

Whether you are looking for a job or to build a career, every step you take to prepare matters. Getting a job can be complicated and can feel really intimidating.

WELCOME TO THIS GUIDE. This guide outlines the tips and tricks that will help you get the job you want.

## WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

- Writing a Resume
- Resume Example
- Writing Cover Letter (What is a Cover Letter??)
- Cover Letter Example
- Interview Checklist (How to Be Prepared)
- What to Wear According to Employers
- Social Media and Online Job Search



### IMPORTANT NOTE:

Searching for a job can be really tough. You may not know where to start. You might not think you have anything to put on your resume. Make it easier on yourself by ....

**asking for help.** You have options...

#### Option 1:

Your school has a Career Centre – check it out!

#### Option 2:

Ask an adult you trust to help you.

#### Option 3:

Visit a **WorkBC Job Search Centre** in your area. Find out which one is closest to you: [workcentres.ca](http://workcentres.ca).



# COVER LETTERS

## Why should I make a cover letter?

A cover letter is a short letter which explains why you are applying for **this specific job**. Use it to point out things in your resume that are relevant to the job you are going for. If you have a real interest in the company and its products, or you have certain interests that make you suited for this job, **SAY IT HERE!**

**Your GOAL here: Write a letter that tells the employer why YOU suit THIS job.**

Your Name  
Email and Phone Number

Month, Day, Year

Name of Employer or Contact Name  
Name of Company  
Email and Phone Number

Dear Mr. / Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

**TIP:** Try to get the name of the Hiring Manager but if you can't, use 'Dear Hiring Manager'.

**OPENING PARAGRAPH:** State why you are writing and specify the position or type of work for which you are applying. Mention how you learned of the opening.

**MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS(S):** Relate your skills, interests, knowledge and abilities to the needs of the employer. Point out relevant training, education and employment. Elaborate on your courses and your field of work if appropriate. Highlight extra-curricular and volunteer experience. Refer the reader to the enclosed resume which summarizes your qualifications.

Explain why you are interested in working for the employer. Specify your reasons for wanting this type of work. Try to convince the employer of your ability, suitability and interest.

**CLOSING PARAGRAPH:** Use an appropriate closing to pave the way for an interview by requesting an appointment and by giving your phone number or by offering some similar suggestion to facilitate an immediate and favourable reply.

Sincerely,

**(Your signature here!! Don't forget to sign once you print it!)**

Type Your Name Here

**NOTE:** If you haven't had any paid work experience, matching your experience and skills to the job requirements might be a little harder, but it's not impossible. Things you can mention instead of paid work experience include:

- School work experience or volunteer work that demonstrates your strengths and attributes
  - General skills that help you work in a team and as part of an organization
  - Any sporting or community club participation (if relevant)
- Any hobbies or interests that are relevant to the job or demonstrate your professional experience
  - Personal attributes that will help you learn to work in a professional work environment
  - Key strengths and contributions that show you are a **stand-out applicant**

# COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

**Joanna Smith**

Email: joannasmith@gmail.com

Cell: 250 478 9525

April 23, 2015

Mr. Allan Moyle

Thrifty Foods

Phone: 250 383 9954

Email: enquiries@thriftys.com



**RE: Application for Customer Service position**

Dear Mr. Moyle,

As a young, motivated individual I am extremely interested in submitting an application for the Customer Service position currently advertised.

In responding to the specific requirements of this position I would like to highlight how my experience can demonstrate my ability to meet each of these:

- **Previous experience in Customer Service:** I have been a volunteer at Lions Club sausage sizzle fundraiser, helping to take orders, handle money and respond to customer enquiries.
- **Exceptional communication skills:** I am a positive communicator who understands the different communication styles required when working with fellow volunteers and customers.
- **Great attention to detail:** My teachers have complemented me on the attention to detail I have demonstrated in my school assignments and presentations.

As well, as a member of my soccer team I have been commended for my cooperation, my eagerness to do well and my enthusiasm to learn new skills. As well, I am on time for all practices and games, and always arrive ready to play.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my application and this position in more detail. I can be contacted at 250 478 9525.

Thanking you in advance for your time,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JS' with a flourish, enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Joanna Smith

# Targeted RESUMES *Your GOAL here: Match your resume to the job you are applying for*

**NOTE:** This is one example of a chronological resume format. You can vary this with different fonts and bullets.  
**Warning:** Keep it easy to read with a simple font and bullets. There are other places to express your unique creativity in the job search process (the interview for example!). Too much flashy editing on a resume can make it hard to read and end up working against you.

