain design and sending the résumé as a rich text format (.rtf) document. Or, if precise design is



important, send the résumé as a portable document format (PDF) file that will preserve the fonts, images, graphics, and layout. You can attach this file to an e-mail message that will then serve as your **application letter**. See *Digital Tip: Using PDF Files* on page 574.

## revision

When you revise your draft, read and evaluate it primarily from the point of view of your **audience**. In fact, revising requires a different frame of mind than **writing a draft**. To achieve that frame of mind, experienced writers have developed the following tactics:

- Allow a “cooling period” between writing the draft and revision in order to evaluate the draft objectively.
- Print out your draft and mark up the paper copy; it is often difficult to revise on-screen.
- Read your draft aloud—often, hearing the text will enable you to spot problem areas that need improvement.
- Revise in passes by reading through your draft several times, each time searching for and correcting a different set of problems.

When you can no longer spot improvements, you may wish to give the draft to a colleague for review—especially for projects that are crucial for you or your organization as well as for collaborative projects, as described in **collaborative writing**.

### WRITER'S CHECKLIST Revising Your Draft

- ✓ **Completeness.** Does the document achieve its primary **purpose**? Will it fulfill the readers' needs? Your writing should give readers exactly what they need but not overwhelm them.
- ✓ **Appropriate introduction and conclusion.** Check to see that your **introduction** frames the rest of the document and your **conclusion** ties the main ideas together. Both should account for revisions to the content of the document.
- ✓ **Accuracy.** Look for any inaccuracies that may have crept into your draft.
- ✓ **Unity and coherence.** Check to see that sentences and ideas are closely tied together (**coherence**) and contribute directly to the main idea expressed in the topic sentence of each **paragraph** (see **unity**). Provide **transitions** where they are missing and strengthen those that are weak.

### Writer's Checklist: Revising Your Draft (continued)

- ✓ **Consistency.** Make sure that **layout and design**, **visuals**, and use of language are consistent. Do not call the same item by one term on one page and a different term on another page.
- ✓ **Conciseness.** Tighten your writing so that it says exactly what you mean. Prune unnecessary words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs. See **conciseness**.
- ✓ **Awkwardness.** Look for **awkwardness** in **sentence construction**—especially any **garbled sentences**.
- ✓ **Ethical writing.** Check for **ethics in writing** and eliminate **biased language**.
- ✓ **Active voice.** Use the active **voice** unless the passive voice is more appropriate.
- ✓ **Word choice.** Delete or replace **vague words** and unnecessary **intensifiers**. Check for **affectation** and unclear **pronoun references**. See also **word choice**.
- ✓ **Jargon.** If you have any doubt that all your readers will understand any **jargon** or special terms you have used, eliminate or define them.
- ✓ **Clichés.** Replace **clichés** with fresh **figures of speech** or direct statements.
- ✓ **Grammar.** Check your draft for grammatical errors. Use computer **grammar** checkers with caution. Because they are not always accurate, treat their recommendations only as *suggestions*.
- ✓ **Typographical errors.** Check your final draft for typographical errors both with your spell checker and with thorough **proofreading** because spell checkers do not catch all errors.
- ✓ **Wordy phrases.** Use the search-and-replace command to find and revise wordy phrases, such as *that is*, *there are*, *the fact that*, and *to be*, and unnecessary helping **verbs** such as *will*.

### DIGITAL TIP

#### Incorporating Tracked Changes

When colleagues review your document, they can track changes and insert comments within the document itself. Tracking and commenting vary with types and versions of word-processing programs, but in most programs you can view the tracked changes on a single draft or review the multiple drafts of your reviewers' versions. For more on this topic, see [bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech](http://bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech) and select *Digital Tips*, “Tracked Changes.”



## rhetical questions

A rhetorical question is a question to which a specific answer is neither needed nor expected. The question is often intended to make an audience think about the subject from a different perspective; the writer or speaker then answers the question in an article or a presentation. The answer to a rhetorical question such as “Is space exploration worth the cost?” may not be a simple yes or no; it might be a detailed explanation of the pros and cons of the value of space exploration.

The rhetorical question can be used as an effective title or opening, especially in newsletter articles, brochures, or even blogs. However, it should be used judiciously in other, more formal documents. A rhetorical question, for example, would not be appropriate for the title of a report or an e-mail addressed to a manager who needs to quickly understand the subject and purpose of the document or message.

