

<b>The Effective Resume, Cover Letter and Follow-up Letter</b>		<b>Student/Class Goal</b> Students are preparing to enter the workforce and want to create the necessary tools for their job search.
<b>Outcome</b> <i>(lesson objective)</i> Student will produce and publish polished resume, cover letter and follow-up letter.		<b>Time Frame</b> Up to 12 hours
<b>Standard</b> <i>Convey Ideas in Writing</i>		<b>NRS EFL 6</b>
<b>COPS</b> Determine the purpose for communicating.	<b>Activity Addresses Components of Performance</b> As students prepare for the workforce, they will need to become proficient in building their resume.	
Organize and present the information to serve the purpose, context, and audience.	Students will choose between various resume formats the one that best portrays their attributes for a desired job.	
Pay attention to the conventions of the English language usage, including grammar, spelling, and sentence structure to minimize barriers to readers' comprehension.	Mechanics, usage, grammar and spelling errors should not be evident in their resume, cover or follow-up letter so as not to discourage a future employer.	
Seek feedback and revise to enhance the effectiveness of communication.	The resume checklist is provided to for reviewer and writer to critique the effectiveness of the resume.	
<b>Materials</b> Sample Chronological Resume Sample Functional Resume <i>Resume Checklist</i> Sample Cover Letter Sample Follow-up Letter Computer with Word Resume paper (optional)		
<b>Learner Prior Knowledge</b> Discuss the purpose and importance of creating a resume. Elicit students' prior knowledge via brainstorming.		
<b>Instructional Activities</b> Step 1 – There are several basic types of resumes used to apply for job openings. Depending on your personal circumstances, choose a chronological, a functional, combination, or a targeted resume.  <b>Chronological Resume</b> A chronological resume starts by listing your work history, with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current, or most recent job, first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history.  <b>Functional Resume</b> A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.  Among jobseekers who should consider a functional format:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those with very diverse experiences that don't add up to a clear-cut career path.</li> <li>• College students with minimal experience and/or experience unrelated to their chosen career field.</li> <li>• Career-changers who wish to enter a field very different from what all their previous experience points to.</li> <li>• Those with gaps in their work history, such as homemakers who took time to raise and family and now wish to return to the workplace. For them, a chronological format can draw undue attention to those gaps, while a functional resume enables them to portray transferable skills attained through such activities as domestic management and volunteer work.</li> <li>• Military transitioners entering a different field from the work they did in the military.</li> <li>• Job-seekers whose predominate or most relevant experience has been unpaid, such as volunteer work or college activities (coursework, class projects, extracurricular organizations, and sports).</li> </ul>		

- Those who performed very similar activities throughout their past jobs who want to avoid repeating those activities in a chronological job listing.
- Job-seekers looking for a position for which a chronological listing would make them look "overqualified."
- Older workers seeking to deemphasize a lengthy job history.

The article [Chronological vs. Functional: Which Resume is For You?](#) also has some important questions for students to ask themselves to determine which resume type is best for them.

**Combination Resume** A combination resume lists your skills and experience first. Your employment history is listed next. With this type of resume you can highlight the skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for, and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer.

**Targeted Resume** A targeted resume is a resume that is customized so that it specifically highlights the experience and skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for. It definitely takes more work to write a targeted resume than to just click to apply with your existing resume. However, it's well worth the effort, especially when applying for jobs that are a perfect match for your qualifications and experience.

Step 2 – Students with minimal work experience will opt for creating a functional resume. Brainstorm with group, write down skills and accomplishments. Don't worry at this stage which ones are relevant. Sort and edit later, don't forget anything that might help, including:

- Volunteer experience
- Experience working in another country, industry, or job function
- Education, academic background, and on-the-job training
- Skills, especially computers and language skills
- Clubs and community affiliations
- Hobby, craft, and do-it-yourself knowhow

What is the very best, most relevant selling point on your resume? Give your strongest asset top billing. You might also subdivide your experience into groups; for instance general people skills and more concrete accomplishments. Arrange the resume by category, not by time. Rather than a section for each job, have a section for each sort of experience or skill you can offer. Computer skills, education, and experience are the obvious divisions. When listing experience, begin each line with an active verb. It adds punch to the writing and gives the list a consistent tone and structure.

