5

Resumés and References

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Identify resumé types and decide which is best for you.

- Create several versions of your resumé that sell you to an employer and accommodate the ways in which resumés are transmitted.

- Adapt to the scannable resumé technology.

- Appreciate the importance of reference selection and use.

- Be aware of the questions your reference contacts may be asked.

- Create your own personal list of references.

Critical Tools for Success

Always think in terms of what the other person wants.

—JAMES VAN FLEET

Developing a resumé is an important part of your job search and is usually one of the first steps taken in the job search process. Revising your resumé is something you should do frequently during your career to reflect any changes in your professional life and to include any new skills you develop and experience you gain.

A resumé cannot get you a job; however, a good resumé can help you get to the interview stage. So, the goal of the resumé is to get the interview. With that in mind, a resumé should tell recruiters enough to make them eager to meet you, but not so much that they have no reason to talk to you in person. Also, your resumé should look appealing and be easy to read. Resumé writing can be challenging and requires considerable effort—the key is to achieve just the right mix of interesting content and engaging format.

Remember, your resumé will probably find itself in a pile or an inbox of several hundred. Most resumé readers spend only a minute or two on each resumé. What will make yours the one chosen for consideration? What will be the first information they read about you and how impressive will it be? When recruiters first look at your resumé, they don't spend a great deal of time scrutinizing every word. They initially look for those key traits, technical skills, and previous experiences that satisfy the requirements of the open position. Their eyes are drawn to industry buzzwords and quantified statements. For example, a quantified statement about managing a local area network might say that the candidate managed a network of 130 Dell computers, handling user complaints, upgrades, security, and routine maintenance.

Also keep in mind that your resumé may be read first by a computer. Resumé scanning software is discussed later in this chapter. Finally, because the resumé often serves as a springboard for questions and discussions during the interview, all information must be truthful, accurate, and easy to follow.

PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR RESUMÉ

As you can probably tell already, successful resumé writing is not just putting your education and work history down on a piece of paper. There are many issues that you must consider. This chapter first covers the following resumé aspects and addresses the important issues for successful resumé writing:

■ resumé types
■ resumé styles, including electronic resumés
■ resumé sections
■ resumé guidelines
■ resumé tips

The second section provides samples of the main resumé types and formats. The last section of this chapter discusses selecting and using references.

TYPES OF RESUMÉS: CHRONOLOGICAL VS. FUNCTIONAL

There are two types of resumés: chronological and functional. You may also hear of a combination resumé, but that is really just a chronological resumé with more emphasis on your skills, qualifications, and key traits. There is a tendency among job seekers to create a chronological resumé because it is perceived as the easiest to write, and most resumé samples are this type. Keep in mind that you want the best type for your particular circumstances and job-search goals. So, think about the types and decide which represents you the best. All of the sample resumés discussed below can be found in the section "Resumé Samples" (Exhibits 5.1–5.6) beginning on page xxx.

In the *chronological resumé* format (see Exhibit 5.1), information is organized according to time, listing the most recent education and experience first and working back to earlier education and experience. This is by far the most widely used type because of its simplicity. It is an appropriate format to use if you have had continuous employment and are interested in providing a historical view of your past. Chronological resumés focus on dates and individual job experiences. It is often the most suitable for students and recent graduates.

The *functional resumé* format (see Exhibit 5.2) organizes information according to types of experiences or functions. Rather than relying on dates and time frames as in the reverse chronological format, this format spotlights key traits or qualities, providing details and examples that demonstrate those qualities. This format requires a bit more thought and planning than the first; however, one of its strengths is that it is not like the majority of resumés—a fact that unfortunately can also be one of its main weaknesses.

This format is useful if you do not have continuous employment experience or if you want to focus the reader's attention on *what* you did rather than on *when* and *where* you did it. This resumé is also called an accomplishments or skills resumé. It allows you to reflect on the most prominent skills and qualities you bring to the career market, and provides a format for you to organize these skills and qualities in such a way that they become the focus of the resumé. It can be most useful for someone who is making a total career change. The functional resumé is often the best choice for the mature student with a new career focus.

Targeted Resumés

You may be hearing a lot about targeted resumés. Targeted resumés simply mean that they must be targeted toward your job objective and the position you are applying for. Industry key words and relevant skills are very important to highlight. Your resumé needs to be tweaked for every position you apply for.

> ## *Examples of Individuals Who Should Use Functional Resumés:*
>
> - Previous experience is line work in a factory. New career: office administration
> - Previous experience is business, banking, and insurance. New career: technologist
> - Previous experience is office administration. New career: nursing
> - Previous experience homemaker, mother and/or, volunteer. Re-entering the workforce
> - Previous experience labourer. New career: millwright apprentice

In addition, you also need to target your entire application through your cover letter, by highlighting the specific skills and qualifications the employer is looking for. Whether you choose to create a chronological or a functional resumé, it will not represent you well unless you tailor it for each position you are applying for.

Steps to Create a Targeted Resumé

- Highlight the qualifications, skills, experience, and qualities on the job description that you possess
- Create an objective on your resumé for the specific position and company
- Create proof statements to demonstrate the skills and qualifications that are relevant to the position
- Ensure your experience provides additional proof of the requirements for the position. You don't want to just list what you did in the position but target it towards what is relevant for the new position you are applying for
- Add any relevant volunteer activities and interests
- Review your references
- Review the posting again and ask yourself whether you have focused on and proven the most important aspects of the position

SECTIONS OF A RESUMÉ

Resumés are formatted using a number of essential components or resumé sections that employers will expect to see. They are discussed in detail below. While there are options in discussing resumé sections, you should always remember that your resumé is your sales tool and will work best for you if you provide the reader with all of the information he or she is looking for when deciding whether to interview you. Missing sections will look like an incomplete package to an employer.

Let's take a look at the various sections.

Heading

Your heading includes your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Students sometimes find it useful to list both current and permanent addresses so they can always be reached. In the past, job seekers included both home and

work phone numbers when possible. With the popularity of cell phones, many candidates are listing just one number: their cell phone number. This is fine, but remember, your cell phone could ring at any moment with a recruiter on the other end. If you include your cell phone number on your resumé, be prepared either to respond to that call immediately or defer it to your voice mail for later handling. Always remember to use postal codes and area codes.

Include your e-mail address on your resumé. Listing an e-mail address says that you are comfortable with this communication technology and use it in your everyday life. Just a couple of words of common sense here about e-mail addresses. If your current e-mail address name is not as professional as it should be, change it before you start using the address on your resumé.

