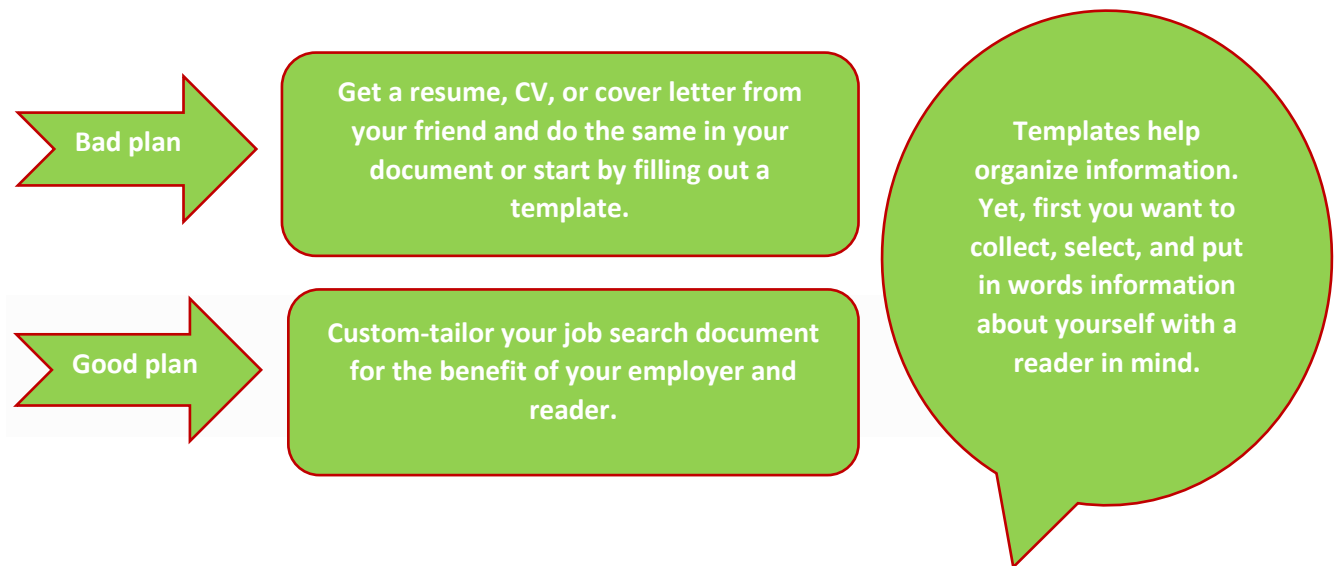# Effective Job Search Writing

Employment documents usually include cover letters, resumes or CVs, professional portfolios, and other types of job search documents. Usually, resumes are written for the industry, and CVs are written for academia. Although there are certain expected ways of organizing and presenting your information in employment documents, there is no single right way of doing so. Our handout outlines the steps for writing successful job search documents. In addition, it refers you to resources for templates.

How do I start?

Bad plan → Get a resume, CV, or cover letter from your friend and do the same in your document or start by filling out a template.

Good plan → Custom-tailor your job search document for the benefit of your employer and reader.

Templates help organize information. Yet, first you want to collect, select, and put in words information about yourself with a reader in mind.

Job search writing done smart

1. If you already have a resume or a CV, start by updating it. Update your LinkedIn or other profile if you have one.

2. Carefully read and *understand* the job ad. This Purdue OWL resource will help you:
   https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/skilled_labor_job_search_resources/reading_and_using_job_ads/index.html

3. Create a table that lists job requirements for the position and your response to each point in the ad.

Job requirement in the ad/ and based on my inquiry about the job ad	How my skills and achievements match the required qualification
Example: Accredited teacher status	M.Sc. in Education, XXX University

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4. Make sure that you know to whom to address your cover letter. Address it to a person and not "to whom it may concern." If you were not able to find the name of a person to address your cover letter to, write "Dear Hiring Manager," "Dear Hiring Team," "Dear Search Committee," etc.

5. Now that you have understood the job ad, create your profile. The profile is a *database* you will use to write your employment documents and prepare for the interview. You will use this database to match your strengths to the employer's needs. The podcast published by *Nature* (see the URL at the bottom) offers a detailed description of this process and document examples.

6. If you are writing a resume, create your employment objective statement or summary of qualifications. Alred et. al. (2020) offers many examples.

7. Resumes/CVs usually contain but are not limited to the following large categories: contact information, education, experience, and honors and activities. Review sample documents in the resources listed below and customize titles in your document. Split major categories into subcategories, if possible. Title these subcategories.

Category	Optional Title	Subcategories
Contact information		
Education		
Experience		
Honors and Activities		

8. Create your resume/CV template. Using an existing template saves time and effort, but doing so might send a message that you are not hard-working or invested enough. Resources listed at the bottom *offer templates and examples* of employment documents.

9. Create a list of active verbs that you want to use when detailing duties you performed. The following job skills list will help you brainstorm and name your skills:

   https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/preparing_an_application/job_skills_checklist.html

10. Fill out your CV/resume template.

11. Have someone perform a 20-second test on your document:
    https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/resume_design.html

12. Edit and proofread.

13. To understand and write a good cover letter, we suggest using the Purdue OWL resource:
    https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/skilled_labor_job_search_resources/cover_letters/index.html

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Keep in mind the following:

- Your cover letter should not rehearse your resume/CV. Instead, a cover letter is an opportunity to elaborate on selected skills and achievements listed in your resume/CV.

- Your cover letter should create a compelling argument for why you are the best candidate for the position.

- In terms of layout, today's cover letters may contain subheadings and bullet points to increase readability.

- It is always a good idea to use the same font in both a cover letter and resume/CV.

Useful Resources

Alred, G. J. (2020). Handbook of Technical Writing: With 2020 APA update. BEDFORD BKS ST MARTIN'S.

Job Search Writing. Purdue OWL, https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/

How to Write a Great CV for Academia and Industry: A Webcast. Nature, https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00520-2

Major cover Letter Mistakes 2022: A YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhCasM6Mqh8

The Essential Résumé Template: What to Include in a Résumé. Grammarly Blog, https://www.grammarly.com/blog/the-essential-resume-template/?&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=11862361100&utm_targetid=aud-834333299456:dsa-913938105576&gclid=Cj0KCQiA4feBBhC9ARIsABp_nbWjwNWSiz71qY1v1v2urfYd43E4Lu6zOiVo2uNgnssqWxensXCo9zsaAoo6EALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

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