

# Resume Information

- Keep your resume one page in length.
  - Employers spend an average of 30 seconds reviewing your resume.
  - Your resume needs to be neat and easy to read.
    - Use bullets and bolding.
- Include all your contact information at the top of the page. Include your name, address, phone number and email.
- If you are not sending a cover letter, include an objective
  - Example Objective: To obtain a full-time *Name of position* position within *Company Name*.
- Areas of a resume:
  - Break down your information into Education, Work Experience and (if needed) another heading such as Other Skills or Certifications.
    - Education
      - List all colleges you have attended along with the degrees you received and dates you attended (If you have not graduated yet, include your anticipated grad date).
      - You can exclude high school education.
    - Work Experience
      - List the job you are currently working at first and work your way back down the page.
      - List the name and location of company, your position and dates of employment.
      - List specific tasks and accomplishments.
    - Other Skills
      - You can use this area to list other skills, abilities or certifications.
- Proofread your resume and have someone else read it.
- Print your resume on heavier paper.

# Joe Smith

123 College Drive  
Bismarck, ND 58505

Home Phone (701) 111-1111  
Cell Phone (701) 222-2222

Email: name@hotmail.com

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## Objective

To obtain a full-time *Name of Position* position within *Company Name*.

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## Education

Bismarck State College  
**Associates of Applied Science**

Bismarck, ND  
Anticipated Grad Date May 2006

Dickinson State University  
**General Education Courses**

Dickinson, ND  
August 2003-May 2004

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## Work Experience

Daycare Center  
**Level 1 Childcare Provider**

Bismarck, ND  
May 2004 - Present

- Interact with the infants and care for them
- Supervise and help with crafts and games with toddlers and school age children
- Create fun and educational activities for toddlers and school age children

Grocery Store  
**Bookkeeper/Cashier**

Dickinson, ND  
August 2003 – May 2004

- Recorded and balanced sales, accounts payable, and accounts receivable in ledger
- Placed orders over the computer
- Assisted customers
- Ran and operated registers

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## Computer Skills

### Software

- Microsoft Windows XP, ME, 98, 95
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Works
- Microsoft Access
- Microsoft Excel
- Peachtree
- PeopleSoft

# Reference Sheet

- All references should be on a separate sheet of paper. Your name and contact information should be on the top.
- 4 types of references:
  - Work Related – includes past employers, coworkers or clients who can speak about your specific employment experience. You can also list the people for whom you perform volunteer activities, babysitting, lawn mowing and other odd jobs.
  - Professional – people who know you on a professional basis. May include contacts from business and sales, clubs or professional and community organizations.
  - Academic – instructors and vocational counselors who can speak about your academic endeavors.
  - Personal – only use a personal reference if you have no work related, professional or academic ones to offer. Friends and neighbors who know you personally and can describe your self-management skills. Doctors, librarians and landlords are a few more examples.
- When using someone as a reference, always get permission first.
- Tell them about your job search and the job opportunities you're seeking.
- Coach them so they'll be prepared to present you as an ideal candidate.
- Find out if the reference would prefer to be contacted at work or home.
- Be prepared to provide the reference's occupation, phone number, length of time you've known each other and the nature of the relationship.
- Send your reference a thank you note when you know they have given you a reference.

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## References

- *Name of reference*  
*Company*  
*Title*  
*Phone Number*
- Mrs. Sue Johnson  
Daycare Center  
Daycare Director  
701-333-3333
- Mr. Jack Thompson  
Bismarck State College  
Math Instructor  
701-444-4444

# Do's and Don'ts for Resume Writing

## *Do's*

- Lead with your strongest statements that are related to the job or goal.
- Emphasize your skills.
- Keep it brief.
- Use 8 ½" x 11" paper.
- Correct all typographical, grammatical and spelling errors.
- Include your employment related accomplishments.
- Target your qualifications.
- Clearly communicate your purpose and value to employers.
- Maintain eye-appealing visual appearance.
- Use the best format to showcase your skills.
- Appear neat, well organized and professional.
- Be creative and make your resume relevant to the job.
- Always include a cover letter when mailing your resume.