What about including your personal website? If you have a website, don't automatically list it in the heading. Consider whether you want it to be seen by a potential employer. Website references on resumés are particularly appropriate for individuals desiring positions as webmasters or web designers. But remember: any web page referenced in a resumé should be professional looking and in good taste.

Objective

An objective is a clear and concise statement of the type of job you are seeking. Be original, and avoid phrases such as "wish to gain experience" or "desire for advancement." Mention the specific position or career area you are interested in. Your objective should tell the recruiter the purpose of your resumé. The rest of your resumé should provide the proof that you are qualified for your objective. It should be short and to the point.

Not all experts agree on the importance of stating your objectives, but you want to ensure the reader knows what you are applying for. Remember, this objective is for your current resumé—not where you want to be in five years.

Personal/ Professional Summary

Instead of stating a career objective, some people include a personal or professional summary. This section may say more about you than a typical career objective statement. This section focuses on what you have accomplished and what technical or personal traits you have to offer. Reflect on your past positions and your accomplishments to create a personal or professional summary. Producing succinct statements about yourself and your qualifications impresses most resumé readers, who tend to pay closer attention to the material at the beginning of the resumé. This section tends to be used more often by professionals who are midway into their career.

Education

How prominently you wish to display your education and how detailed you choose to be depends on how long it has been since you were in school. Recent graduates, who will spotlight their education, should include grade point average and honours. If you have been in the workforce for a while, you may merely include your degree, school, and year of graduation. For those who have been in the workforce for some time, listing education on the resumé may not be necessary or it may be included lower down. To help you prepare an education section for your resumé, complete the following worksheet.

REPRESENTING EDUCATION ACTIVITY

This exercise is designed to help you think about aspects of your education. Answer the following questions to construct a complete educational and qualifications section for your resumé.

1. State the name of the educational institution you most recently attended. Include the city and province where the school is located.

_____

_____

_____

2. Give the correct name of the diploma/degree you are working to attain or have attained.

_____

_____

3. Supply the month and year of your graduation.

_____

4. Indicate your grade point average (for recent graduates).

_____

5. List any honours or academic achievements.

_____

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6. List several of your favourite courses in which you did well.

_____

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_____

7. List those courses that involve the subject matter relating to the career you are pursuing.

_____

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8. Decide what additional course work you want to mention in your resumé. Consider grouping courses into several categories with appropriate headings.

_____

_____

_____

9. Highlight any special equipment (computers or other types) on which you are proficient, and any software or computer languages you have learned in school or taught yourself.

_____

_____

_____

10. List any other post–high school educational institutions attended. Give names and locations.

_____

_____

11. If you obtained a diploma/degree from the institutions listed in question 10, indicate the title and the date of graduation.

_____

_____

12. List any honours or special comments about the course work listed in question 10.

_____

_____

13. If your high school graduation was recent, you may discuss any special course work, honours, programs, or projects.

_____

_____

_____

14. Please note that most of this information will not go in your Education section, but will fit well in your Skills and Qualifications section if you have a chronological resumé, or in other sections if you have a functional resumé.

Skills and Qualifications

This section is a very important and useful part of the resumé. It should hold a prominent position in the resumé, even above the experience section. In this section you should highlight the important skills, certificates, and training that are relevant to your desired field of employment and your objective. Computer skills, languages, and special licenses and certificates should all be included here. You may also want to highlight some of your transferable skills. Using scope and achievement statements can help market this area well. You should be thinking about listing your relevant coursework here, but do not list the course names. Rather, think about the key skills that you developed from that course; think about the potential employer reading the resumé. The skill or competency is much more relevant than the course name.

Work Experience

When completing this section, provide job titles, company names, and the cities and provinces in which the companies are located. There is no need to include street addresses or the names of managers or other personnel. For each

position, briefly describe your duties and responsibilities. When describing your previous and current jobs, use action verbs to demonstrate accomplishment. Simply listing duties and responsibilities is not enough for a superior resumé. For the best resumé possible, develop more insightful descriptions of your work experiences. Adding impact to your work experience is discussed later in this chapter.

How far back should you go when listing your employment history? That depends. The rule of thumb is five years; however, if you had some noteworthy experience previous to that time, you may include it as well. Certainly, if you have extensive work experience, you may want to include a greater number of previous positions.

For many, work experience is the most important section of the resumé. Unfortunately, this is also often the most poorly written section. Often job seekers merely create a list of work experiences by listing their duties. They miss the opportunity to grab the reader's attention with key ideas and specific accomplishments. All job seekers should know how to add impact to their work experience. The following discussion explains how to do this.

Adding Impact to Your Work Experience

To create a work experience section with more impact, include more in your job descriptions than simply the duties. Most resumé writers do a very good job of listing job responsibilities. The problem is, you are telling the reader what she already knows: salespeople deal with customers and handle accounts, secretaries create documents and schedule appointments, computer programmers program computers! Try thinking about your work experience a little differently. As you reflect on your duties, also think about the *scope of responsibilities* you have had and your *accomplishments on the job*. The box below shows two examples using the positions of computer programmer and sales representative.

See how this attention to scope and achievement in your job description is more powerful and more informative? Which person would you rather talk to: the salesperson who merely said he was in charge of outside sales or the person who said that she was responsible for a 30 percent increase in revenues over a six-month period? I think you get the idea. Don't despair if you don't have impressive achievements at this stage in your life. Just think about all aspects of your past and present employment, and determine how you can make your job experience section move beyond the mundane description of job duties by completing the work experience exercise that follows.

WORK EXPERIENCE EXERCISE

Directions

Before you develop the work experience section for your resumé, try this exercise. It provides an opportunity to think creatively about the jobs you've held.

Using the list of action verbs found on page xxx and your imagination, create some innovative job descriptions for the positions described in Situations 1–3 (starting on page xxx). Pay special attention to the use of action verbs. Remember that a current job is described with phrases using present tense verbs; keep descriptions of your previous jobs in the past tense.

Highlighting Scope and Achievement

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER POSITION

Duty statement: Wrote code and performed troubleshooting using Visual Basic.

Scope statement: Worked as a member of a four-person project team to create code and solve programming problems in a PC-based environment.

Achievement statement: Wrote and maintained a computer program using Visual Basic that analyzed current work-flow operations, reduced analysis time by 50 percent, and served as a model program for six divisional offices.

SALES REPRESENTATIVE POSITION

Duty statement: Supervised outside sales for computer division.

Scope statement: Sold electronic components to 140 clients in a five-province region of Canada.

Achievement statement: Maintained successful five-province sales region of 140 clients, averaged five new accounts monthly, and generated a 30 percent increase in revenues over a six-month period.

