



A GREAT PLACE TO GROW

# Job Search Resource Guide

**PAYCHEX**<sup>®</sup>



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**PAYCHEX®**

## **Introduction**

This information has come from years of experience in recruiting and training candidates on job search techniques.

These resources have been created to share some best practices with you on the various components of the application process, planning and writing a resume, contents in a cover letter, and interview techniques.

Please pass this information along if you know someone else that could benefit from the tips and suggestions in this guide.

Good luck in your job search!



## **Planning Your Resume**

Before you can write a persuasive resume, you need to answer the following questions:

- ***What skills and qualities can I offer?***
  - Analyze your past experiences (courses, special projects, paid employment, community involvement, and clubs) to determine in what ways you have demonstrated desired qualifications.
  - Take into account all aspects of your background as possible strengths. Do not discount minor or unrelated jobs. Managers are interested in the total person. Ask yourself what you learned from these experiences, what qualities were necessary for good performance, and how these might be applicable.
  - Consider formal education and previous experience related to your field as your most significant qualifications. Do not underestimate the skills you have acquired.
  - Utilize previous job descriptions to assist in detailing your responsibilities.
  
- ***What type of resume do I want to have?***
  - Chronological - “A chronological resume is probably the one with which most people are familiar. On it, work experience is listed in reverse chronological order with the most recent job first.”
  - Functional – “A functional resume categorizes skills by function, emphasizing your abilities. This is useful if you are changing careers and want to show how you can transfer your skills.”
  - Combination resume – “A combination resume is exactly what it sounds like – it combines a functional resume with a chronological one.”

For more information please refer to the website link below:

<http://www.resumewriting.com/>

**Remember, your resume is *your* marketing tool!**

## Contents of a Resume

- **Identifying Information**
  - Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email
  
- **Career Summary / Objective**
  - Objectives are not essential, but if you include one make sure it matches the job(s) for which you are applying. The general consensus is that Objectives offer little value.
  - Career Summaries are an opportunity to give the reader a high level overview of your experience (who you are). This can also be customized based on the position of interest.
  
- **Skills (Optional)**
  
- **Work Experience**
  - Indicate dates of employment, name of employer, city and state, and title of each position. Describe your major duties and responsibilities and relate any notable achievements (e.g. promotion) and/or skills developed. Make sure to elaborate on work experience relevant to your desired position and not focus on experience that isn't related.
  
- **Educational Background**
  - List the schools attended, dates, degrees, diplomas, and certificates with emphasis on highest-level achieved and special training pertinent to your desired position.
  
- **Activities**
  - Make a brief mention of professional memberships and community activities.



## **Resume Writing**

- First impression
- Objectives are NOT essential
- Brief and to the point
- Grammar is important

Writing a resume is not always the easiest thing to do. So we have included some techniques to assist you in creating a resume that will attract and impress potential employers. First impressions are everything; your resume must be concise, clearly readable, organized, and flow well. If you are unsure of a specific position, your objective is not always necessary. Make sure your resume is one page and to the point with information employers will consider. Be sure that grammar is correct; have someone proof read your resume to ensure spelling and organization is acceptable. Ask several people to critique your resume for you. Be sure to ask people that you trust who have knowledge about resume writing to give you honest opinions.

## **Resume Do's**

- Use spell check.
- Include important work experience.
- Accurately describe your current position.
- Limit the size of your resume.
- Utilize a posting to assist you.
- Keep your resume updated.
- Look at other resumes; you may find good ideas.
- Use 8 1/2" by 11" white or off-white paper.
- Print on one side of the paper.
- Use a font size of 10-14 points, one that is basic, easy to read, and professional (Arial, Times New Roman, etc.).
- Utilize bold very judiciously (i.e., your name, section titles, very important information). If you are highlighting too much, it is as bad as not highlighting at all.
- Use bullets to organize listed items. They look more professional than asterisks.



## **Resume Don'ts**

- Assume.
- Include too many details.
- Exclude your education.
- Get personal.
- Use a resume that is not updated.
- Embellish.
- Publish an unprofessional E-mail address.
- Use a font that is difficult to read.
- Use horizontal or vertical lines, graphics, or shading.
- Fold your resume. If you must mail it, use an envelope large enough to accommodate it unfolded.
- Include your photograph.



## Cover Letters

Whether you apply for a position online, by email, or by mail, each resume should be accompanied with a cover letter. This letter can be the most important piece of business communication you have with a future employer; therefore, it should be individualized for that specific employer and position.

