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7 Resume & Cover Letter Tips That'll Get You More Interviews



By Kit Samuels

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Intro: Real Purpose of A Resume/Cover Letter Set

When I first came up with the title for this report, "**7 Resume & Cover Letter Tips That'll Get You More Interviews,**" it caused a friend of mine to raise his eyebrows. "More interviews?" he asked. "Wouldn't you rather call it, '7 Resume & Cover Letter Tips That'll Get You a Job?'"

I shrugged. "Sure," I told him, "I'd love to call it that. Boy, what a powerful title that would be! Two little pieces of paper alone can land you the job you've always dreamed of, with a six-figure salary and a month's vacation time to boot!"

My friend and I debated each other for a little while longer. I ended up explaining to him that it just doesn't work that way.

You and I both know, a resume and cover letter alone can't get you a job. Not by themselves.

The real and honest purpose of a resume/cover letter set is to get you the interview. From there, how well you do at the interview is what can lead to that great job offer.

Promises, Promises...

When surfing the net, I've seen websites that'll offer resume-writing services, and make these huge, unrealistic promises. Resumes that can, by themselves, get you the job you want, the income you want, all in a matter of weeks. Unfortunately, some jobseekers choose to believe this, that the resume/cover letter set alone is what gets you the job, and that's all it takes.

And that explains why some jobseekers mistakenly try to cram everything about themselves into a single resume. Sometimes, things that aren't even related to the position, and it ends up becoming a resume filled with needless fluff.

A powerful, persuasive resume/cover letter set gets your foot in the door. From then on, it's up to you to use your interview skills to carry on, give a great impression and convince them you're the right person for the job.



A powerful, persuasive resume & cover letter set, together, is what convinces an employer to interview you. Never send one without the other.

Resume/Cover Letter “Set”

Before we go on, I’m sure you’ve noticed that I’ve been saying **resume/cover letter set**, not just resume. That’s because sending a cover letter with your resume is absolutely critical. A resume and cover letter together—let’s see, they’re like mashed potatoes and gravy, sushi and warm sake, a cheese platter and fine wine... it’s not the best idea to present one without the other. And that’s something I’ll get into later on with tip #1, “Always Send A Cover Letter.”

Why Isn’t Your Job Search Going As Well As You’d Like?

Well, it could be because of a number of reasons...

- 1)** First of all, the issue of a cover letter. Be honest...have you been sending your resumes without one? And if you *have* been sending one, is it a basic one that you use for all of your resumes, or do you take the time to tailor a different cover letter for each job you’re applying for?
- 2)** On your resume, are you being specific about the job you’re applying for? If your objective isn’t clear, that will likely frustrate the hiring manager, and your resume will probably end up in the trash...
- 3)** Are you detailing what you’ve accomplished on previous last jobs, or are you just jotting down a bland list of duties and responsibilities? I’m sure you’ve achieved some...

These are just a few things that could be damaging your job search. But hopefully, by using the tips in this guide, you’ll be closer to finally getting that dream job you’ve wanted for so long.

I Hope You Find This Guide To Be Helpful...

I understand that the job search can be hard work, at times frustrating, and, on those difficult days, you may feel like you’re going nowhere. But that’s not true. The fact that you’re *even looking* for another job, something that pays better and will give you more deserved recognition, shows that you have initiative. You’re taking action, trying to improve your life, which is a lot more than most people are doing.

So with that, let’s go ahead and concentrate on supercharging your resume/cover letter set. We’ll focus on the best ways to improve them, so we can get that phone of yours ringing with more offers for the job interviews you want.

More Interviews Tip #1: ALWAYS SEND A COVER LETTER

Sending your resume without a cover letter is like throwing two layers of cake on a cake dish, minus the frosting. There's no introduction. What's presenting it?

A cover letter is your chance to not only show your professionalism by even sending one, it's a way for you to speak to the potential employer. Your cover letter has a voice, unlike your resume. So before you create one, there are a few things that you need to do. The most efficient way to handle all of this is to get yourself a notebook and a few file folders. Label each file folder with the name of the company you're applying to. You can keep your notes inside these folders, so when you start to draft your cover letters, you can easily refer back to this information.