Example

You worked at Carlson's Cafe for three years while attending college. Your title was assistant restaurant manager, and your responsibilities included managing a staff of 10 servers, scheduling your staff, taking care of any problems or disagreements that occurred with staff members or patrons, running the cash register, doing the banking, and training new servers as they were hired.

A creative job description for this example might include:

- Trained and managed a staff of 10 employees
- Handled staff scheduling
- Provided friendly and prompt customer service
- Operated and troubleshot problems with electronic cash register
- Balanced daily cash receipts
- Communicated with restaurant staff and owners to improve restaurant operations

See what you can do with the following situations. Don't forget to use those action verbs effectively!

Situation 1

You worked for several years as a technical writer for a software company. Your duties included converting programming notes into plain English for user documents. You created appropriate graphics using several desktop publishing programs, solicited printing quotes from local printers, and handled ordering and the distribution of manuals and documents. You also created marketing brochures for the sales staff, and occasionally helped with other company promotional programs.

Description #1

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Situation 2

You are the owner and manager of a daycare centre located in a mid-size town. You recruit and hire qualified daycare providers; manage the centre's day-to-day operations; handle provincial licensing and compensation paperwork; and plan, purchase, and prepare food for your staff and the children. In addition, you plan special interest programs in art, music, and physical education for the children. You are implementing a "Computers for Kids" program that will be a model for centres across the province.

Description #2

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Situation 3

You currently work as a telemarketer with minimal supervision. You are responsible for keeping accurate records of the calls you make as well as tracking the outcome of each call. You were named Employee of the Month when you organized a mini-workshop for your co-workers on how to handle difficult customers. Your supervisor sometimes calls upon you to substitute for her. You volunteer to work extra hours when co-workers are sick. You have consistently scored as one of the top two salespersons in your division.

Description #3

_____

_____

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_____

Your Turn!

Using the job you currently hold (or the last one held), write a paragraph describing the position and the duties and tasks associated with it, then develop a creative job description suitable for inclusion in your resumé. Remember to use action verbs and the correct verb tense.

Job Title

_____

Situation

_____
_____
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Description

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Now, write a description for all of the positions you intend to put in your resumé. Don't be shy about any of your accomplishments.

Personal This is a section that not all job-search experts agree on. If you have the space, you may want to include a line or two about some personal characteristics or activities. Sometimes, these comments help to make the person behind the resumé seem more real. At the same time, you must be careful not to mention anything in this section that could be controversial (e.g., politics, religion).

When you put these sections together to form your resumé, remember that the most important information must go first. Therefore, if you are experienced, your work section follows the heading. If you are a recent graduate, education is your most prominent section. If you include a personal section, it should be placed near or at the end of the resumé.

References

If space permits, you may choose to state that your references will be provided upon request. If you have little space remaining, omit this statement. Employers expect you to provide references regardless.

For more information on using references effectively, see the References section beginning on page xxx.

CONVERTING YOUR RESUMÉ FROM CHRONOLOGICAL TO FUNCTIONAL

You have made the decision that your format and style are not working for you any longer, but where do you start? Don't try to convert your previous resumé. Start a brand new resumé. Look at the sample Functional Resumé 5.2.

Determine what direction your career is now taking. What are the skills that you will need to be successful in this career choice? Start with a list of your relevant transferable skills. Use the Transferable Skills Checklist in Chapter Two. This list should start out long; you will sort and add proof statements later.

Next, you need to determine your subtitles under the Skills and Qualifications section. Usually three or four titles are enough.

Sample Subtitles to Choose From in your Skills and Qualification Section:

- Technical
- Computer
- Communication
- Interpersonal
- Organizational
- Team Work
- Sales
- Marketing
- Customer Service
- Management
- Supervisory

Now you need to sort your transferable skills under your chosen subtitles (see Functional Resumé Example 5.2). Add scope and achievement statements and even the company name, in brackets, where you developed that skill. The scope and achievements exercise follows in this chapter.

This will take some revising. One of the most difficult parts of this exercise if you are changing careers is the feeling that you are leaving behind who you were. This is all about looking forward and presenting your previous skills in a manner that a future employer will utilize. If you don't do this well, they will pass you by.

You may need to get a second opinion and some guidance with this. Contact the Career Services department within your college or university. It may take two or three attempts to get it right but perseverance will pay off.

RESUMÉ GUIDELINES

These guidelines reiterate and emphasize some points already discussed.

The resumé is a sales tool, and as the salesperson you must use this tool effectively. It is crucial that your sales tool be the best it can be. To ensure this, pay particular attention to the content (what you say) and the layout (how you structure your content on the page). The format should be engaging and easy to read; your content should be impressive, interesting, and promotional in nature, as well as honest and accurate. An impressive resumé is a blend of good content and attractive format.

Your resumé should read easily and quickly. You may have only 10 to 15 seconds to attract the attention of the recruiter and encourage that person to read in more detail. Keep in mind that most of us read from the top of the page at the left margin down in a somewhat diagonal direction when we are trying to scan a document to get the greatest amount of information in the least amount of time.

Resumés are quickly scanned because recruiters receive hundreds of resumés each day. They literally don't have time to read each one word for word during the screening phase of their resumé review. Because recruiters have these time constraints, it is important for your best and most important information to be close to the top of the page and for your format to be inviting and easy to read.

When readers scan a resumé, their eyes will be drawn to specifics that relate to the positions they are looking to fill. Because of this, be sure to highlight any technical terms, buzzwords, or personal characteristics that recruiters may be looking for.

Resumé Length

While many sources recommend that your resumé should only be one page, this goal is often not realistic. The main focus of your resumé is to attract the attention of the potential employer. If your resumé is crowded onto one page, nothing will stand out. White space is an important component of the resumé. Do not be afraid to use a second page, but make sure that the most relevant information is on the first page. If you do use two pages, make sure you put a header with your name and phone number at the top of the second page.

Remember: A resumé is not designed to be a complete personal history. Rather, it is a specification sheet about a product (you) written in such a way that the recruiter will want to learn more from you in person during the interview.

Because recruiters need to review resumés quickly, it is not a good idea to include attachments to your resumé, such as grade transcripts or letters of recommendation, unless asked. This extra information is not as important at this preliminary step of the job-search process as it will be later on. Recruiters are concerned with seeing whether you look like a good candidate on paper. Thus, provide only the material that is relevant to this stage of the job-search process.

Resumé Writing Style

General writing style for a resumé is quite different from that used for a letter or a business report. Instead of using complete sentences and lengthy paragraphs, present information about yourself in as clear and concise a manner as possible. Remember, your resumé is a glimpse of you as a candidate for a particular position, not your life story! Use bulleted phrases that express complete ideas in a clear, concise manner.

