

## JOB SEARCH GUIDELINES

### APPLYING IN GENERAL

- Only apply for positions that match your experience and skills (applying all over the place wastes the recruiter's time, and it makes you look desperate and like you didn't read the job description carefully).

### COVER LETTER

Receiving an unsolicited resume with no cover letter irritates (this) recruiter. Include your letter in the body of your email:

- Address it to a person, or if you don't have the name of a person, to the organization.
- Explain why you are contacting them (ex. I saw your ad for X job, I was referred to you by Y).
- Include 3-5 bullets (no more than 2 lines each) of why your background is a good match.
- Ask for what you want (ex. Please add me to your distribution list, Would you have time for a quick call?)
- Attach your resume in .doc form

### APPLYING ON LINE

Applicant tracking systems (ATS) can be black holes. Only apply online if there's no other way to get your foot in the door. Preferably, use networking or a professional recruiting company like Emerson Howell Nagel & Associates. But if you must:

- Fill in all the information requested in the online application, even if it is included on your resume or listed as optional (screening filters sometimes pick up missed fields).
- If you're being referred by an employee, list that on your application (ATS can screen for that).
- If you can, upload instead of cutting and pasting your resume (protects formatting).
- Watch your spam folder for a response, since ATS replies sometimes trigger spam guards.
- If they respond, get back to them within 24 hours and follow their instructions precisely.
- Avoid fancy formatting, headers/footers, logos, graphics (can choke the ATS, or be presented in Cyrillic – yes, this has happened).
- Check spelling and grammar by hand, don't just rely on spell- and grammar-check software (typos can lower your ATS ranking).
- If you get an automatic rejection e-mail, contact the employer and see if you can submit a new, more tailored resume.
- If you reapply, focus on your executive summary and key skills/achievements (don't change work history).
- Don't try to use a different e-mail address (won't fool them anyway). Follow up and ask them to review your updated resume.

### SPAM/SECURITY TRAPS

- Send your resume as text in the body of the email, not as an attachment, unless requested otherwise.
- Avoid exclamation marks.
- Avoid words that can be misinterpreted by spam filters (ex. "graduated cum laude").
- Include information that demonstrates experience and familiarity with the position subject, not just keywords (ATS uses context as well as keywords).
- Avoid abbreviations and acronyms (ATS not likely to have been programmed for them).

## RESUME WRITING GUIDELINES

### RESUME DON'TS

- Don't lie (it will catch up with you eventually, and is usually grounds for dismissal).
- Don't include personal details (it can create a discrimination problem for the recruiter).
- Don't include a photo (it can create a discrimination problem for the recruiter).
- Don't use page frames, tables, boxes or colored ink (it just looks cluttered and unprofessional).
- Don't include an Objective (write a cover letter/email instead).
- Don't go over 2 pages (unless you have over 30 years' of experience, as recruiters and hiring managers value conciseness and communication skills).
- Don't use paragraphs (too hard to scan quickly).
- Don't exceed 2 lines to a bullet (too hard to scan quickly).
- Don't go below pitch 11 (too hard for (this) recruiter to read).
- Don't include information not relevant to the position for which you are applying (wastes recruiter's time), but don't leave out any positions held (that's misleading, unless you group them as Positions held prior to...).
- Don't include too much information (leave something for the interview).
- Don't include hobbies (unless they shed light on your personality that is relevant to the role).
- Don't include publications (makes it too long, just say available upon request).

### GENERAL RESUME TIPS

- Make sure your resume is in a clear, concise format that is easy to scan/read quickly.
- Have someone whose judgment you trust and who will be brutally honest read it over (feel free to contact us, we can help, we do this all the time).
- Check spelling and grammar by hand, don't just rely on spell- and grammar-check software (composition errors make you look sloppy and careless).
- Use standard, correct capitalization throughout, don't use all-capitals, and don't capitalize nouns unless they are proper names (ex. "Worked in the Risk Management Department" is fine, "Worked in Risk Management" is not).
- Use active verbs, and avoid the gerund form (ex. "Directed a team of" is stronger than "Directing a team of"). See suggested Action Verbs below.
- Functional resumes make (this) recruiter think you're hiding your age. They'll figure it out eventually, so turn it into an asset early on instead of trying to disguise it.
- Use the same font type and size throughout, except for your name.