---

## Your Name Here

Street Address, City, BC, Postal Code

Email address (**very important that this is 'work appropriate' – [partysensation673@hotmail.com](mailto:partysensation673@hotmail.com) is not cool here.**)

Phone number (**Make sure the employer can leave a message – and that your voicemail message is something your new boss would approve of.**)

**Highlights** (**List the five to seven skills you think are most important to the employer - Keep them simple and to the point.**)

- What would you want if you were hiring someone for the position?
- Try and keep them specific to the exact position you are applying for – **check out the company's website for clues here!**
- Skills should be connected to the job you are applying to
- Don't forget to mention your communication skills – these matter for any job!
- Sporting or community club participation
- Hobbies or interests that are relevant to the job or demonstrate your related experience

**Work Experience** (**List these starting with the most recent. You can list your Volunteer experience and short term babysitting or lawn mowing jobs here too – it's all work experience.**)

**Job Title**                      Month, Year – Month, Year (**Example: April 2015-December 2015**)

Company Name, City, Province

- List 3-4 skills and accomplishments here
- Find skills employers are looking for in the job posting or on the website
- Keep them simple and to the point
- Include mostly skills you will likely need in the position you are applying for
- Use this for each job or volunteer position you have had

**Education and Training** (**You can also include any certificates you completed here such as FoodSafe or First Aid. Same as work experience, list the most recent first.**)

Course description or certificate title, year completed

Institute or Company Name, City, Province

## References

Name, their job title, phone number

### Rules for References

- **2-3 references are ideal and do your best to not use family members**
- **You need to get permission to use their name and contact info**
- **These are people that can speak positively about how you work**
- **Make sure that they are reachable by the phone number they provide**

# Resume Checklist *You've made your resume.*



## Now what?

- Have someone read it over for spelling, grammar and encouragement!** The more eyes on this the better! Look for spelling and grammar errors and make sure that the font is all the same.
- Drop it off in person** at the places you are applying *if possible!* (PROVEN most effective way to get the job!!)
- If you must apply online, take your time** – the applications are long and ask tough questions. Be honest and give yourself at least a half hour to fill them out in full. **Be prepared to attach your resume.**
- Call your references and make sure that what they have to say about you is super positive.** They can often be the ones that close the deal for you.
- DON'T worry if you don't have much experience.** Employers often prefer to train someone from scratch. PLUS, draw from any work or school related experiences you have had – babysitting, leaf raking, cat sitting, paper delivery, team sports, school events, volunteer stuff – and if you can't think of anything, consider checking out Volunteer Victoria for TONS of fun opportunities to get some volunteer experience.
- IF YOU ARE STILL FRUSTRATED** – Check out your local WorkBC Centre ... we are more than happy to help **for FREE**. Check us out online and how to find our offices at:

[workbccentres.ca](http://workbccentres.ca)

---

## BEFORE DROPPING OFF RESUMES

- Dropping off your resume could mean an interview on the spot. THEREFORE:**
  - Plan your clothing in advance, dress to get the job and appear well groomed.
  - Prepare 2 questions ready to ask the employer that show your interest in the company. (Ex: "Can you tell me about the teams I'll be working with?")
- Check to see if the company wants you to do an **online application**. IF SO, take your time with it as they ask tough questions.
- Learn as much as you can about the company and the job. Ask around. Do **INTERNET RESEARCH:**
  - What does their mission statement say? Do you share similar values?
  - Be ready to answer: "*Why do you want a job with us?*" or "*What do you know about us?*"
- Job Search **ON YOUR OWN** – it shows you're independent and self-motivated.
- TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE**– and take off headphones before going in.
- How's your hygiene?** Brush your teeth, chew a mint versus chewing gum – avoid perfumes or scents.
- Ensure you have **2-3 references** with updated phone numbers.
- BREATHE. Breathe. BREATHE.** 3 long deep breathes before you go in. Oxygen to your brain helps you think and be calm.

# RESUME EXAMPLE



## Joanna Smith

1234 Sooke Road, Victoria, BC, V9B 3S1

Email: joannasmith@gmail.com

Cell: 250 478 9525

---

### Highlights

- Friendly and helpful; volunteered at Lions Club taking orders and serving customers
- Cooperative team member; played on winning soccer team for 3 years
- Punctual and organized when completing school projects
- Completed FoodSafe training recently
- Available to work after school, weekends and holidays

### Work Experience

**Customer Service Volunteer**                      **May 2015**

**Lion's Club, Sausage Sizzler Fundraiser, Victoria, BC**

- Politely took orders from customers
- Stocked up kiosk area with cups, lips and napkins
- Worked alongside coworkers effectively in a fast paced environment
- Assisted with cooking of meals and followed Foodsafe standards

**Babysitter**    **September 2012-January 2015**

**Various Local Families, Victoria, BC**

- Responsible for looking after children ages 6 months to 10 years
- Prepared nutritious snacks for several children
- Provided safe playing activities and took children on outings