Start new ideas or phrases on the left-hand side of the page whenever possible, and use bullets to make the lines of type easier to read quickly. To help sell yourself in your resumé, begin lines with action verbs. These are power words that grab the reader's attention and indicate what actions you have taken and what accomplishments you have. Action verbs are discussed in more detail below.

Resumé Accuracy

Is correctness that important? Yes! Your resumé needs to be accurate and correct. Do not estimate or approximate—be sure you are accurate with such things as titles, dates, and responsibilities. Today's recruiters are rather skeptical

of what people put on their resumés, feeling there has been a growing tendency to lie or exaggerate what is being said. Make sure all details on your resumé are factual and accurate.

Using Action Verbs

To ensure a dynamic and powerful resumé, use action verbs to describe your school and work experiences. Read through the following list, circling the verbs that apply to your school and work activities. Then, use this list as you draft your resumé.

act/perform	direct	lead	recommend
adapt	distribute	learn	report
advise	enforce	listen	research
analyze	entertain	locate	resolve
anticipate	estimate	log	restore
appraise	evaluate	maintain	retrieve
arrange	examine	manage	review
assemble	exhibit	run	
assess	expand	meet public	schedule
audit	explain	memorize	select
budget	explore	mentor	sell
calculate	find	motivate	service
check	fix	negotiate	set
collect	gather	observe	solve
communicate	generate	obtain	sort
compare	handle complaints	operate	speak
compile	handle equipment	order	study
compute	handle money	organize	supervise
confront	help people	perform	support
contact	illustrate	persuade	test
control	implement	plan	teach
coordinate	improve	prepare	train
cope	inform	process	translate
create	initiate	produce	troubleshoot
decide	inspect	program	understand
delegate	install	promote	update
deliver	instruct	protect	upgrade
demonstrate	interpret	question	verify
design	interview	raise	volunteer
determine	invent	read	work
develop	investigate	reduce	write

WHAT IS AN ELECTRONIC RESUMÉ?

The term electronic resumé is used to describe resumés that are scanned by a computer and those that are posted on the Internet. Both are electronic and differ greatly from the traditional paper resumé. Resumés that are scanned into software programs by employers are very focused, basic, and rely on key traits to promote individuals. Resumés posted on the Internet tend to look like traditional resumés initially, but the reader may discover that he or she can travel to additional areas of the resumé through hypertext or links.

Let's look further at the scannable resumé. To understand what is needed in a scannable resumé, you must be familiar with the capabilities of this resumé-scanning technology.

Resumé-scanning software has been used by Fortune 500 companies as well as small firms for some time now. This software performs many functions, including resumé scanning and tracking. This specialized software can also generate response letters to applicants. In addition, some systems help firms track who has been hired and can store other personnel information in a human resources database.

How does resumé-scanning software work? As each resumé is scanned into a computer, the program looks for those key words identified by company personnel as important. For example, a department manager may have the database search for a candidate with certain accounting knowledge. In addition to the accounting key words that are programmed into the software for that particular position, some programs can identify desirable employee traits and place them in various categories such as "must have" or "important to have." Resumé software programs rank resumés according to the number of "hits" or "matches" between the key words listed and those appearing on a resumé. The next section discusses an example of how an employer might process an electronic resumé.

Processing an Electronic Resumé

Many employers process all incoming resumés electronically. Resumés are scanned as images and special software is used to read the text. The text is then entered into an electronic database. When an employer is ready to review the resumés, the employer searches the database for possible candidates by selecting appropriate key words. Resumés that match a specified score for the relevant key words are then selected and printed.

Because computers read resumés differently than people do, recruiters recommend that job hunters prepare at least two versions of their resumé, one for scanning and one for human readers. On an electronic resumé, key words can be listed in a separate key word section (see Exhibit 5.6) or integrated into the text. In general, action verbs like "managed" or "facilitated," which are highly recommended for use in paper resumés, are not effective in electronic resumés because most scanning software programs look more for noun key words than verbs.

Why do companies use these scanning programs? Mostly because they save time, energy, and money. A computer can scan and store a resumé in seconds and quickly retrieve it a year later if necessary. Scanning programs objectively review information on resumés. Some employers feel this technology enables them to respond more quickly to applicants than the more labour-intensive methods of the past. To help you determine which type of resumé is appropriate for a specific company, first call the company if possible to see if it uses scanning software. Research the company website to further aid you in your application process. No matter how you transmit your resumé initially, remember to take an attractive paper copy of it to the interview.

Be aware that advice on the techniques of good electronic resumé writing varies. Some resumé-scanning software has become sophisticated enough to handle such format elements as italics or underlining. Keep yourself informed of the latest technologies used in the job-search arena and revise your own methods accordingly.

Resumé Scanning Advice

TIPS ON FORMATTING

Make sure your name is the first readable item and is on its own line.

Use plain white paper measuring 8.5 by 11 inches.

Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman, New Century Schoolbook, or Courier.

Use standard 10- to 14-point font.

Original should be laser printed.

Don't use italics or underlining. (You may use boldface and capital letters for emphasis.)

Don't use shading, boxes, borders, or graphics.

Don't staple or fold the resumé.

TIPS TO MAXIMIZE HITS

Have plenty of key words for the software to pick up.

Focus on using nouns (name of degree, software names, department names, etc.) rather than verbs, as in a more traditional resumé.

Use key words and industry jargon or buzzwords.

Describe experience with concrete words, not vague ideas.

Don't feel you must limit the resumé to one page.

Use common headings found in traditional resumés.

Consider including a cover letter identifying the position you are seeking.

Additional Guidelines for Using Scannable Resumés

The electronic era has ushered in new considerations and techniques for those wishing to compete for positions in the current electronic age. Gone are the days when you could just stuff a resumé into an envelope and mail it. Applicants must be aware of the latest technologies and methods of application.

If your resumé has been scanned, it is usually in that firm's permanent file. When following up on the disposition of your resumé, consider asking such questions as "Did you receive my resumé?" "Was I a match in your desired skill areas?" "Has my resumé been routed?" Some recruiters believe that the operative word for finding out if your resumé (and you) have made it to the next step of the screening process is "routed." If you follow the advice and recommendations discussed here and can demonstrate you are a good candidate for the position, you have a good chance of having your resumé routed to the right people in an organization. If you can achieve this, you are on your way to the next step in the job search process, the interview. Additional information and advice on scannable resumés is on the **Companion Website.**

No matter the type of resumé you create, you must do the best job possible for it to be an effective tool in your job-search campaign. It is easy to put together an average resumé. It takes some thinking and good writing to create a dynamic, outstanding, successful resumé. Be prepared for the commitment it takes to craft an outstanding resumé if you want to compete successfully in the job market.