Here are some helpful tips to assist you in the writing of a cover letter:

- **Consider the cover letter as a business document.** Keep the format, tone, and language professional. Sound confident, not arrogant, and let a little bit of your personality come through. Remember one size does not fit all - each cover letter should be specific to the company and the position for which you are applying.
- **Address the letter to the hiring manager or the HR manager.** Use your resources to uncover the name of this individual, including calling the organization to find out the name of the person to whom to address the letter.
- **Include your contact information, including your address, telephone number with area code, and E-mail address.**
- **Keep your cover letter brief and to the point.** It should be no more than 3 or 4 short paragraphs.
- **Start your cover letter by mentioning the position for which you are applying, how you learned about the position, and why you are interested in pursuing an opportunity with the specific employer.** Show the employer that you have researched the company.

**Example:**

"I am submitting my resume for your review and strong consideration for the Risk Management Analyst position posted on the Paychex website. Paychex has built a strong reputation as being a leader within the payroll industry and encourages a strong entrepreneurial spirit among its employees. I want to be an integral part of this team."

- **Peak the employer's interest.** In the next paragraph(s) tell the employer how your qualifications best fit the specific job, persuading the reader to want to read your resume.





**Example:**

“I have been in the insurance industry for 5 years and have built strong insurer and broker relationships and have excellent corporate interpersonal skills. My duties included the analysis, development, and implementation of employee risk management training. I worked directly with senior management to gain their support on these trainings and assisted with the development of new risk management policies and procedures.”

- ***Lastly, summarize and list your action steps (optional).***
  - If you choose to use action steps in your summary, be certain to follow through. Failure to do so may indicate to a future employer that you may not follow through on your job assignments as an employee.

**Example:**

“My strong commitment to excellence and inter-personal and communication skills will bring value to Paychex. I am looking forward to discussing my qualifications for the Risk Management Analyst position with you.”

**Example with action steps:**

“My strong commitment to excellence and inter-personal and communication skills will bring value to Paychex. I am looking forward to discussing my qualifications for the Risk Management Analyst position with you and will contact you next week to arrange an interview.”



## **References**

Many employers ask for references as part of their application process, while others may only ask for references when they are seriously considering extending an offer to a candidate. It is not necessary to include references with your resume; however, you should always have at least two recent professional references ready for future employers.

The individuals you choose to put on your reference list should be able to verify and elaborate on your previous work history. The best references you can provide to a future employer include your former managers and supervisors.

### **Reference tips:**

- **List references on a separate piece of paper.**
- **Ask for permission before adding anyone to your reference list.**
- **References should include former managers and supervisors.**
- **Keep in contact with the individuals on your reference list.**
  - Let them know with what company you are interviewing and for what position.
- **Make sure your reference's information is current.**
  - Do you have the correct spelling of their name?
  - Where are they currently working?
  - What is their current title?
  - Is their telephone number correct?
  - What is the best way to contact them? Their work phone number, cell phone or home phone number?
- **It is preferable that you do not use family members or friends.**
  - If this is your first job, ask teachers, professors, advisors, or coaches if you may list them as a reference.
  - If you had odd jobs through school such as babysitting, dog-walking, lawn mowing, etc., ask your customers if you may list them as a reference.
- **Include your relationship with the reference.**
  - Where did you work with them and for how long?
  - Were they your manager, supervisor, teacher, or coach?

#### **Example:**

Reference Name  
Company  
Title  
Phone Number  
Cell Phone Number  
Relationship

## Understanding the Online Application Process

Most employers are happy to accept resumes at job fairs and events; however, it is strongly encouraged to formally apply online. The purpose of applying online is two-fold. It gives you the opportunity to research the company to which you are applying, and it enables the employer to accurately track and identify candidates in their applicant pool. Some employers' applicant tracking systems are linked to their payroll department, while others may be linked to corporate and government reporting.

## Applying Online at Paychex

### **What happens to the hardcopy resume that I turn in at a job fair?**

We bring this paperwork back to the HR department and use it to generate an E-mail inviting you to go to our web site and create a candidate profile. We do keep hard copies of resumes for one year; however, to be strongly considered candidates must formally apply online.

### **Example of how to create a new account at Paychex:**

1. Go to <http://www.paychex.com/careers>.
2. On the Opportunities menu in the middle of the screen, click **Register to Apply**.
3. Create your user name and password. Click **Register** to continue.
4. Create a security question and answer. Click **OK** to continue.
5. Upload your resume to your account. If you skip this step now, there are other ways to submit or create your resume later. Click **Save and Continue**.
6. Upload any other related documents, such as a cover letter, to your account or paste your resume in the **Plain Text Document** box at the bottom of the screen. Click **Save and Continue**.
7. From the drop-down menu, select what/who prompted you to apply (2 steps).
8. Complete your personal information. Please include your E-mail address so we can send you status updates about the jobs for which you have applied. Click **Save and Continue**.
9. Indicate your preferred location. Click **Save and Continue**.
10. If you haven't uploaded your resume or pasted it into the application, you can now enter your work experience. Click **Add Work Experience** at the bottom to add additional positions. Click **Save and Continue**.