## *Don'ts*

- Don't use abbreviations.
- Don't mention salary expectations or wage history.
- Don't print on a dot matrix printer.
- Don't use fancy typeset, binders or colorful paper.
- Don't send a photograph of yourself.
- Don't make statements that you cannot prove.
- Don't include personal information (age, height, etc).
- Don't include religious or political affiliation, unless you're applying for a job with one of these organizations.
- Don't use the title "resume".
- Don't include references on a resume (use a separate sheet).
- Don't include hobbies or social interests unless they contribute to your objective.
- Don't use repetitious statements.

## Reviewing your resume

- Resume critique questions:
  - Appearance
    - Does it look good without reading it?
  - Format
    - Was the best format used to sell your strengths?
  - Skills
    - Is the resume skills-based? Did you list a number of your skills?
  - Keywords
    - Are keywords and phrases easy to identify?
  - Focus
    - Does the content point to your employment objective?
  - Scan ability
    - Is it designed to be easily read by a scanning system?
  - Proofing
    - Is it free from grammar, spelling or typing errors?
  - Length
    - Is it a reasonable length?
  - Integrity
    - Is it an honest presentation of your best qualities?
  - Appropriate
    - Does the content capture an employer's interest?

## Cover Letter Information

- Always include a cover letter when mailing out a resume.
- Include your name address, city, state, zip and date at the top of the page.
- Include the name and title of the employer (or if not known, address it to Human Resources Manager), company name, city, state and zip.
- Opening paragraph
  - List which position you are applying for and where you found the job announcement.
- Body of the letter
  - Have the job announcement in front of you when you are writing the letter.
    - Include exact wording from the announcement such as specific skills or duties you have had experience with or would be capable of doing.
- Ending paragraph
  - Thank the employer for their time and express your interest in an interview.
- Remember to type and sign your name at the bottom.

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123 College Drive  
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Home Phone (701) 111-1111    Email: [Name@hotmail.com](mailto:Name@hotmail.com)  
Cell Phone (701) 222-2222

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March 10, 2006

Mr. Jim Johnson  
Human Resources Manager  
Company A  
456 Company Street  
Bismarck, ND 58504

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Please consider me for the position of *(Name of Position)* which was listed in the Sunday edition of the Bismarck Tribune. I am very much interested in this position and have enclosed my resume for your review.

*[Use this area to list specific skills, education, and abilities you have that are listed in the job announcement.]*

So that we can discuss this exciting opportunity further, please call me for an interview. You can reach me at (701)-111-1111 or at [name@hotmail.com](mailto:name@hotmail.com). Thank you for your time and consideration. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Joe Smith

## Tips for Completing Applications

- Write out responses using a separate sheet of paper before completing the application. An alternative is to obtain a second application.
- Whenever possible, take the application home so you can fill it out where you're comfortable and take your time. Read the directions carefully. It's often helpful to discuss your answers with someone else to give you perspective and direction to your responses.
- A typed application, although optional, always creates a good impression with an employer.
- Use correction fluid sparingly for fixing minor errors. Consider using a black, erasable pen or a correction ribbon on your typewriter.
- Double-check grammar, spelling and content. When possible, ask someone to proofread it.
- Include skills on the application that are related to the type of position for which you're applying.
- Never write "See Resume" on the application.
- When explaining gaps in your employment, describe what you did in positive terms that can be related to employment. For example, if you spent time caring for a sick family member, refer to skills used in occupations like home health aide.

## Interview Information

- The interview starts when you enter the parking lot. Be careful of your actions as you arrive (you never know who's watching!).
  - Speeding
  - Littering
  - Being rude to the receptionist/personnel
- Nonverbal communication
  - More than 50% of your communication is nonverbal. Your posture, walk, dress, facial movement, energy, gestures and eye contact are all nonverbal signals. Be aware of the signals you are sending.
- What to wear to the interview
  - Guys – dress pants (khakis) and a nice button down shirt or polo.
    - If it is for a more professional position wear a suit.
  - Girls – dress pants/skirt and a blouse.
- What not to wear to the interview
  - Jeans with holes
  - Baseball caps
  - T-shirts
  - Heavy perfume/cologne
  - Piercings – remove all facial peircings except for ears
- Prepare for the interview
  - Be on time – know how long it will take you to get to the interview site and plan to be early.
  - Study the company – do some research and be knowledgeable about the company.
  - Be prepared to ask questions about the company/position.
  - Be careful of your actions the night before.
    - Employers don't want to interview anyone with a hangover!