***Writing your
cover letter
takes a little
preparation,
some
research...and
it's well worth
the effort.***

What Makes A Great Cover Letter

Take the time to do some research on the company you want to work for.

This way, on your cover letter, you can mention something important that's happening. It could be a new purchase they've made, a new product they've developed, or a problem they're facing. Showing that you know something about the company will definitely show your enthusiasm for the position. Read over the company's website. The "About Us" and "Press Releases" sections are the main ones that'll probably offer you the most information.

Obviously, on your cover letter, be sure that your contact information is accurate. Meaning your correct name, address, telephone number and email address. It might seem silly, mentioning this to you, but I've seen cover letters that have actually left one or more of these things off, even the critical telephone number, of all things!

Another important thing—address your letter directly to the person who's hiring for the position. Do your best to get the exact name of the hiring manager. How? Call the company receptionist. Ask around. Don't ever start your letter with that tasteless set of words, "Dear Sir/Madam" or even worse, "To Whom It May Concern." Personalize it! Taking the time to find out a hiring manager's name shows that you have serious initiative and that you're a resourceful person. Now if you've tried and absolutely can't get the name of the person doing the hiring, "Dear Hiring Manager" would have to be your last resort.

Cover Letter Examples



Example #1:

In your cover letter's opening paragraph, be specific about the position you're applying for. I doubt if hiring managers have the time or patience to figure this out.

Here's another helpful tip: if you happened to find out about the position from someone already working for the company, be sure to, with that person's full knowledge and permission, mention their name in your opening paragraph. That's a great way of showing that someone already employed by the company, had enough faith in you to suggest that you apply for the position. Great way to stand out from the other applicants, don't you think?

Here's the opening from a cover letter sent with a resume for a teacher's position:

Dear Ms. Emma Smith,

Laura Ford, who's spoken highly of you and your school many times, suggested that I contact you about a teaching position that you're interviewing for.



Example #2:

In the body of your cover letter, just whet the hiring manager's appetite—give about 2-3 of your best skills, qualifications and achievements. Briefly highlight these things, being careful not to repeat exact lines that are in your resume. In the following example, the applicant mentions a couple of important skills needed for a teaching job—the ability to communicate well and develop a great curriculum. Which happens to be two of the qualifications that the employer is specifically looking for (something the applicant learned while researching the position):

I understand that you're looking for preschool teachers who can warmly communicate with children, while creating an exciting and comfortable learning environment. Not only am I capable of this, but I share your belief that our teaching should always foster a child's enthusiasm for learning. I love when my students ask questions, and I've always done my best to give them answers that are of course accurate, detailed, and yet easy to understand.



Example #3:

Let's go back to research for a moment. Like I mentioned before, show that you've done some homework on the hiring company. You can briefly mention a special product they've developed, a certain challenge they're facing, a recent purchase they've made. Offering solutions to problems and ideas for new or current products shows your genuine desire to improve

their efficiency and profitability. That can only show that you truly do want to work for their company. Here's an example:

I was excited to find out that you may be starting a school newsletter. As my resume says, I have over 3 years experience writing and editing a school newsletter. In fact, I have a few ideas for your own newsletter that I'd love to discuss with you.



You can close your letter by asking for an interview, or in an even more assertive form, state when you'll be calling *them* to ask for the interview:

Example #3: I'll give you a call next Tuesday morning to see when we can possibly schedule an interview. I'm looking forward to meeting you. Thank you in advance for looking over my resume.

P.S.: One great cover letter tip is to place a postscript section on it. This is the perfect place to put some information that you really want to stand out. It could be another great skill or achievement, or you could ask for an interview in this section. Either way, a P.S. is always seen, it stands out, so use it wisely.



Example #4:

Here's the P.S. in the teacher's cover letter:

P.S. If you'd like to talk about the ideas I have for your newsletter sooner than next Tuesday, I'm definitely available for an earlier meeting. You can reach me directly at (323) 728-xxxx.

Okay, here's the entire cover letter (next page):

Cover Letter Sample

Marie Brown
45xx 10th Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 900xx
(323)294-34xx Email: MBrown@xxx.xxx

January 23rd, 2007

Ms. Emma Smith
Director
ABC Preschool
39xx Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 900xx

Dear Ms. Emma Smith,

Laura Ford, who's spoken highly of you and your school many times, suggested that I contact you about a teaching position that you're interviewing for.

