Characteristics of a Resume

* The resume is a summary of *all* your activities and experience.
* The resume should be arranged to highlight your most important qualifications.
* It ought to:
  + Be easy to read:
    - not too long,
    - not too much material crammed on a page
    - easily visible headings
    - (preferably) short phrases rather than full sentences
  + Give your vital statistics:
    - your name
    - address and telephone number
    - permanent address and telephone number if you intend to move soon
  + Suggest
    - where you are headed professionally (perhaps in a section called "Career Goals")
    - where you have been (in a section called "Qualifications and Experience")
  + Include education and work experience, or two sections titled "Work Experience" and "Education"
    - * Put the most relevant and impressive qualifications first.
      * Put relevant work experience before your educational experience if they are a lot otherwise emphasize your education and its special features.
      * Write all that makes you different from other students.
      * Write any research or design courses which simulate a job situation.
      * In a separate section write all your honors and extracurricular activities since it shows you organized enough to handle several activities at one time.
      * Avoid a lot of empty space at the bottom of the page.
      * Include name of the references that are ready to serve in that role by prearrangement.
      * **At the end of the resume include date of the last edit.**

**Curriculum Vitae Format**

**Your Contact Information**  
Name  
Address  
Telephone  
Cell Phone  
Email

**Personal Information**  
Date of Birth  
Place of Birth  
Citizenship  
Visa Status  
Gender

**Optional Personal Information**  
Marital Status  
Spouse's Name  
Children

**Employment History**  
*List in chronological order, include position details and dates*  
Work History  
Academic Positions  
Research and Training

**Education**  
*Include dates, majors, and details of degrees, training and certification*   
High School  
University  
Graduate School  
Post-Doctoral Training

**Professional Qualifications**  
Certifications and Accreditations  
Computer Skills

**Awards**

**Publications**

**Books**

**Professional Memberships**

**Interests**

**When to Use Curriculum Vitae?**

When should job seekers use curriculum vitae, commonly referred to as CV, rather than a resume? In the United States, curriculum vitae are used primarily when applyingfor academic, education, scientific or research positions. It is also applicable when applying for fellowships or grants.

When asking for a job in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Asia, expect to submit a CV rather than a resume. Keep in mind that overseas employers often expect to read the type of personal information on a curriculum vitae that would never be included on an American resume, such as date of birth, nationality and place of birth. United States law on what information job applicants can be asked to provide does not apply outside the country.

**The Differences between a Resume and a CV**

There are several differences between a curriculum vitae and a resume. A curriculum vitae is a longer (up to two or more pages), more detailed synopsis of your background and skills. A CV includes a summary of your educational and academic backgrounds as well as teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honors, affiliations and other details. As with a resume, you may need different versions of a CV for different types of positions.

Like a resume, curriculum vitae should include your name, contact information, education, skills and experience. In addition to the basics, a CV includes research and teaching experience, publications, grants and fellowships, professional associations and licenses, awards and other information relevant to the position you are applying for. Start by making a list of all your background information, and then organize it into categories. Make sure you include dates on all the publications you include.

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/cvsamples/a/blsamplecv.htm>

[**How to Write a CV**](http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/curriculumvitae/a/curriculumvitae.htm)

There are important points to consider when preparing effective curriculum vitae. It should be clear, concise, complete, and up-to-date with current employment and educational information.

**Cover Letters**

Writing a cover letter often seems like a particularly daunting task. However, if you take it one step at a time, you'll soon be an expert at writing letters to send with your resume.

A cover letter typically accompanies each resume you send out. Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your resume ignored, so, it makes good sense to devote the necessary time and effort to writing effective cover letters.

A cover letter should complement, not duplicate your resume. Its purpose is to interpret the data-oriented, factual resume and add a personal touch. A cover letter is often your earliest written contact with a potential employer, creating a critical first impression.

**There are three general types of cover letters:**

* The **application letter** which responds to a known job opening ([review samples](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/coverlettsample.htm))
* The **prospecting letter** which inquires about possible positions ([review sample](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/letterinterest.htm))
* The **networking letter** which requests information and assistance in your job search ([review sample](http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/networking/a/networking_3.htm))

Your cover letter should be designed specifically for each purpose outlined above as well as for each position you seek. Do not design a form letter and send it to every potential employer (you know what you do with junk mail!).