## Interview Information (continued)

- Handling Difficult questions
  - Welcome all questions with a smile.
  - Give direct, honest answers. Take your time. Develop the answer in your head before you respond. If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be repeated or clarified. You don't have to rush, but don't be indecisive.
  - Ask questions in return.
  - Be prepared. Answering difficult questions that may reflect negatively on you can be answered by using the "sandwich model".
    - This model has a positive statement followed by admitting the negative situation, and ending with another positive statement about what you've done to overcome the problem. Ending with a positive statement leaves a positive impression. Anticipate tough questions and practice beforehand.
- Follow-up
  - Evaluate the interview. What went well in the interview? How can you improve?
  - Send thank you letters or notes within 24 hours to each person to whom you interviewed.
    - Basic parts of a Thank You letter/note:
      - Be brief and to the point. Note the job you interviewed for along with the date of your interview.
      - Always address a thank you letter to a person by name and title.
      - Statement of appreciation.
      - Expressions of interest in the job.
      - Brief restatement of qualifications/skills.
      - An opportunity to add additional information you failed to mention.

## Sample Interview Questions

- Tell me a little bit about yourself.
- What about this position has interested you?
- How did you become interested in this industry/career?
- What do you know about our company?
- Why do you want to work for our company?
- Tell me about your education and training you have received.
- What unique experiences or qualifications separate you from the other candidates?
- What do you feel are your strengths?
- What do you feel are your weaknesses?
- Explain to me your definition of a good work ethic.
- Where do you plan to be 5 years from now? 10 years from now?
- Describe a time when you were faced with a challenging situation and how you handled it?
- Are you at your best when you work alone or in a group?
- What are your short and long term goals?
- What would your former boss/instructor say about you?
- What do you feel has been your greatest accomplishment so far?
- What previous experiences prepared you for this position?

## Questions to Ask in an Interview

- What are the responsibilities and accountabilities?
- How well is the position defined? Can its duties be expanded?
- Would you describe an average day on this job?
- What is the history of the position?
- What aspects of this job would you like to see performed better?
- What are the key challenges or problems of this position?
- Where can I go from here, assuming that I meet/exceed the job responsibilities?
- How would you describe the ideal candidate?
- What is the employer's short and long range objectives?
- What are some outside influences that affect company growth?
- Where does the company excel? What are its limitations?
- When and how will I be evaluated? What are the performance standards?
- With whom would I be working? Who would be my supervisor? Who would I supervise?
- What is the department's environment like?
- When will you make the hiring decision?

## Reasons People Don't Get Hired

- Poor personal appearance.
- Over-aggressiveness.
- Inability to express information clearly.
- Lack of interest and enthusiasm.
- Lack of planning for career – no purpose or goal.
- Nervousness, lack of confidence and poise.
- Overemphasis on money.
- Unwillingness to start at the bottom.
- Lack of tact and courtesy.
- Lack of maturity.
- Negative attitude about past employers.
- No genuine interest in the employer or job.
- No eye contact with the interviewer.
- Incomplete or sloppy application form.
- Arriving late for an interview.
- Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time. Failure to follow-up with thank you note.
- Failure to ask questions about the job.
- Vague responses given to questions.

## Searching for a Job

- Job Seekers Network
  - <http://www.myinterfase.com/bsc/student>
  - OR go to <http://www.bismarckstate.edu> and click on Student Affairs, Counseling and Career Services and Job Seekers Network Student Login (located at the very top right hand corner of the page)
    - You will need to go through the registration process. You will then be able to view jobs according to your major.
- Questions?
  - Counseling and Career Services located in the Student Union across from the Bookstore.
    - Jay Meier – Counseling and Career Services Director
      - 701-224-5666

# Good Luck!!