## run-on sentences

A run-on sentence, sometimes called a *fused sentence*, is two or more sentences without punctuation to separate them. The term is also sometimes applied to a pair of independent clauses separated by only a comma, although this variation is usually called a comma splice. See also sentence construction and sentence faults.

Run-on sentences can be corrected, as shown in the following examples, by (1) making two sentences, (2) joining the two clauses with a semicolon (if they are closely related), (3) joining the two clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction, or (4) subordinating one clause to the other.

- R
- ▶ The client suggested several solutions <sup>Some</sup> some are impractical.
  - ▶ The client suggested several solution <sup>;</sup> some are impractical.
  - ▶ The client suggested several solutions <sup>, but</sup> some are impractical.
  - ▶ The client suggested several solutions <sup>, although</sup> some are impractical.

## salary negotiations

Salary negotiations usually take place either at the end of an interview or after a formal job offer has been made. If possible, delay discussing salary until after you receive a formal written job offer because you will have more negotiating leverage at that point. See also job search.

Before interviewing for a job, prepare for possible salary negotiations by researching the following:

- The current range of salaries for the work you hope to do at your level (entry? intermediate? advanced?) in your region of the country. Check trade journals and organizations in your field, or ask a reference librarian for help in finding this information. Job listings that include salary can also be helpful.
- Salaries made by last year's graduates from your college or university at your level and in your line of work. Your campus career-development office should have these figures.
- Salaries made by people you know at your level and in your line of work. Attend local organizational meetings in your field or contact officers of local organizations who might have this information or steer you to useful contacts.

If a potential employer requests your salary requirements with your résumé, consider your options carefully. If you provide a salary that is too high, the company might never interview you; if you provide a salary that is too low, you may have no opportunity later in the hiring process to negotiate for a higher salary. However, if you fail to follow the potential employer's directions and omit the requested information, an employer may disqualify you on principle. If you choose to provide salary requirements, always do so in a range (for example, \$35,000 to \$40,000). See also application letters.

If an interviewer asks your salary requirements toward the end of the job interview, you can try the following strategies to delay salary negotiations:

- Say something like, “I am sure that this company pays a fair salary for a person with my level of experience and qualifications” or “I am ready to consider your best offer.”



## DIGITAL TIP

### Using PDF Files

Converting documents such as reports, articles, and brochures to PDF files allows you to retain the identical look of the printed documents. The PDF pages will display on-screen exactly as they appear on the printed page. Readers can read the document online, download and save it, or print it in whole or in part. For more on this topic, see [bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech](http://bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech) and select *Digital Tips*, "Using PDF Files."

## "you" viewpoint

The "you" viewpoint places the reader's interest and perspective foremost. It is based on the principle that most readers are naturally more concerned about their own needs than they are about those of a writer or a writer's organization. See **audience**.

The "you" viewpoint often, but not always, means using the words *you* and *your* rather than *we*, *our*, *I*, and *mine*. Consider the following sentence that focuses on the needs of the writer and organization (*we*) rather than on those of the reader.

- ▶ *We must receive your signed invoice before we can process your payment.*

Even though the sentence uses *your* twice, the words in italics suggest that the **point of view** centers on the writer's need to receive the invoice in order to process the payment. Consider the following revision, written with the "you" viewpoint.

- ▶ *So you can receive your payment promptly, please send your signed invoice.*

Because the benefit to the reader is stressed, the writer is more likely to motivate the reader to act. See also **persuasion**.

In some instances, as suggested earlier, you may need to avoid using the **pronouns** *you* and *your* to achieve a positive **tone** and maintain goodwill. Notice how the first of the following examples (with *your*) seems to accuse the reader. But the second (without *your*) uses **positive writing** to emphasize a goal that reader and writer share—meeting a client's needs.

ACCUSATORY	<i>Your</i> budget makes no allowance for setup costs.
POSITIVE	The budget should include an allowance for setup costs to meet all the concerns of our client.

As this example illustrates, the "you" viewpoint means more than using particular pronouns or adopting a particular writing **style**. By placing the readers' interests at the center, you can achieve your **purpose** not