11. Review your information on the **Summary** page. You can edit sections of your profile by clicking **Edit** on each header. When you are satisfied, click **Submit**.
12. Click the **Job Search** link at the top left of the screen to search and apply for jobs at Paychex.

### **Steps to apply online:**

1. To review current job openings, you can search by keyword, job category, location, or job number. Searching by specific criteria helps you to find jobs that match your interests and qualifications.
2. Click on a job title to review the description and qualifications for that position.
3. Once you have reviewed current openings and have selected a position for which you want to apply, click **Apply Online** and follow the instructions on the screen.
4. You can easily change or update your profile and personal data at any time by clicking **Accessing Your Profile** on the job search page. This allows you to update your resume, add a phone number, change your address, update your E-mail address, etc. After you have applied for a position through our web site, you will receive an E-mail acknowledgement. If there is further interest, a Paychex representative will contact you. If you do not hear back, it is important to monitor your E-mail account for correspondence, periodically check our web site for new positions, and continue to express your interest by applying to future positions.



## **Filling Out Application Forms**

Below you will find several items to always be mindful of when completing an employment application.

- ***Be Careful***  
If you are careful about following instructions on your application, an employer will probably think that you may be careful as an employee.
- ***Be Neat***  
Print or write clearly so that your application can be easily read. Use a reliable black or blue ink pen.
- ***Be Certain***  
Before you begin to fill in the blanks, carefully read everything on the application. After you complete the form, read it again to ensure no information is missing.
- ***Be Prepared***  
Fill out a sample application form to bring with you. A sample application can be obtained from your Department of Labor Employment Services Office. By having all of the information about yourself ready ahead of time, you will be complete and accurate.
- ***Be Alert***  
If you are not sure about the meaning of abbreviations or anything else, ask the person who gave you the form to explain.
- ***Be Complete***  
Answer every question. If a question does not apply to you write, "Does not apply." If you wish to discuss in the interview write, "Will discuss in interview."
- ***Be Correct***  
Watch your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Always proofread!
- ***Be Thorough***  
Describe all your skills and abilities. Also, list the kinds of computers, computer programs, machinery, equipment, and tools you are able to use. Indicate any licenses you may have.
- ***Be Accurate***  
Make certain all information is correct. Check employment dates, telephone numbers, and addresses for accuracy.

## **Tips and Techniques of Successful Interviewing**

### **Preparing for the Interview**

- **Research the company.**
  - Do your homework!
  - Impress the interviewer by taking the time to learn about their company.
  - Utilize the following resources:
    - Internet
    - Annual Report
    - Networking with people who work for the company
  - Below are recommendations on the type of information you can research about the company/position:
    - What does the position do?
    - What are some of the company's latest achievements?
    - Ask yourself, "What can I bring to the company?"
  
- ***Know your skills and qualifications and how they relate to the position for which you are applying.***
  - You will make the interview process easier for the employer if you volunteer relevant information about yourself. Be prepared to back up all your answers with examples that support the statements you make. Think about how you can answer difficult questions accurately and positively, while keeping each answer brief.
  - Take time to identify your individual strengths.
  - Write down your strengths and think of examples of how these strengths can benefit the position to which you are applying.
  - Think of projects or recognitions that you have accomplished in your career (or an accomplishment from school) of which you are particularly proud.
  
- ***Be prepared for questions an interviewer might ask.***
  - Carry a portfolio notepad or at the very least a manila file folder labeled with the employer's name. Bring extra resumes and have the names, addresses, and phone numbers of references, in case the employer asks.
  - Open-Ended General Questions
    - Give me a brief synopsis of your work history and bring me to the present.
    - What has prompted you to seek other employment opportunities at this time?