As technologies change, this process has also changed a lot in the last year. When you upload your resumé to a website you will be faced with two different methods depending on the website. If the website has a browse feature to allow you to upload your resumé, the process is very straightforward and you simply have to attach your resumé as requested. This is the newer technology and works very well.

Many companies still use an online application template and require you to have a box and copy and paste a text (.txt) resumé. It is very important in these cases that you do not copy and paste your document directly without first converting it to a text-based document. Follow these steps below to convert.

- Open your resumé in Microsoft Word.
- Rename your resumé as something simple like Alan Wong Text Resumé, change the format to plain text (.txt) format, and resave.
- It will alert you to the fact that proceeding with this step will cause you to lose your formatting. Check OK.
- Open Notepad (found under Accessories).
- Open your newly saved resumé.
- You will notice that all of the formatting has been removed and likely your bullets have been replaced. This is what you want.
- Now modify it further by justifying everything to the left. Use spacing to separate sections. Take out all tabs. This resumé doesn't have to look nice, but it does have to be easily read by the employer. Take out any page numbers or second-page headers.
- Resave it and then copy and paste this version onto the website.

RESUMÉ TIPS

This section discusses a few tips to ensure the best possible resumé for your job search.

Personal Content

Stay away from mentioning anything personal that is not directly related to the job. This includes your age, date of birth, health status, and Social Insurance number.

Paper Choice

While most resumés are now sent electronically, you will sometimes need a hard copy. If you plan to send resumés by regular mail, drop it off directly to the company, or print off a copy to take to the interview, the safe choice for paper colour is white. A beige, buff, or light gray colour can also be used. Avoid bright and unusual colours; the business community is still fairly conservative in nature. Resumés should be printed on good bond paper (at least 20 lb/75 g/m2). When using special shades or types of paper, use the same paper for your cover letters and other correspondence. Special resumé paper and envelopes can be found in most office supply stores. If you plan to send a number of resumés by fax, the paper quality is not so important. Always select a font style and size that is easy to read (see Tips on Formatting, above).

Photos

The use of photographs is not recommended. For most people, photos are not relevant to the positions they seek. However, there is a growing trend toward including photos on resumés displayed on the Internet. Most job-search experts, however, feel that photos can easily be used to discriminate against individuals. Therefore, unless your personal appearance is key to the position (such as jobs in the broadcast or movie industries), stay away from photographs.

Word Processing Software

While computers are sold with many different software programs, the only program that interacts well with those used by the majority of businesses is Microsoft Office. You should use only Microsoft Word to create your resumé. Often you will purchase your computer with Microsoft Works already installed. I recommend you not use this program or other software programs to create your resumé as it will likely not be compatible when you send it to a potential employer. If they can't open it, they will simply move on to the next resumé that they can open.

Resumé Writing Templates

Today, the computer makes many routine tasks easier and less tedious. Resumé writing is one of these tasks. There are many resumé software programs on the market. Although you may look into these programs as an alternative to typing everything from scratch, beware. Nothing takes the place of a carefully created, well-planned, and well-implemented original resumé.

When you rely on these canned programs, your resumé ends up looking like everyone else's. A case in point is the Microsoft Office resumé template. Because it is part of a commonly used suite of software programs, its format and style are easily recognized. Resumé templates make some tasks easier initially, but the trade-off is originality. Do you want your resumé to look like all the others? You will also find these templates very difficult to edit or manipulate. They are almost impossible to convert to a text-based resumé to upload onto a website.

Optimal Resumé

Optimal Resumé is an online program to which many colleges and universities are now subscribing. This program uses some of the template technology but brings it to a new level. The program will take you step by step though the data-entry portion while formatting it for you. However, the difference is that you then have many options that will customize and change the appearance with a click of the button. Once you are satisfied with the basic set-up, you pull it into your Microsoft Word program and further edit the appearance. Optimal Resumé will then save it in RTF (Rich Text Format). Optimal Resumé also assists by providing examples for typical positions, action verbs, and other tools that you will have the option of using along the way. Check with your Career Services department to see whether your school subscribes to this or other similar programs.

Final Check

As mentioned earlier, accuracy and correctness are critical. Proofread your resumé meticulously, not only for clearly presented information, but for grammar and spelling. Because the resumé is such an important document for your future career, it must not have any errors. Recruiters who see errors may conclude a couple of things about the writer. First, if there are spelling, grammar, or formatting errors, they may wonder how skilled this writer is. Second, if there are obvious spelling mistakes or other errors, they may assume that the

writer is a careless person and conclude that this person may also be careless when performing the job.

Be a careful proofreader. Two techniques for proofing are reading backward and reading out loud. Read each word of your resumé, starting at the end of the last line and working your way to the left and to the top. This helps you uncover misspellings and typos. Reading your resumé out loud ensures readability and completeness. When proofing, examine the resumé for any mechanical errors. Word processing spellcheckers are a great way to catch the obvious mistakes, but they don't catch all of them.

Once you have finished proofing your resumé, show it to others whose opinions you value. Make any changes needed to improve the document at this point. Remember, resumé writing is very subjective. Everyone has an opinion, and there is no one right way to do it. Sometimes it is useful to seek out the opinions of others; however, if you receive too much conflicting advice, it is easy to become confused. Remember, this is *your* sales document. You must be satisfied with it. After all, you and only you will be the one to distribute it and talk about it during the interview.

Now, it is time to create (or update) your own resumé. Use the following as a final check before you get ready to print your copies.

RESUMÉ CHECKLIST

OVERALL APPEARANCE

_____ Are all the margins equal and does text appear balanced on the page?

_____ Is the content consistent in such elements as capitalization, verb tense, and punctuation?

_____ Are your key points either at the left margin or on the top half of the sheet?

_____ Does your name stand out, and are your address and phone number correct?

_____ Is your e-mail address professional and correct?

_____ Have you used bullets to make your statements easy to read?

CAREER OBJECTIVE

_____ If you have included this section, is the objective original?

_____ Is your objective specific to the position without limiting yourself too much?

_____ Did you put your statement in the third person and not use "my" or "I"?

PERSONAL SUMMARY

_____ If you have included this section, have you briefly described your accomplishments?

_____ Have you included specific personal skills?

_____ Have you included any experience with current electronic technology?

QUALIFICATIONS

_____ Have you listed your computer skills, including software you are experienced in using?

_____ Have you included any special training courses?

_____ Have you included any valid certificates or licenses such as CPR or WHMIS?

_____ Have you included all relevant skills that may not have been mentioned elsewhere?

_____ Have you included any professional memberships that are relevant?

_____ Have you provided the relevant skills learned from your education?

EDUCATION

_____ Have you included the correct title of your diploma/degree and the date it was granted?

_____ If a recent graduate, have you included your GPA?

WORK EXPERIENCE

_____ Have you included the names of the companies where you worked as well as the cities and provinces in which they are located?