Add a brief summary at the beginning. This is more than an objective about obtaining a full-time job. Instead, it is the best condensed version of your offerings you can write. Ideally, a busy recruiter or hiring manager should be able to tell whether it's worth reading more of your resume within about 20-40 seconds. Add a brief chronology of your work history at the end. They can be one-line descriptions, including simply the company, your title, and the year in which you worked there. Prepare draft and type into Word. Check online at [Microsoft Word](#) for appropriate templates.

Step 3 – Share your resume with a peer and use the *Resume Checklist* to determine completeness. Teacher recommendations can also be incorporated for final product. Rubrics can also be found online to use, such as [Functional Resume Rubric](#).

Step 4 –The cover letter serves as your introduction to a prospective employer when you mail or e-mail your resume. Your cover letter should never be exactly the same twice, as you should customize it to the particular advertised requirements of each individual employer.

The letter should be fairly short in length: 3 or 4 paragraphs. Identify to whom the letter should be addressed if at all possible. (This might take a little research, the company website, etc.) Only when it's not possible to find the Human Resources Director's name, direct the letter to "Dear Sir or Madam."

If asked to mention your salary requirements, don't fall for this trap. It is conventional wisdom that the first one to mention a solid number in negotiations loses. Just reply with a general statement such as "I'm sure a company with a solid reputation like yours compensates its employees fairly."

Your letter should, of course, be free of grammatical errors. Do not use the pronoun "I" very much: remember, this is your chance to show the employer what *you* can do for them. Your cover letter paper should match that of your resume.

Step 5 – The follow-up letter is similar to the cover letter; the difference is that the follow-up letter is written after an interview has been conducted, and might be one of your final chances of impressing a potential employer. The letter should be addressed to the person with whom you interviewed. If you interviewed with more than one person, try to determine who the decision maker is and address it to that person, with copies going to everyone else involved in the interview.

Prepare and send the thank you or follow-up letter immediately after the interview. Make it clear you remain interested in the position and re-iterate the skills and abilities you have that will allow you to do the best job possible. Thank the employer for any special treatment you received at the interview (e.g., lunch, a tour of the operations, etc.).

Be sure to comply with any requests the interviewer may have made during the interview, e.g., references, work samples, etc. End the letter by again asserting how confident you are that you could do the job, and request another meeting in the near future

**Assessment/Evidence** *(based on outcome)*

Resume  
Resume Checklist  
Cover letter  
Follow-up letter

**Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation**

*This lesson has not yet been field tested.*

**Next Steps**

**Technology Integration**

Chronological vs. Functional: Which Resume is For You? [http://www.execsearches.com/articles/Chronological\\_vs\\_Functional.htm](http://www.execsearches.com/articles/Chronological_vs_Functional.htm)  
Functional Resume Rubric [http://fc.amdsb.ca/~Randy\\_Johnson/S03BE5738.78/Rubric%20Functional%20Resume.pdf](http://fc.amdsb.ca/~Randy_Johnson/S03BE5738.78/Rubric%20Functional%20Resume.pdf)

**Purposeful/Transparent**

Part of the job search process is to put together an effective resume that gives the prospective employer your work history and qualifications for their business.

**Contextual**

Students will actually create their resume in preparation for a prospective job and also develop cover and follow-up letters to complete the process.

**Building Expertise**

Students may know about resumes, but understanding about their personal circumstances and the types of resumes will help them determine exactly what kind of resume is best for their situation.

# Functional Resume Sample Format

Darla M. Booth  
1234 Happy Trail  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
330-562-8695  
Cell: 313-566-9865  
e-mail: [dbooth101@roadrunner.com](mailto:dbooth101@roadrunner.com)

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## OBJECTIVE

To obtain a secretarial/receptionist position where I can utilize my computer and clerical skills to contribute to an organization.

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Windows	Filing/editing	Accounting
Office Procedures	Business English, Math	Customer Service skills
Typing (55 wpm)	Telephone Etiquette	Management Skills

## EDUCATION

GED earned July 2010 (ABLE @ The Gault Family Learning Center, Wooster, OH)  
Office & Technology Program, Wayne County Schools Career Center, Smithville, OH  
(3 years completed)

## EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

Developed ability to work in fast-paced environment  
Maintained excellent customer service and rapport  
Diplomatically resolved customer complaints on as-needed basis  
Accurately calculated and made daily deposits up to \$20,000  
Motivated and supervised 15+ employees on daily basis  
Delegated responsibilities to employees to meet company's expectations

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Data Entry Operator, TMI, Martinsburg, WV, temporary assignment      12/97-2009  
Assistant Manager, Roger's Fuel Center, Hagerstown, MD      06/95-11/97

## REFERENCES

Available upon request

# Chronological Resume Sample Format

Shannon Barnet  
234 Northwestern Ave.  
Wooster, OH 44691  
330-562-8695  
Cell: 313-566-9865  
e-mail: [barnetrocks@roadrunner.com](mailto:barnetrocks@roadrunner.com)

## ***Objective***

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To find a position that I am proud of and in which I can prove my hardworking ability and contribute to the growth of the organization.