I understand that you're looking for preschool teachers who can warmly communicate with children, while creating an exciting and comfortable learning environment. Not only am I capable of this, but I share your belief that our teaching should always foster a child's enthusiasm for learning. I love when my students ask questions, and I've always done my best to give them answers that are of course accurate, detailed, and yet easy to understand.

I was excited to find out that you may be starting a school newsletter. As my resume says, I have over 3 years experience writing and editing a school newsletter. In fact, I have a few ideas for your own newsletter that I'd love to discuss with you.

I'll give you a call next Tuesday morning to see when we can possibly schedule an interview. I'm looking forward to meeting you. Thank you in advance for looking over my resume.

Sincerely,

Marie Brown

P.S. If you'd like to talk about the ideas I have for your newsletter sooner than next Tuesday, I'm definitely available for an earlier meeting. You can reach me directly at (323) 728-xxxx.

Enclosure: Resume

More Interviews Tip #2: **DON'T FORGET YOUR OBJECTIVE**

A recruiter's time can't be wasted. I doubt if they feel like reading through your entire resume, searching for what you want to do for their company. If anything, your resume should have strong focus. So make it clear, from the very beginning, and state the position you're applying for.

On your resume, after your contact information, should be your 'Objective.' Your usual objective statement will simply state the position a person wants, for example:

Objective: *Position as a **Salesperson***

But I've never thought this was enough for an objective. The objectives I write for my customers will include not only the position you want, but a few good words about yourself. Like this:

Objective: *Seeking a position as a **Salesperson**, with skills in communication and customer service*

In addition to these words about yourself, describing how your skills can benefit the company makes for an even more powerful objective statement:

Objective: *Seeking a position as a **Salesperson**, where skills in communication and customer service will improve operations and help increase company's bottom line.*

And then you can always throw in how many years of experience you have:

Objective: *Seeking a position as a **Salesperson**, where over 4 years of skills in communication and customer service will improve operations and help increase company's bottom line.*

Including a clear, straightforward objective in your resume lets the reader know exactly what position you want, and whether or not they should continue reading your resume. If the job you want is the position they're looking to fill, then the chances of your resume slipping into that small "keep reading" pile will be much greater.

***An objective on
your resume
should clearly
state the
position you're
applying for.
Don't make it
a mystery to
hiring
managers.***

More Interviews Tip #3: FOCUS ON COMPANY & THEIR NEEDS

When creating your cover letter, try not to be selfish. What I mean is, a huge mistake you want to avoid is focusing too much on yourself. How far you want to move up in the company and the salary you're after isn't what the employer cares about.

Here's a good idea: before writing your cover letter, do some research on the company. Find out what the latest happenings are. What particular challenges they might be facing. An exciting product they might have just developed. You can easily log on to the internet and find information on just about any company these days.

So how do you find this information? You can go to the company's website, for one. If you don't have their web address, do a google search—something is sure to pop up. When you find the website, be sure and do a thorough reading of it. Read over the "About Us" section, recent press releases, their company philosophy, and the products/services they're offering.

If you can't find the company's website, there are other sites you can check out, that specialize in helping you find information about a company. Two of these sites are vaultreports.com and wetfeet.com

Mention what you've learned in your cover letter. Doing this will show that you have a genuine interest in the company and a strong drive to work for them. Even think of a way you can link your skills to their needs and what you can do for them.

Here's a paragraph from a cover letter that concentrates on the company's needs (this person applied for a position as a copywriter with a marketing firm):

I've heard that you're looking for a copywriter with great research skills and the ability to create persuasive sales copy. I have over 5 years experience doing this, and would love to share a few ideas I have for your new 'Healthy Diets' ad campaign.



***In job postings
and ads,
companies will
say exactly what
they're looking
for. Figure out a
way to link your
skills to what
they need.***

More Interviews Tip #4: **WHAT YOU'VE ACHIEVED**

Your achievements. The things you've accomplished.

I can easily say that this is absolutely the most critical part of your resume. Your accomplishments section is what differentiates you. Your achievements give you your unique shine, they make you stand out.