_____ Have you included the terms of your positions, including the months and years?

_____ Have you remembered to include the titles of your positions?

_____ When you discussed your job responsibilities, were you descriptive and did you use action verbs whenever possible?

_____ Check through your job descriptions; do all the verb tenses agree with the time that you held the positions?

_____ Did you create scope and achievement statements?

_____ Did you omit managers' names, previous salary, and reasons for leaving?

_____ Have you included any co-op, field, or internship experience?

PERSONAL

_____ Have you provided meaningful and useful information?

_____ Have you included recent and relevant volunteer experience?

_____ Have you included relevant interests, associations, and activities?

RESUMÉ SAMPLES

Now that you have learned about resumé writing, let's look at some samples. Remember, how you organize and lay out your resumé on the page is just as subjective as what you choose to put into it. You must decide what looks best to you and what showcases your traits and skills most appropriately. Also, remember that it should be attractive and easy to read.

EXHIBIT 5.1   **Sample Chronological Resumé**

RYAN H. CHAN   416-495-8892

1221 Pleasent Hill Drive, Toronto, ON M59 2T9   rchan@linkup.com

OBJECTIVE

To secure the position of Programmer Analyst with IBC Enterprises

EDUCATION

May 2011   **COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST - GRADUATE**
                    Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

Honours: GPA 3.90/4.00
                    Dean's Honour List

QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated working ability with common hardware server and workstation platforms
- Practical experience with Networking Systems Linux, Windows Workstation/Server
- Programming languages used are Java, C, C++, Perl/Unix Shell script writing and Assembler
- Ability to analyze problem situations and generate creative solutions
- Apply structured approach to program design development testing and debugging
- French bilingual

WORK EXPERIENCE

2011–present   **Operations Supervisor**
                    SPEEDY PARCEL SERVICE CORPORATION, Toronto, ON

- Responsible for controlling production, efficiency, employee motivation, promotion and discipline
- Supervise 25 floor employees during second shift
- Demonstrated ability to apply workflow analysis
- Provide ongoing support of production applications systems including problem analysis, resolution, and reporting as necessary
- Design, construct, test, document, and implement new or existing applications
- Train new employees, hold communications meetings
- Evaluate employees in performance reviews

Sept.–Dec. 2010   **Co-op**
                    ABC AUTOMOTIVE PARTS, Toronto, ON

- Served as project leader for co-op consulting project
- Designed and implemented an inventory tracking system for automotive parts distributor, which improved efficiency by 20 percent
  Received an outstanding evaluation during my work term
- Gained experience with Java, C, C++

2009–2010   **Destination Specialist**
                    GROUND DELIVERY TRANSPORTATION, Toronto, ON
- Consulted with clients concerning systems operation
- Advised technical managers in operational techniques
- Conducted oral presentations for internal and external audiences

REFERENCES   Available upon request

EXHIBIT 5.2 **Sample Functional Resumé**

RYAN H. CHAN
1221 Pleasant Hill Drive
Toronto, ON   M5P 2T9
416-495-8892
rchan@linkup.com

OBJECTIVE

To secure the position of Programmer Analyst with IBC Enterprises

EDUCATION

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST - GRADUATE May 2011
Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

Honours:

GPA 3.90/4.00
Dean's Honour List

SKILLS

Supervisory:

- Responsible for controlling production, efficiency, employee motivation, promotion, and discipline
- Supervisor of 25 floor employees during second shift
- Project leader for co-op consulting project

Technical:

- Demonstrated working ability with common hardware server and workstation platforms
- Practical experience with Networking Systems Linux, Windows Workstation/Server
- Programming languages used are Java, C, C++, Perl/Unix Shell script writing and Assembler
- Ability to analyze problem situations and generate creative solutions
- Apply structured approach to program design development testing and debugging
- Designed and implemented an inventory tracking system for automotive parts distributor, which improved efficiency by 20 percent
- Demonstrated ability to apply workflow analysis
- Provide ongoing support of production applications systems including problem analysis, resolution, and reporting as necessary
- Design, construct, test, document, and implement new or existing applications

Communication:

- Consulted with clients concerning systems operation
- Advised technical managers in operational techniques
- Trained new employees and held communications meetings
- Evaluated employees in job performance reviews
- Conducted oral presentations for internal and external audiences
- French bilingual

EMPLOYMENT

Operations Supervisor, July 2011–present
    SPEEDY PARCEL SERVICE CORPORATION, Toronto, ON

Co-op, Sept.–Dec. 2010
    ABC AUTOMOTIVE PARTS, Toronto, ON

Destination Specialist, 2009–2010
    GROUND DELIVERY TRANSPORTATION, Toronto, ON

REFERENCES

Available upon request

EXHIBIT 5.3	Sample Two-Page Resumé

AISHA SMITH
11245 Anystreet, Sarnia, ON N2L 3H5 • 519-242-1047 • asmith@internet.net

OBJECTIVE

Hospitality Co-op position May–Aug. 2011

EDUCATION

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM MANAGEMENT   2009–present
Lambton College, Sarnia, ON
GPA 3.78/4.00
Candidate to graduate   August 2011

OSSD
St. Clair High School, Sarnia, ON

QUALIFICATIONS

- Smart Serve Certified
- Computer skills: Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet, e-mail
- Cash-handling and balancing experience
- 5 years' customer service experience
- WHMIS trained
- Valid CPR certificate
- Basic French

EXPERIENCE

Front Desk Agent   2010–present
ANY HOTEL, Sarnia, ON

- Efficiently check guests in and out of 175 room full service hotel
- Provide excellent customer service advising guests on local attractions, restaurants and events
- Maintain hotel standards while following all procedures
- Accurately perform night audit
- Confirm reservations and determine appropriate nightly rate
- Work efficiently and accurately under pressure and with little or no supervision

Co-op Student/Server   May–Sept. 2010
ANY RESORT, Huntsville, ON

- Served food and beverage in the resort's fine-dining restaurant in a professional manner
- Familiar with all menu items and made recommendations for special diets
- Recommended appropriate wine with meals
- Advised guests on resort and local activities
- Received outstanding evaluation

Food and Beverage Server   2009–2010
ANY RESTAURANT, Sarnia, ON

- Served food and beverage in a busy family-style restaurant
- Provided friendly and excellent customer service
- Demonstrated ability to discuss all 185 menu items
- Assisted with basic food preparation
- Learned the value of team work
- Developed excellent time management and organizational skills