## ***Education***

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GED earned July, 2010 (through the ABLE program at the Gault Family Learning Center, Wooster, OH)

Smithville High School

Occupational Work Adjustment Program – worked in middle school office using the copier, laminator, sorted mail, and ran errands. Completed 2 years.

## ***Work Experience***

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Kidron Incorporated

Kidron, OH, 2007-2009

### **Laborer**

- Insulated truck body wall; measured areas for refrigeration units
- Applied corner strips to body interiors and caulked all crevices
- Used band saw to cut door molding strips; also used drills, welding torch, rivet guns, table saw, and tape measure

Bert's Gas

Orrville, OH, 2004-2007

### **Cashier**

- Assisted with customer gas purchases
- Sold lottery tickets and money orders

Buehler's Restaurant

Orrville, OH 2001-2004

### **Waitress**

- Provided friendly, efficient service to restaurant customers
- Took orders and delivered their food & drinks

McDonald's

Orrville, OH 1999-2001

### **Cashier/Food prep**

- Took and prepared customer's food & drink orders
- Kept all areas of the restaurant clean and neat
- Trained new employees on restaurant procedures

**References available upon request**

## RESUME CHECKLIST

### Reviewer

Circle **Yes** for each objective below that is satisfactorily met. Circle **No** if you don't find the objective in the resume.

### Writer

If the reviewer circled **No**, review your resume and make any necessary corrections.

Clearly stated objective? (What <i>you</i> can do for company)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Clear organization – either functional (stresses skills and education) or chronological (stresses work experience)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Essentials all included: skills, education, employment history	<b>Yes/No</b>
Earning of GED noted in Education section (“earned” or “expected”)	<b>Yes/No</b>
References either listed on resume, additional page, or statement that “References are available upon request” included	<b>Yes/No</b>
Pleasing visual format...not too crowded (ample white space)	<b>Yes/No</b>
No inappropriate personal information included (e.g., age, weight, church attended, etc.)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Is correct punctuation used throughout?	<b>Yes/No</b>
Is document grammatically correct? (E.g., subject-verb agreement, proper tenses used, etc.)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Is resume printed on resume paper of a modest business color? (e.g., beige, manila, cream, gray – no bright colors)	<b>Yes/No</b>

Writer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Shannon Barnet  
234 Northwestern Ave.  
Wooster, OH 44691  
330-562-8695  
Cell: 313-566-9865  
e-mail: [barnetrocks@roadrunner.com](mailto:barnetrocks@roadrunner.com)

July 18, 2010

Director of Personnel  
Buehler's Food Markets  
3540 Burbank Road  
Wooster, OH 44691

Dear Director of Personnel:

I am very interested in applying for a position with your company. I am looking for a long-term position that will allow me to utilize my skills. I am available for part-time or full-time employment.

I am a reliable person who works very well independently or in a team environment. I learn very quickly and take great pride in my work. I am willing to work in any position.

Enclosed please find my resume, which describes my work experience and education. I am available at any mutually convenient time for an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shannon Barnet

# SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Shannon Barnet  
234 Northwestern Ave.  
Wooster, OH 44691  
330-562-8695  
Cell: 313-566-9865  
e-mail: [barnetrocks@roadrunner.com](mailto:barnetrocks@roadrunner.com)

July 18, 2010

John Smith, Director of Personnel  
Buehler's Food Markets  
3540 Burbank Road  
Wooster, OH 44691

Dear Mr. Smith:

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview with your company for the position of deli clerk. I enjoyed our conversation and believe my experience and education would complement Buehler's Foods. I look forward to being able to put my extensive experience and work ethic to the test at your store.

As we discussed, I have enclosed three letters of reference from my professional acquaintances.

Again, thank you for your time. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Shannon Barnet