In all honesty, sitting down and figuring out the unique things you've done on the job takes work, time and focus. Sometimes, it's a little difficult to realize the great things you've achieved until you're willing to sit down, think hard about it and write these things down.

Unfortunately, too many resumes have those long lists of daily duties, things that just about any person may be able to do. Here are some examples:

- Organizing and distributing information about company policies
- Answering questions and directing calls
- Inputting information into the computer
- Filing

But these are only dry responsibilities, things that anyone who qualified for the position would be able to do.

What makes your resume stand out are your own individual accomplishments. For example, did you think of a way to cut overhead costs? If so, by how much? Did you create a new marketing idea, a way to increase sales? By how much did you increase sales? Be as specific as you can. Numbers and percentages help a lot. They give credibility to your achievements. Here are some examples of a few specific achievements:

- ➔ *Created XYZ Inc.'s direct mail package, which drew a 4% response and increased product sales by 12%.*
- ➔ *Authored 3 published articles in **Infopreneur Magazine**, which outlined the benefits of running your own information-selling business*
- ➔ *Trained 20 loan documentation assistants on how to use NB Bank's new ABC computer filing system.*
- ➔ *Created and currently edit **Educator's Voice**, a monthly newsletter that keeps parents aware of past and upcoming school events and activities.*

More Interviews Tip #5: A #1 DESIGN

A few years ago, I helped one of my mother's neighbors carry a few boxes into her new place. She'd cleared out her living room and ordered all new furniture—sofas, end tables, lamps, the works. It wasn't arranged yet...a lot of things were still in boxes, and the sofas and tables were set about any old way.

About a month afterward, this neighbor invited my mother and I to lunch, to thank us for helping out. When I walked into that same living room, I have to say I was stunned. *It was beautiful.* The furniture was arranged, lovely paintings hung on the walls, beautiful vases...and I hadn't even noticed before what a gorgeous fireplace and hardwood floor she had. What I realized was this—that was the same unorganized room I'd seen a month earlier, with the same things in it. It just hadn't been arranged yet. My point with this?

Design—Big Key To A Successful Resume

While the words on your resume are super-important, how you arrange those words is just as critical. Like how my mom's friend arranged her furniture made all the difference in the appearance of her living room.

A resume needs to look good. Be easy on the reader's eyes. So whatever you do, don't make the mistake of bunching too many thick clumps of text together. While it might seem like a great idea to try and get everything you can onto your resume, it can actually shoot you in the foot. If a recruiter sees thick blocks of text all over the place, it becomes a heavy-duty chore to read your resume—even difficult to do any skimming. To the hiring manager, the trash becomes the only sensible place to put your resume.

So break up your text wisely. Make the sentences on your resume & cover letter succinct, to the point. Try not to go beyond 3-4 sentences a paragraph.

Another thing—bullets are great, especially for your *summary of qualifications* section, located right after your *objective* statement.

And use **bold** and *italics* here and there. They do wonders to break up the text, but don't go overboard with them, or you'll end up canceling out the whole effect.

And don't forget about your margins, which should be about an inch on all sides.



Do your best to make your resume easy on the eyes, not so difficult to read. Use white space wisely. Break up your text—thick clumps of words are a definite turn-off for hiring managers.

More Interviews Tip #6: WATCH THOSE WORDS!

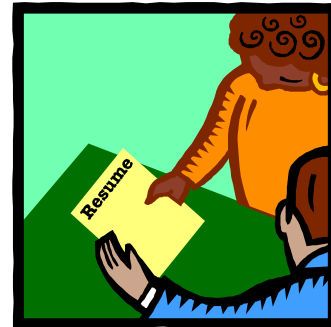
Okay, I know. You've probably heard it thousands of times—watch your spelling, watch your grammar. Honestly, I get sick of reading those rules myself—and I'm a writer! But it's so true, and I can't stress it enough. And it's definitely something you shouldn't ignore.

There are times I'll be kicking back, enjoying a good cup of coffee or treating myself to a bottle of that delicious Thomas Kemper Vanilla Crème Soda, totally immersed in a great article. Next thing I know, up pops a blatant typo, or an error in grammar.