EXHIBIT 5.3   **Sample Two-Page Resumé (*Continued*)**

AISHA SMITH

519-242-1047

VOLUNTEER

BIG SISTERS   Sarnia, ON
- Big Sister to 10-year-old girl for 1 year
- Active fundraiser for Big Sisters

CELEBRATION OF LIGHTS   Sarnia, ON
- Assist with set-up and take-down of annual event

INTERESTS

- Active in team sports including basketball and volleyball
- Member of the Lambton College Women's Volleyball Team
- Work out to maintain physical fitness
- Photography

PORTFOLIO

Available upon request

REFERENCES

Available upon request

EXHIBIT 5.4   **Other Sample Format**

CAROLYN STEVENSON

492 Middleton Lane   **403-430-3758**
Calgary, AB TOM 3Y5   stevenson@internet.ca

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Areas of strength in accounting include:

- Cost Accounting, Federal Tax Accounting, Accounting Information Systems
- Microsoft Office - Word, Excel, MS Access, Accpac computerized accounting package
- Take pride in producing accurate calculation for data used by management for budgeting, forecasting, and sales projections. Capable of building excellent working relationships with professional staffs at all levels.
- Decision-making and leadership skills used to prioritize daily workload. Organize projects and written reports and records. Consistent follow-up on work environment to ensure deadlines are met on time and to specifications.

EMPLOYMENT

Tax Associate   2011–present
CLARK AND LEWIS ACCOUNTING SERVICE, Calgary, AB

- Perform tax compliance, analysis, and research for consolidated companies
- Provide tax consulting to partnerships, trustees, and non-profit organizations
- Awarded excellent rating for customer service

Accounting Assistant   2009–2011
ASPEN HILL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, Windsor, ON

- Responsible for developing and presenting financial topics to residents
- Counselled individuals concerning personal finances
- Provided assistance to corporate controller in financial statement matters

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Commerce   2011
University of Windsor, Windsor, ON

Accounting Diploma   2008
Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

References available upon request

EXHIBIT 5.5 **Text Resumé for Applying Online**

RYAN H. CHAN
1221 Pleasant Hill Drive
Toronto, ON M5P 2T9
416-495-8892
rchan@linkup.com
* * * * * * * * * * * * *

OBJECTIVE
To secure the position of Programmer Analyst with IBC Enterprises

EDUCATION

May 2011
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST - GRADUATE
Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

* Honours
* GPA 3.90/4.00
* Dean's Honour List

QUALIFICATIONS

* Demonstrated working ability with common hardware server and workstation platforms
* Practical experience with Networking Systems Linux, Windows Workstation/Server
* Programming languages used are Java, C, C++, Perl/Unix Shell script writing and Assembler
* Ability to analyze problem situations and generate creative solutions
* Apply structured approach to program design development testing and debugging
* French bilingual

WORK EXPERIENCE

2011–present
SPEEDY PARCEL SERVICE CORPORATION, Toronto, ON

* Responsible for controlling production, efficiency, employee motivation, promotion, and discipline
* Supervise 25 floor employees during second shift
* Demonstrated ability to apply workflow analysis
* Provide ongoing support of production applications systems including problem analysis, resolution, and reporting as necessary
* Design, construct, test, document, and implement new or existing applications
* Train new employees, hold communications meetings

Sept.–Dec. 2010
ABC AUTOMOTIVE PARTS, Toronto, ON

* Served as project leader for co-op consulting project
* Designed and implemented an inventory tracking system for automotive parts distributor, which improved efficiency by 20 percent
* Received an outstanding evaluation during my work term
* Gained experience with Java, C, C++,

2009–2010
GROUND DELIVERY TRANSPORTATION, Toronto, ON

* Consulted with clients concerning systems operation
* Advised technical managers in operational techniques
* Conducted oral presentations for internal and external audiences

REFERENCES Available upon request

EXHIBIT 5.6   **Sample Scannable (Key Word) Resumé**

Cynthia Salazar

1347 Quincy Road, Toronto, ON M5P 2X3
416-555-8981
Email: salazarc@quicklink.com

Key Words: Bachelor's Degree in Business, 8 years analyst experience, experienced report writer, developed sales performance guidelines, experienced financial analyst, excellent presentation skills, team player, effective manager and leader, excellent sales performance, experience with contract sales force. Received sales award, increased sales by 15 percent. Hired, trained, and managed sales staff.

Work Experience
2011–Present Sales Analyst, Comco Products, Toronto, ON
- Formulate recommendations relative to sales performance data
- Perform analysis of both internal and external sales history
- Create reports for upper and mid-level management
- Deliver presentations on performance data and national trends
- Supervise task force group evaluating current sales concepts

2009–2010, Senior Sales Representative, Office Solutions, Edmonton, AB
- Supervised 12 junior sales associates in a four-state region
- Hired, trained, and managed new sales associates; analyzed performance of current general sales staff
- Managed own sales region of 23 locations with an average increase in sales of 15 percent

2008–2009, Sales Associate, Leland Homes, Toronto, ON
- Developed marketing plans and media placement for new home construction company
- Developed leads, contacted sales prospects, presented three different residential communities to clients
- Received Sales Associate of the Year Award for 20 percent increase in annual sales

Education
B.A. in Marketing, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON
Advanced Marketing Techniques Diploma, Sales Institute Inc.

References

REFERENCES

Although the resumé is critical to career success, another element to a successful job search must also be explored—finding and using references. Many questions such as these arise when thinking about selecting references:

- Do I really need to have references?
- Will they be checked?
- How many should I have?
- Whom should I select?
- What should they say about me?

Companies differ in their requirements for references, but most do want them and will check them. Employers want to ensure they are hiring the best people. They also want to know that they are hiring good people in general. When they begin checking references, they are fairly confident that you can handle the job and fit into the firm. They now want some reassurances from people who know you that their evaluation of you is correct. They want a final blessing, so to speak, before they continue with the hiring process.

So, when are references requested? Some companies want them upfront, others after the first interview or two. Others want them at the end of the interview process, but before they consider making a job offer. So, what should you do?

This information varies greatly depending on whom you speak to. Many experts suggest putting "References available upon request" at the bottom of your resumé. You would then take your references to an interview or wait for the potential employer to ask you for them. This is in fact the most common practice.

However, you need to remember that the purpose of submitting a resumé is to sell yourself by providing relevant information. Certainly references are part of this process, and providing them in advance indicates you are well-prepared in your application. Your reference list also gives additional insight to the employer and makes it easier to hire you.