### Education and Training

**Student**    **September 2012 – Present**

Belmont Secondary School, Victoria, BC

**FoodSafe**    **January 2015**

Belmont Secondary School, Victoria, BC

### References

**Melanie Bloomswell**, Lions Club President, 250 216 8389

**Jennifer Harrison**, Soccer Coach, 250 478 9525

**Randy Waldie**, Local Father (babysitting), 250 642 3685



# INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

**TIP #1:** Be prepared for an interview when you drop off your resume.

**TIP #2:** Try your best to give your resume directly to the Hiring Manager.

## DANGER

### BIGGEST INTERVIEW BLUNDERS:

**Lack of eye contact (66%)**

**Appearing cocky or disinterested (54%)**

**Not knowing anything about the company (49%)**

**Answering a cell phone during an interview (48%)**

**Dressing too casually (47%)**

**Talking negative about past employers (46%)**

**Not providing specific examples or stories of your strengths and accomplishments (43%)**

**Failure to smile (38%)**

- Arrive approximately **15 minutes** before an interview.
- Cell phone off or on silence.**
- Arrive on your own** – this shows your independence and confidence.
- Know where you are going** – map out or even travel the route beforehand.
- Introduce yourself** to the interviewer, write down their name (for the Thank You note later!) and shake hands (avoid bone crusher or wet noodle handshakes).
- Look alert and interested – **if you're nervous**, it's ok to tell them that! It shows them you want the job.
- Make **eye contact** with the interviewer as much as possible to show confidence.
- Answer questions clearly and to the point. **TIP: Practice with a friend beforehand to prepare your answers.**
- Be ready to talk about your strengths, gifts and accomplishments. If you can't think of any, ask a friend or someone you trust to help you brainstorm some.
- Always show a positive attitude and make the employer aware of your interest in the position – **NEVER say anything negative about any past job or employer.**
- Ask the interviewer a question or 2 when they offer you the chance (have at least 3 prepared). These questions show you're interested in working for them:
  - EXAMPLE: *How soon will you be making a decision?*

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Send a thank you note OR an email to the interviewer within 24 hours – **SERIOUSLY** - this could be what makes you stick out from the crowd!
- If you have not heard from them within a week, call or email back to see if they have reached a decision.

## **One way or another, all interview questions stem from these 5.**

**Be prepared to answer these positively with specific examples from your life. TIP: A good way to take away nervousness is to write out your answers AND practice these with someone else beforehand.**

- 1. Tell me about yourself.**
- 2. Why should we hire you for this job?**
- 3. What are your strengths?**
- 4. What is one weakness you have?**
- 5. Do you have any questions for us?**

# What you need to know about your online self



What would I learn about you from looking at your Facebook profile? 50% of employers are looking at your social media profiles before they hire you.

## **BE MEDIA-AWARE**

Before you post ask yourself, "Do I want the world to know this about me?".

TIP: Google yourself and see what you find!

TIP: Create an email account *only* for job search. Gmail is free!

## Job Search Sites

– CLICK HERE:

[www.workbc.ca](http://www.workbc.ca)

[www.indeed.ca](http://www.indeed.ca)

[www.yyjworks.com](http://www.yyjworks.com)

[www.used.ca](http://www.used.ca)

OR

go to the website for the business you want to work for and look there!

 **When dropping off resumes or in an interview, remember to turn your cell phone off.**

The most effective job search strategy is dropping your resume off in person to the hiring manager. HOWEVER, more and more businesses ask you to apply online. With **online applications**, take your time, check your spelling and don't hesitate to ask for help. This application becomes your first impression.

# What Do I Wear for Job Search?



Employers prefer you to wear clothing that says "I really want this job".

Employers say this clothing could look too casual and unprofessional. This clothing could leave a negative first impression.



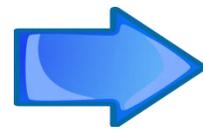
**First impressions are formed in 7 seconds.**

A whopping 55% of a first impression comes from nonverbal cues like:

- ..what you choose to wear.
- ..do you look 'positive'? (are you smiling?)
- ...are you making eye contact?



**Employers say that these items could negatively affect making a positive first impression**



*TIP: When you drop off your resume, arrive dressed ready for an interview. You might find yourself getting interviewed on the spot.*

*TIP: Check out how the staff dress in the place you want to work and this will give you clues on how to dress for an interview.*

- Jeans
- Hoodies
- Heavy Makeup
- Yoga wear
- Sandals
- Wearing Sunglasses
- Stained /crinkled clothes
- Piercings/'Bling'
- Headphones on
- Running/Skate Shoes
- Oversized or Tight Clothing
- Hats or tshirts with certain logos
- Cologne/Perfume/Cigarette Smell
- Chipped nail polish/dirty fingernails

Check out [worklink.bc.ca](http://worklink.bc.ca) for more info