Effective cover letters explain the reasons for your interest in the specific organization and identify your most relevant skills or experiences (remember, relevance is determined by the employer's self-interest). They should express a high level of interest and knowledge about the position.

Next, what to include, how to format your cover letter, and following up with prospective employers?

To be effective, your cover letter should follow the basic format of a typical business letter and should address three general issues:

1. First Paragraph - Why you are writing
2. Middle Paragraphs - What you have to offer
3. Concluding Paragraph - How you will follow-up

**Why You Are Writing**

In some cases, you may have been referred to a potential employer by a friend or acquaintance. Be sure to mention this mutual contact, by name, up front since it is likely to encourage your reader to keep reading!

If you are writing in **response to a job posting** ([review samples](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/coverlettsample.htm)), indicate where you learned of the position and the title of the position. More importantly, express your enthusiasm and the likely match between your credentials and the position's qualifications.

If you are **writing a prospecting letter** ([review sample](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/letterinterest.htm)) a letter in which you inquire about possible job openings - state your specific job objective. Since this type of letter is unsolicited, it is even more important to capture the reader’s attention.

If you are **writing a networking letter** ([review sample](http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/networking/a/networking_3.htm)) to approach an individual for information, make your request clear.

**What You Have To Offer**

In responding to an advertisement, refer specifically to the qualifications listed and illustrate how your particular abilities and experiences relate to the position for which you are applying. In a prospecting letter express your potential to fulfill the employer's needs rather than focus on what the employer can offer you. You can do this by giving evidence that you have researched the organization thoroughly and that you possess skills used within that organization.

Emphasize your achievements and problem-solving skills. Show how your education and work skills are transferable, and thus relevant, to the position for which you are applying.

**How You Will Follow Up**

Close by reiterating your interest in the job and letting the employer know how they can reach you and include your phone number and/or email address. Or bid directly for the job interview or informational interview and indicate that you will follow-up with a telephone call to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Be sure to make the call within the time frame indicated.

In conclusion, you may indicate that your [references](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/referenceletters/) are available on request. Also, if you have a portfolio or writing samples to support your qualifications, state their availability.

## Writing Thank You Letters

Writing a thank you letter, or thank you email, after an employment interview is a must. In fact, some employers think less of those interviewees who fail to follow-up promptly. Plan to send out your thank you letters or [thank you notes](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/thankyouletters/a/thankyounote.htm) as soon as possible (preferably within twenty-four hours) after your interview.

In addition to thanking the person you talked with, the thank you letter reinforces the fact that you want the job. Note: Even if you do not want the job, write a thank you letter respectfully [withdrawing your application](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/morejobletters/a/rejectajob.htm), because you never know what the future holds so why burn your bridges?

***Thank You Letter Template - Job Interview***

Your Name   
Your Address   
Your City, State, Zip Code   
Your Phone Number   
Your Email

Date   
Name   
Title   
Organization   
Address   
City, State, Zip Code   
Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Use the first paragraph to thank the interviewer for taking the time to meet with you. Mention your interest in the job and how enthusiastic you are about it.

The second paragraph of your thank you letter should include the reasons why you are an excellent candidate for the job. List specific skills that relate to the job you interviewed for. The more detailed you are, the more the interviewer will know about your qualifications.

In your closing paragraph, reiterate your appreciation for being considered for the job and let the interviewer know you are looking forward to hearing from him or her soon.

Sincerely,   
Your Signature   
Your Typed Name

**More Employment Thank You Letters -** In addition to thanking your interviewers, thank everyone else who assists with your job search, including references, people who refer you to a job opening and any other employment contacts whose help you have appreciated and who you want to develop a good relationship with.

**What You Didn't Say -** If there was something that you wish you had mentioned during the interview, here's your chance to say it by including it in your thank you letter.

**Thank You Letter Basics -** Thank you letters can be handwritten, typed or sent via email.  Each thank you letter should include a thank you for the interview, your interest in the jobs, your qualifications and skills, and a final thank you.

**Short and Simple -** Keep your thank you letters short and simple, but, do use the letter to reiterate your interest in the job, your enthusiasm for the company and to sell yourself as the ideal candidate.

**Proof Your Letter -** Spell check and proof your thank you letter. Then ask someone else to proof it for you. That way you will be sure it's perfect.