Recruiters often expect that co-op students and recent graduates will provide references with the application. Because of the large volume of resumés they are looking through, often hurriedly, having references handy saves them a lot of time in the long run. There is also a growing trend among some employers to do reference checks prior to the interview. Even if your references are not needed at this time, submitting them in advance means at the very least that your application is complete.

The bottom line is you *do* need references, and they should be good ones. If recruiters ask you for references, they will be checked. Because it is not efficient to check references by mail, references are usually contacted by phone. Some employers are now checking references by e-mail or sending out fill-in-the-blank surveys through e-mail.

The dynamics of a telephone conversation are the best way to achieve the goals of both the recruiter and the person giving the reference. Let's take a look at some answers to frequently asked questions about references.

How Many References Should I Have?

Many people use three to five individuals. Some may be personal references and others may be professional ones. Keep in mind that when recruiters check references, they may just call the first and second names on the list. Others may work their way down the list until they reach someone. Some recruiters may contact each one listed.

Whom Should I Ask?

Currently, we refer to four categories of references: employment (past employers, co-workers), professional (business contacts, professional or community organization contacts), academic (professors, instructors, counsellors), and personal (people who know you personally). Whether you use three or four categories, you must decide how many you want in each. Remember to focus on work-related individuals. Never use members of your immediate family, and always select people who are articulate and fairly easy to contact. Most employers would rather speak to other employers, however, so this should be your first area of concentration.

Reference Formatting

It is usually recommended that you create a separate page to attach to your resumé or to take to an interview. This page should have a full header that matches the header on your resumé. The information should be presented in a professional manner that matches the rest of your resumé in both font style and paper. A sample reference list format is shown in Exhibit 5.7.

EXHIBIT 5.7   **Reference List Format**

AISHA SMITH
11245 Anystreet,Sarnia, ON N2L 3H5 • 519-242-1047 • asmith@internet.net

REFERENCES

John Smith
General Manager
Any Hotel
123 Any St.
Sarnia ON N7T 1L5
(519) 542-2995
John.smith@anyhotel.com

Mary Garcia
Front Office Manager
Any Resort
123 Anylake Dr.
Huntsville ON M3V 5P7
(705) 339-1234
mgarcia@anyresort.ca

Sam Black
Professor
Lambton College
1457 London Rd.
Sarnia ON N7S 6K4
(519) 542-7751 Ext. 4444
sam.black@lambton.on.ca

What Should They Say About Me?

It depends. Professional references address your work ethic, the quality of your work, your personality on the job, and similar qualities. Academic references will comment about your class attendance, participation, punctuality, and your ability to get along with classmates. Personal references are asked about your character and personality in general.

Other Advice for Handling References

Get permission from your intended references before you give their names to prospective employers. Remember, you are asking these people to assist you in your job search. You want to be courteous about it, and you want them to be prepared. Tell your references about your job targets or your goals and make them aware of your most marketable traits. Alert them to any specific calls from employers they may receive. Inform them of the position that relates to the call and your qualifications for that position. Your references should speak as directly as possible to a particular opening and your ability to fill it. Ask your references if they prefer to be contacted at work or at home. It is also a good idea to find out the best time of the day or evening to contact them.

Determine which references will be most appropriate for you. Select people who are willing and eager to brag about you! At the same time, select people who converse easily and can handle potentially difficult questions. Also remember, people must be available to receive phone calls about you: Don't select someone who is always out of town or in meetings.

Be careful not to overuse people who have agreed to be your references. It may be useful to select two individuals as your key references and rotate their names to the top of your reference list. Also, call your references to let them know each time you give their names to potential employers. Tell them to expect the calls.

Choose your references based on their knowledge of you rather than on their prestige. Don't select someone who has an impressive title or position but very little knowledge about you.

Keep your references reasonably updated on the progress of your job search. Finally, remember to thank the people who serve as your references. The best call your reference can receive is one in which you tell them how happy you are in your new position!

Questions Your References Should Expect What are some typical questions that references are asked? Different employers want to know different things so they may have unique questions. However, there are some common ones that you should make your references aware of.

1. What is your relationship to the candidate?
2. How long have you known the candidate?
3. When and why did he/she leave the job?
4. What was the candidate's attendance like at work?
5. What were his/her duties?
6. How was the candidate's cooperation with supervisors and co-workers?
7. What are the candidate's strengths?
8. What are the candidate's weaknesses?
9. How adaptable is the candidate to changes in the workplace?
10. Was he/she self-motivated?

11. How does this candidate handle stress?

12. What are the applicant's interpersonal and communication skills like?

13. Would you rehire the candidate if you had the opportunity?

14. Is there anything else you would like to add?

These sample questions are most appropriately asked of an employer. While recruiters may ask personal references some questions similar to these (such as "How long have you known the candidate?" and "What are the candidate's strengths?"), generally recruiters ask questions about a candidate's personality, honesty, character, and so on. When speaking to your academic references they will want to know about attendance, participation, quality of work, and consideration of classmates.

As you can see, selecting and using references goes well beyond casually asking a friend to be a reference. Exhibit 5.7 offered a format for your reference sheet that you may tailor to your own needs. Remember, have your reference sheet with you at all times while interviewing. This concludes the discussion of two very critical tools for any job search success: resumés and references. Both deserve your time and effort to develop. Both will serve you well in getting that job or changing to the career you have always dreamed about.

Internet Resumé Sites

The following is a listing of some interesting locations on the Internet for further tips, examples, and advice. Please remember this: Sites on the Internet change constantly; therefore, some of the addresses below may be relocated or may have disappeared by the time you read this. Also, the listing of Internet sites in this book in no way indicates recommendations or endorsements by Pearson Canada or by the authors. These are listed for information only.

Workopolis
www.workopolis.com

Quintessential Careers
www.quintcareers.com

Monster
www.monster.ca

Job Web
www.jobweb.com

College Grad Job Hunter
www.collegegrad.com

Job Hunters Bible
www.jobhuntersbible.com

The Riley Guide
www.rileyguide.com

MY *Focus*   ESPECIALLY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

1. How are resumés and references critical components of your self-promotion? Describe how they will assist you with your self-promotion.

2. Focusing on a possible personal summary for your resumé, what would you include as your top three traits?

3. For your reference list, how will your reference choices be able to market you? What will their knowledge of you be based on?

FINDING YOUR FOCUS

1. With your knowledge of reverse chronological and functional resumés, which one is the best for you and why?

2. Select either a current or past position and describe that position using duty, scope, and achievement statements.

3. How do you feel about the trend toward scanning resumés into scanning software? Is it a good idea? How can it work for and against you?

4. Develop your list of references, deciding how many and whom to include in each category: employment, professional, academic, and personal. Can you ever have too many references? What other assistance can references give you in your job search?