Okay, so I'll let it go. It throws me a little, but I keep reading. Few seconds later, another one. Eventually, another one pops up. Here's my point—this article can be great, fantastic, but things like typos and grammatical errors, especially if they keep appearing, just derail my concentration. One typo, I keep going, but more than that, I start cringing and sadly, losing respect for the article, and even the writer.

Well, you might think that's a bit picky when it comes to reading articles, but it helps to have that kind of attitude. It makes you something of a perfectionist, which can only help you when it comes to creating your own resumes and cover letters. So here's what you need to do to avoid having those terrible spelling blemishes appear all over your resumes & cover letters:

- Run a spell check on your resume and cover letter. A warning about spell checks—don't totally rely on them. Computer spell checks will pick out words that aren't misspelled (to, two, too), or skip over words that don't belong in a sentence. So what do you do?
- Run your own manual spell check. Look it over, and read it aloud—this will help you catch more errors a lot faster.
- Pass your resume and cover letter along to a friend or two and let them read—chances are, they might end up catching something you've missed.



***Hiring managers
won't allow for
one single typo.
Nothing. These
kinds of errors
shout
unprofessional.
Proofread your
resume, then get
a friend to check
it over.***

More Interviews Tip #7: GET YOUR CONTACT INFO STRAIGHT

As ridiculously simple as this might sound, if you'd like to get phone calls for interviews, you have to include your phone number. I'm not joking, I've actually seen, not one, but several resumes, more than I should have, ones that were even great, but without phone numbers.

So that said, be absolutely sure that you include your correct contact information. Take the time to go over it, because you never know—any one of us could accidentally type in a wrong digit in our telephone number, or an incorrect letter in our email address. It's an honest mistake, and it happens. So comb through your resume, making sure it's all correct, and never think you're being too careful.

And while you're at it, be sure to give a phone number that you can *easily* be reached at, preferably without voicemail interference. Some employers may take the time to leave a message, but then there are those that won't, no matter how interested in you they might have been.

Another thing—be sure that your correct contact information is on your cover letter, and on all pages of your resume. So where would you place contact info on a possible page 2 of your resume? At the very top of page 2, you can place your name, address, phone # and email, in a #8 or #9 sized font. This is good to do, because at times, pages can get shuffled around. This way, if any of your pages are lost or separated, you'll always have contact information on every page, no matter what. Here's an example of what I described:

Jerry Sanefield 949 Whatever Rd. Los Angeles, CA 90043
Phone: (323) 444-xxxx Email: dhf@xxx.com



***Give employers a
phone number
where you can be
easily reached.
Not everyone
likes to leave
messages.***

More Interviews Bonus Tip: MAGIC OF QUOTES

Quotes/testimonials are another little gem that people often overlook. It's one thing for you to point out your own accomplishments, but when a manager, supervisor, or someone you worked with, is willing to speak on your behalf—that can only say great things about you.

You can get these quotes from your job reviews, letters of recommendation, and thank-you letters from company clients. Just imagine a recruiter, sitting down, reading over your resume, steadily becoming interested in your achievements. Then the reader sees a marvelous quote...this could actually be the selling point that finally convinces this recruiter to give you a call.



Ever watch those infomercials on cable tv? They are filled with customer testimonials that support the product they bought.

Example Quotes/Testimonials

Here are a few examples of quotes/testimonials:

"Marianne's dedication to excellent customer service is only rivaled by her fierce commitment towards increasing our company's profitability."

"Ms. Daniels is talented, uplifting, and she brightens up the school with her beautiful artwork." (Parent's comments about a preschool teacher).

"She's full of ideas for improving patient care. Janice is efficient and compassionate. She has the ingenuity of a leader, but loves working directly with the patients and their families." (Hospital coordinator's testimonial about a Licensed Vocational Nurse).

Overall, quotes are truly one of the greatest ways to strengthen your resume. Not only do they give you great credibility and individuality, they give the recruiter/employer added insight into your job abilities. Quotes give the recruiter/employer a clear idea of the type of employee you are, and the great things you're capable of—all from someone else's viewpoint, which makes it priceless.

Don't Ever Think You Can't...