### ACTIVE VERBS

Achieve	Consolidate	Explain	Mediate	Recommend
Adapt	Construct	Finance	Model	Reconcile
Address	Consult	Formulate	Monitor	Recruit
Administer	Coordinate	Gather	Motivate	Reduce
Advise	Counsel	Generate	Negotiate	Refer
Analyze	Create	Guide	Obtain	Refine
Arrange	Define	Handle	Operate	Report

Assemble	Design	Identify	Order	Represent
Assess	Detect	Implement	Organize	Research
Assist	Determine	Improve	Oversee	Resolve
Attain	Devise	Increase	Perform	Review
Audit	Direct	Influence	Persuade	Schedule
Budget	Display	Initiate	Plan	Select
Calculate	Earn	Install	Prepare	Solve
Classify	Eliminate	Institute	Present	Study
Coach	Enforce	Instruct	Process	Summarize
Communicate	Establish	Interpret	Produce	Supervise
Compile	Estimate	Invent	Project	Supply
Compose	Evaluate	Investigate	Promote	Test
Compute	Examine	Manage	Provide	Train
Conduct	Expand	Market	Receive	Utilize

#### NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

- Name and contact information should go at the top of the first page, not in the header.
- Put your name in bold, one size larger than the rest of the resume.
- For your address, include at least city and state.
- Include home and mobile phone (putting your work phone makes it look like you take personal calls at work, and are using work time to search for a job).
- Include your personal email (putting your work email makes you look really unprofessional, and if your personal email is too goofy, get a new more professional one).

#### **Name**

Address, City, State  
Cell Phone: 123-456-7891  
Email: name@name.com

#### RESUME SUMMARY

- Include a 1-2 line professional or executive summary at the top of your resume
- Add a short bulleted list (not a table) of the qualifications and/or achievements (measurable) that most pertain to the job for which you are applying.
- Your Summary should include specific keywords from the job description (if they don't fit your experience, perhaps your experience isn't a good fit for the job).

#### **SUMMARY**

**16 years in credit risk management in capital markets in large US commercial banks, and credit risk advisory with Big 4. Hands-on leader, with teams of up to 10 quants.**

- Credit risk
- Derivatives, fixed income, structured products
- Modeling in Excel and C++
- Management

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

List each position held, in reverse-chronological order:

- Use a flush-right tab to right-justify from/to dates, and don't show months, just years.
- Don't use "I" but refer to yourself in the first person (ex. "Managed a team of" instead of "I managed a team of").
- If you are currently employed, show current company as YearFrom-Present, and write the corresponding bullets in present tense (ex. "Manage a team of" instead of "Managed a team of"). Write bullets for all other positions in past tense.
- If you are not currently employed, write all bullets for all positions in past tense. Writing YearFrom-Present if you have already been released is borderline, and it's better to handle any explanations for not being employed in a cover letter. If you have been let go, but are still on the organization's payroll, you can write YearFrom-Present.
- If you have been employed since the 1970's, consider condensing your early experience, and just show Company/title/dates with no bullets.

**Company name, City, State**

**YearFrom-YearTo**

**Title, Department (if applicable)**

Brief description of the company, if not public/well-known.

- 3-5 bullets covering highlights most relevant to the position for which you are applying.

If you held more than one position with a company, don't repeat the name, city and state. Right-justify YearFrom-YearTo for each position, and change YearFrom-YearTo for the company to reflect your entire tenure with that company:

**Company name, City, State**

**YearFrom-YearTo**

Brief description of the company, if not public/well-known.

**Title, Department (if applicable)**

**YearFrom-YearTo**

- 3-5 bullets covering highlights most relevant to the position for which you are applying.

## EDUCATION

List each university and degree held, in reverse-chronological order. Do not include dates. Only include GPA if it is above 3.8, and only if you can include all GPAs.

**University name, City, State**

**Degree in Subject**

- If needed, bullets covering honors, etc.

## CERTIFICATIONS

List each certification/license held, in reverse-chronological order, as well as the name of the conferring entity. Do not include dates unless you are a candidate only, in which case indicate the date you expect to receive certification.