

Building Your Résumé Package

Before employers decide to meet you, they first view your application materials. Traditionally, the set of application materials is referred to as a résumé package, which includes a résumé and a cover letter. Although many employers only allow online applications, which may not require a résumé and/or cover letter, every job seeker needs to create a formal résumé and cover letter. This information is used as a foundation for information an employer will require in the application process. The creation of a quality résumé package provides a job seeker with personalized, concise, and accurate information that can be used in any job search situation.

Your résumé package needs to efficiently and effectively sell your skills and communicate how your attributes are unique compared to all other candidates vying for your target job. A **résumé** is a formal written profile that presents a person's knowledge, skills, and abilities to potential employers. Your résumé is an important job search tool that should be created in advance of a job search and continually updated throughout your career. Even if you are not currently searching for a new job, a time will come when a current résumé is needed. Do not wait until that time to create or update your résumé. Continually add new job skills, accomplishments, and experiences to your résumé.

When you begin to create your résumé, you will quickly discover that there are various types of résumés and résumé formats. You may also receive conflicting advice as to how the perfect résumé should look and what it should include. The appropriate type of résumé used depends on your work experience, education, and other factors. A well-written résumé makes it easy for potential employers to quickly and easily identify your skills and qualifications that make you the right choice for the job.

This chapter will present the tools for creating a professional résumé and cover letter. As you go through the process of constructing your résumé package, make every word sell your skills and career accomplishments. Your résumé package represents you. Therefore, be honest with the information you provide and display character by not lying or embellishing the truth. There are five steps toward building a winning résumé:

1. Gathering Information
2. Creating an Information Heading and Utilizing Proper Layout
3. Writing a Skills Summary or Personal Profile
4. Inserting Skills, Accomplishments, and Experience
5. Reviewing the Completed Résumé

Step One: Gathering Information

The first step in building a résumé is to create a draft document with key headings. This involves collecting and merging all relevant information into one document. Begin identifying and listing the following information into an electronic document:

1. *Education.* List schools, degrees, certificates, credentials, GPA, licenses, and other relevant education-related information, including military experience. Include dates with each entry.