Getting that job you want most, the ultimate career you're striving for day in and day out, might seem a world away at times, even impossible on those extra-frustrating days. But don't give in to those negative thoughts—your dream job is still there for the taking. All you may need is to make a few changes to your overall job search. Take the time to do some extra research on the companies you want to work for. Boosting your job search results may take some rewriting of your resume, and/or adding and changing a few things here and there on your cover letters.

Here's To A More Successful Job Search For You...

So take your time to read, reread, and fully understand these resume and cover letter tips, so you can start putting them to great use. Following the advice in this report and using it to improve your resumes & cover letters can definitely lead to more of the phone calls you want. Before you know it, these tips will soon put you on the path to getting that beautiful job offer you've been dreaming of.

Best of luck to you in your job search!

--Kit Samuels
Owner, Kit Samuels' Resume Writing Service

Your Special Gift With This Report

With this guide, I've included your own free subscription to my newsletter, ***Kit's JobSearch & Workplace Tips***.

Each month, you'll get brand new advice, all designed to help make your job search smoother and more productive. You'll get articles on creating more persuasive resumes and cover letters, successful interview strategies, and how to effectively network yourself in ways which could lead to the ultimate job offer you're looking for.

Platinum Bonus—Going Beyond the Job Hunt

But that's not all...

While most career-related online newsletters will stop here, ***Kit's Jobsearch & Workplace Tips*** goes beyond the job hunt.

Think about it...what happens when you finally do land that dream job you've been after for so long? The workplace section of ***Kit's Jobsearch & Workplace Tips*** covers topics like:

- How to smoothly deal with those difficult personalities that seem to thrive on conflict
- Ways to impress your employer while keeping in good standing with your co-workers
- Productive managing strategies for those of you who *are* the boss
- And overall, how to create the most efficient, profitable and gratifying career experience for yourself and those you work with

Kit's Jobsearch & Workplace Tips will be conveniently sent to you by email each month. And because I know you're such a busy person, I'll make each issue a short, easy read, about 3-4 minutes tops. Yet still, each issue is packed with priceless advice for boosting your job search and workplace results.

Note:if you received this report from a friend, and didn't get the chance to sign up for a subscription, it's easy to do: just visit www.ksresumes.com.

And don't worry, your email address will never be sold or shared with anyone—we believe in privacy here!

Still Nervous About Writing Your Own Resume?

If so, you're definitely not alone.

I've had some customers tell me that while this guide was extremely helpful to them, still, they felt that their resumes and cover letters weren't quite getting them the job interviews they wanted.

If you've used the tips in this guide to rewrite your resumes and cover letters and you're still not quite getting the response you want, then perhaps professional resume writing is what you need.

If so, then why not visit www.ksresumes.com?

Here at Kit Samuels' Resume Writing Service, we work our hardest to create for you the most persuasive, convincing resumes and cover letters that'll get those recruiters to call you for an interview.

And for the productive, high-quality writing services we offer you, our fees are extremely reasonable.

So visit our website today.

Kit Samuels' Resume Writing Service

Phone: (323) 294-0048

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Website: www.ksresumes.com

Email: info@ksresumes.com

About Kit...

Kit Samuels, nicknamed "The Copy Contessa," has over 9 years experience writing, revamping and evaluating a wide variety of resumes, cover letters and other career-related documents.

Kit's experience includes creating resumes for individuals pursuing careers or higher positions in finance, law, medicine, education, sales, freelance work and publishing, in addition to crafting special resume packages for recent college graduates.

Don't see your career listed here? That's okay, Kit will work with you, one on one, to assess your pertinent skills, your unique achievements, and to pinpoint your highest qualifications. This personalized attention will result in a well-crafted, compelling resume designed to get you an interview. An interview that will lead to the job offer you want most.

Kit's extensive background in human resources and career services, combined with her years of expertise as a copywriter (hence "The Copy Contessa") creating direct marketing communications, has proven invaluable in creating expert resumes and cover letters.

Bookmark this website

Save www.ksresumes.com as a favorite, so you can conveniently come back and visit anytime. And please do so...I'll be adding new articles and resources each week.

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Pass This Guide Along

Got any friends, co-workers, or family members who could use the helpful information in this guide?

Feel free to email this guide to them, as long as you don't edit anything. Thanks!