

# Resume Writing: Military to Civilian

MSU Veteran Association



THE CENTER FOR CAREER SERVICES AND  
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

MOREHEAD HALL, ROOM 337

[WWW.MONTCLAIR.EDU/CAREERSERVICES](http://WWW.MONTCLAIR.EDU/CAREERSERVICES)

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

# Things to Keep in Mind



**The challenge:**

- **Correlating different assignments to private sector roles**

**Your military experience:**

- **It's an asset**

# Topics



Resume Basics

Different Kinds

Format

What to Include?

Accomplishments

Common Errors

Typical Categories

Reference Sheet

Optimal Resume

# Resume Basics



- A one page skill sheet
- Not your life story
- Not an all-purpose document

A focused document written to support a particular career goal designed to result in an interview

# Resume Types



## Traditional resume:

-  Sent through the **mail** or given to a potential employer in a **face-to-face** meeting.
- **Can use** italics, bullets and other **design elements**.

## Electronic resume:

-  **Faxed** to an employer or **scanned** by a resume scanning system before it reaches a human reader.
- Has only **very simple design elements**.

# Resume Types *continued*



## **Internet resume:**

- **Sent via e-mail in ASCII text** or cut and pasted into on-line forms.

## **The GOOD news...**

**The three resumes have almost the same content.**

**The differences relate to:**

- **Format**
- **How the resume is transmitted**

# Format



Reverse Chronological or Functional?

## **Reverse Chronological:**

- Start with most recent experience and work back
- Preferred by employers

## **Functional Format:**

- Category driven
- Employment history listed at bottom of document

# Reverse Chronological Format

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, Westbury, New York

## **Air Force Recruiter**

Advertising & Public Relations

(2/08 - 2/09)

- Increased community awareness of Air Force opportunities through effective advertising, promotional events and public relations.
- Developed and implemented marketing programs to increase production. Raised educator confidence in the Air Force as a viable opportunity for all students.
- Prepared presentations and represented the Air Force during speaking engagements at over 30 local schools and colleges to promote strong community relations.
- Conducted speeches and presentations for various community organizations.
- Doubled squadron Advertising and Promotions Program in every aspect through advertisements, community events, radio interviews

# Functional Format



## **MANAGEMENT / ADMINISTRATION EXPERTISE**

- Train and evaluate staff, providing appropriate feedback regarding performance and training requirements.
- Identify corporate objectives, organize needed resources, direct operational efforts to achieve desired results.
- Attend and participate in meetings, seminars and conferences.
- Enforce, track and insure compliance with all organization policies and procedures.
- Gather and disseminate information for status reports for presentation to management staff.

# **Functional Category Titles**



**Management Expertise**

**Operations Management**

**Human Resources**

**Financial Planning and Analysis**

**Purchasing**

**Systems Administration**

**Administrative Support**

# Suggestions



- Develop a few different resumes/formats
- Take the online Transferable Skills Survey  
[http://www.ohiolearns.org/get\\_a\\_plan/self\\_assessment/assess\\_abilities.php](http://www.ohiolearns.org/get_a_plan/self_assessment/assess_abilities.php)

# What to Include?



- Ask yourself, "Will a potential employer care about this experience?"
- Recent and relevant
- Military awards, training and distinctions
- Including active military combat and associated duties should generally be avoided.
- Accomplishments

# Accomplishments



- Received *Army Achievement Medal* for completing 400+ medical evaluations and developing patient database using MS Access.
- Improved database reporting functions and tracked patient demographics, records, medication, appointments and status.

# Accomplishments



- Increased employee retention rate by 16 percent by focusing on training, team building and recognition programs.
- Earned reputation as one of the most progressive and innovative IT organizations in the Navy's communications and IT community.

# Military Terms and Acronyms:



Use acronyms sparingly and spell-out when used

## **Substitute terms:**

- Soldiers = "staff" or "employees"
- Uniforms, machine guns and ammunition = "supplies"
- Hangars and weapon dumps = "facilities"
- Regarding job titles - Field Artillery Battalion Operations Officer can become "Operations Manager" or "Operations Supervisor"

# **Common Errors**



**Spelling**

**Grammar**

**Crowded appearance**

**Length**

**Cross outs**

**Lack of focus**

**Exaggerations**

# Typical Categories



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# Typical Categories

## Objective



### **1. Name the job title:**

Position as Operations Manager

### **2. Name the skills used:**

Position involving counseling, writing, and directing volunteers.

# Typical Categories

## Objective *continued*



### **3. Name the setting:**

Position in an insurance company

### **4. Combine types:**

Position as Graphic Designer with  
MADA Design

# Typical Categories

## Education



**Education:** BA, **Psychology**, expected May 2012  
Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ  
Overall GPA: 3.2

### **Related Coursework:**

- \* Group Dynamics
- \* Child Psychology
- \* Perception
- \* Social Psychology
- \* Cognition
- \* Psycholinguistics

# Typical Categories



## **Seminars, Courses and Workshops:**

- Advertising & Promotion
- Recruiting School
- NCO Leadership School
- Supervisor Prep Course
- Corpsman School (Basic Nursing, Emergency)

# Typical Categories



Software: MS Office, FileMaker, Pagemaker

Operating Systems: **Windows 98, 2000, XP; Mac OS X**

Languages: Reading knowledge of French

Professional Associations: American Psychological Association  
New Jersey Psychological Association

References: Available upon request

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# OptimalResume

**OptimalResume** is a comprehensive, web-based tool, which allows you to create, present and manage up to 5 *resumes*. The program will guide you throughout the creation of your resume, offering suggestions on how to phrase your education and employment history.

**Current students:** You must use your mail.montclair.edu email address to log into the system.

Once your resume is completed, you'll have 3 options:

- Print your resume as a Word document
- Copy and paste a text version
- View as an interactive resume website which you will be able to send to employers.

# Next Steps



## Test Drive:

Show your resume to several non-military friends and ask them to point out terms they don't understand.

## Get Feedback:

Center for Career Services and Cooperative Education:

- Meet with a career counselor
- Drop-in: Tuesday & Thursday (1:30 – 3:30) & Wednesday (2 – 4)
- Drop your resume off, Morehead Hall, room 337

# Cover Letter



## **SALUTATION**

Letter should be addressed to a specific person.

## **INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH**

Indicate how you learned of the position.

## **BODY OF LETTER**

- 1) Pinpoint the particular skills you have which relate to the position.
- 2) Explain why you're interested in this company/organization.
- 3) Use key words from the job description to show that your skills match the employer's needs.
- 4) Refer the reader to your enclosed resume

# Cover Letter *continued*



## **CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH**

1. Indicate your strong interest in an interview
2. State how and when you plan to follow up

## **OTHER LETTERS**

- ✓ Thank you for interview
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Prospecting
- ✓ Acceptance

# Sources



- [www.baseops.net/transition/resumetips.html](http://www.baseops.net/transition/resumetips.html)
- [www.baseops.net/transition/militarytransition.html](http://www.baseops.net/transition/militarytransition.html)



- [suite101.com/article.cfm/resume\\_writing/109555](http://suite101.com/article.cfm/resume_writing/109555)

Thank you.



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