



Great Basin Federal Credit Union's Guide to Help You Through the Job Search, Resume Writing, and Interviewing Process.

Cover Letter Tips

- If the name of the interviewer is available, use it! It may take some research on the company's website but if you can find a name it will make your cover letter stand out from the crowd.
- Customize your cover letter to the company that you are applying to. You can include something that you like about their company so it will show that you are doing your homework and visiting their website before applying. Interviewers appreciate when the candidate already knows a little about the company and it shows motivation on your part.
- Do not restate items on your resume in your cover letter.
- This is your opportunity to say things about yourself that may not belong on your resume. It is also your opportunity to show off your personality and show enthusiasm for the position. Employers are looking for people who are eager to work for their company, not just looking for a job to have a job.
- Do not use simplifiers like, "although I may not have the experience that you are looking for, I am..." Be confident about yourself and start with "I am..."
- Be assertive when asking for a chance to interview. Tell the reader that you want to arrange for an interview; do not be passive with phrases such as, "if you would like to meet with me" or "should you find my qualifications acceptable." Passive phrases may tell the reader that you may be hesitant about your own qualifications for the position and they may also work against you if the position requires assertiveness.

Resume Tips

- No matter how good you think your resume is, go online and do some research. Look at different styles, different ways to word things, and different layouts.
- Your resume should sell yourself. Instead of listing job duties which may end up sounding like a job description, list your accomplishments, any accolades you may have received, and anything else you may have that showed you were going the extra mile. This is your chance to brag about yourself! For example, instead of listing “data entry,” list “used Microsoft Excel to enter up to 300 lines per day with 100% accuracy.” Try to quantify your accomplishments if possible.
- Get to the point when describing you. Instead of writing a paragraph describing your job duties, write short power sentences about yourself like the statement for “data entry” above.
- Do not be so succinct that the reader of the resume has to guess at the details. For example, if you list “organized work station” include how you did it and for “answered phones” include how many lines and what volume of calls you experienced. This will help the reader of your resume get a better picture of your previous experience and your skills.
- Double and triple check for spelling and grammatical errors that may not be detected by your software. Errors of these types will degrade even the best of resumes.
- Make sure your resume is easy to read. Format your resume so different sections stand out, each job position stands out, and so that nothing blends together in an incoherent fashion. If your resume isn’t easily readable, chances are that it won’t be read. Choose a simple font and don’t overuse lines and other graphics. Background colors or colored fonts look unprofessional so stay away from them. Do not put your picture on your resume.

- Customize your resume to the position that you are applying for instead of using a generic resume or worse yet, a resume customized for an entirely different position. If your objective states that you want an accounting position but you are applying for a call center position, chances are the rest of your resume will not be read.
- Send your resume as an attachment in either MS Word or PDF format. If you are worried that your resume won't open as an attachment, send it in either MS Word or PDF format and plain text; plain text versions are often hard to read and more than likely the attachment will open if you send your attachment in “.doc” or “.pdf” form.
- Copy and paste your cover letter into your email. A blank email does not give a good first impression. If the interviewer has to open two attachments, they will go straight for the qualifications in the resume and you miss the opportunity to sell yourself through the cover letter.
- Many large companies use software to do an initial search of interview candidates from the resumes received. The software picks out words that the company feels are valuable attributes (also known as “knowledge, skills, and abilities” or KSA's). These “buzzwords” can often be found in the “required experience” or “skills” section of the job posting. Use these “buzzwords” to describe previous work experience. Even if you are not applying for a government job, this website has some good information about KSA's and may help you develop some power statements for your resume:
 - <http://www.ourpublicservice.org/OPS/programs/calltoserve/toolkit/KSAs.pdf>

Job Search Tips

- **Have your resume and cover letter ready before you start your job search. If not, you may be tempted to submit an incomplete or inadequate resume when you find a great job to apply for.**

- Focus on online employment sites that let employers post for free like Craig's list and America's Job Exchange. Many companies have reduced or eliminated advertising budgets so they will post on the free sites. Also search out company websites or search on Simplyhired.com since that site pulls employment information from company sites.
- ·Never pay to make your resume "more visible" on sites like Careerbuilder.com. Employers generally do not search for resumes, especially in this economy.
- ·Check online employments sites at least once a day for new job postings and do not delay in applying. A good portion of companies are running at minimum staffing so when they do have an opening, they need it filled immediately.
- ·Apply only in the fashion that the employment advertisement states (fax, email, in person, etc.). Chances are that the hiring professional is being inundated with resumes so it is best not to call to ask how to submit a resume, especially if the advertisement states how to submit it. It is acceptable to call after a few days to see if the resume has been received.

Interviewing Tips

- Dress appropriately! Even if you are just dropping in to pick up or drop off an application or resume, dress appropriately. If you are not sure what dress is appropriate, do some homework. If the company is open to public access, go visit beforehand. You can also get clues from pictures from the company's website, or sometimes by just driving by the company's location during the lunch hour.
- If you have any facial jewelry, take it out before the interview. If you have visible tattoos, cover them up before the interview. Even if you see someone who works there with these items, do not assume that it is ok. Wait until the first day of work to ask if it acceptable unless not wearing facial jewelry or not showing tattoos is unacceptable to you. In that case, ask the interviewer when they call to arrange for the interview.

- Do not bring children, friends, or spouses to the interview.
- Turn your cell phone off during the interview.
- Use professional language when talking to the interviewer. Do not use slang and never use swear words! Stay away from any conversation that is politically or religiously orientated.
- When you first arrive and then are waiting to be interviewed, pay attention to your actions! Even though the interviewer may not be present, the receptionist or other employees may report back on your behavior. Read a magazine or book, engage employees in conversation, or show interest in company materials hanging on the wall. Be mindful of your body language and try to not fidget too much.
- Talk about things you found interesting on their website and back up what you said in your cover letter. Show that you are excited about being a part of their organization.
- Maintain eye contact and a positive attitude. Do not talk negatively about your previous company, boss, or coworkers. Not only will this make you look like a person who dwells on the negative but it will also make you look like a gossip.
- Try to identify with the interviewer. Use clues from personal pictures or trinkets on the desk to start a short conversation to show your interviewer that you are similar and that you will fit in with the culture.

Useful Resources

- Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation
 - To file a claim online: <http://nvdetr.org/index.htm> then click on the link “file unemployment claim online” on the right hand side of the screen
 - To file a claim by phone: 775-684-0350

- General information and frequently asked questions about unemployment benefits: detr.state.nv.us/uiben/uiben_uiben.htm
- Free job search engines
 - Americasjobexchange.com/nv
 - <http://reno.craigslist.com>
 - Indeed.com
 - Simplyhired.com
 - Renotahoejobs.com
 - <http://reno.jobing.com>
 - renohelpwanted.com
 - snagajob.com
 - Pronetreno.com (for management level positions)
- Free tips on resume and cover letter writing, interviewing skills, and job hunt strategies
 - Monster.com
 - http://jobsearch.about.com/od/resumewriting/Resume_Writing.htm
- Free salary comparison service specific to your job title and job location
 - Salary.com
- Thinking of relocating? Get free demographics of anywhere either by zip or city and state.
 - <http://www.homefair.com/real-estate/city-profile/index.asp?cc=1>

- Staffing agencies (please let them know you heard about them from Great Basin Federal Credit Union)
 - Applied Staffing 853-5433
 - Contact Judy Griggs
 - MCSS, Ltd. 827-2226
 - Contact Lisa Brown
 - Career Choices 826-2555
 - Contact Elsa Ozuna-Richards
 - STS Staffing 852-2555
 - Contact Diana of Rhonda