- Behavioral-Based Questions
  - In your current job, what tasks or projects have you performed of which you are the most proud? What specifically did you do to accomplish this? What obstacles did you encounter?
  - In your current position, give me an example of the steps you took to respond to a specific customer complaint. How did the customer react? Was the customer satisfied?
  - In your current position, tell me about a team you were on. What was your role? How did the team function?
- Fact-Finding Questions
  - Tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?
  - What specifically did you do?
- ***Prepare a brief list of questions to ask the interviewer about the company and position which convey your interest.***
  - Write these questions down. Be prepared to ask new questions based on the content of the interview.
  - Examples of questions to ask during the interview:
    - How is an employee evaluated and promoted?
    - Describe the work environment.
    - Tell me about the type of training programs you offer.
    - What do you enjoy about working here?
    - At the end of an interview, it is appropriate for you to ask when you may expect to hear from the employer.
- ***Practice, practice, practice!***
  - Role play interview questions with a friend; this will help you become more comfortable in the process.
  - Don't be afraid of short pauses. You may need a few seconds to formulate an answer. The interviewer may need time to formulate an appropriate question. It is not necessary to fill up every second with conversation.
- ***Pay attention to appearance when you go for the interview.***
  - Dress for success. When setting up the interview, ask about the company dress code or policy; it is always better to be professionally dressed (business suit).
  - Be poised. Pay attention to your nonverbal behavior. Look the interviewer in the eye, sit up straight with both feet on the floor, control nervous habits, don't giggle or play with your hair, and smile as you are greeted.
  - Be yourself. Speak clearly and enthusiastically about your experiences and skills. Be professional, but don't be afraid to let your personality shine through.

- ***Be prompt and professional.***
  - Always arrive early. If you don't know where the organization is located, call for exact directions in advance. Leave some extra time for any traffic, parking, or unpredictable events. If you are running late, call right away and let someone know. The best time to arrive is approximately 10-15 minutes early. Give yourself the time to read your resume one more time, to catch your breath, and to be ready for the interview. Once you're at the office, treat everyone you encounter with respect. Be pleasant to everyone as soon as you walk in the door.
  
- ***Take the time to write after-interview notes.***
  - After the interview, take time to write down the names and titles (check spelling) of all your interviewers, your impressions, remaining questions, and any information that may influence your decision to accept a position with the organization. If you are interviewing regularly, this will help you keep employers and circumstances clearly differentiated.
  - Send a thank you letter or E-mail to the interviewer expressing your interest in the position and the department and thank the interviewer again for taking the time to meet with you.





## **Additional Resources**

Do you need additional assistance with your resume, cover letter, interview, and networking skills? Here is a list of additional resources that you may find useful during your job search.

- ***Your state's unemployment office***
  - Some states call these One-Stops; others may call them Employment Training Centers, Worksource Centers or WorkNets. Whatever they may be called in your state, many of these offices offer training in resume writing and mock interviewing, as well as offer networking events and informal job fairs.
- ***Religious affiliations***
  - Local religious leaders and staff may be a source of counsel.
  - Many religious orders have a job ministry, where members can gain further counseling, training, and networking opportunities.
- ***Go back to school***
  - Update your skills.
  - Work with the Career Services Department.
- ***Already graduated?***
  - Alumni associations are a great resource.
  - Some schools offer lifetime career counseling and placement services.
- ***Chambers of Commerce***
  - Contact your local Chamber of Commerce; they may be aware of local job fairs or employers that are currently hiring.
- ***Professional Organizations***
  - Stay abreast of new developments in your area of expertise and continue to build your network.
- ***Social Networking***
  - These social networks are a great way to re-connect with family, friends, former classmates, and future employers. Keep your site professional. Don't put anything out there that you wouldn't like to see as a headline in tomorrow's local newspaper.
- ***Job Clubs***
  - These are formed for the purpose of sharing job information to foster employment. Many of these are local and some are national.

- **Libraries**
  - Libraries are a great resource for free or nominal cost technical resources and computers that you may use for your job search.
- **Family and Friends**
  - Tell everyone, your family and friends, that you are seeking a new opportunity. This will broaden your contacts and networking circle.
- **Media**
  - Read the local newspapers, especially the business sections.
  - Read business and trade publications like the Wall Street Journal, Fortune Magazine, and HR Magazine.
  - Tune into local radio stations or television channels.

### **Web and Media Resources**

- **Resume Writing**
  - [University of Minnesota Action Verbs](#)
  - [www.pongoresume.com](http://www.pongoresume.com)
  - [www.jobweb.com](http://www.jobweb.com)
- **Assessment**
  - [About.com](#) (Career Counseling)
  - [JobHuntersBible.com](#) ("What Color Is Your Parachute" by Richard Nelson Bolles)

### **Networking Resources**

- [About.com](#) (Job Searching)
- [www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com)
- [Power Networking: 55 Secrets for Personal & Professional Success](#) by Donna Fisher and Sandy Vilas; Austin, Texas; Mountain Harbour Publications, 1992.

