



**VIRGINIA**  
CAREER WORKS

---

ALEXANDRIA | ARLINGTON REGION

# **RESOURCES FOR THE JOB SEEKER**

**GUIDE TO FINDING A NEW JOB**

A proud partner of the  
**americanjobcenter**<sup>®</sup>  
network

A special thank you to Virginia Career Works Piedmont Region for the development of this resource.

# WORKFORCE CENTERS

## ALEXANDRIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

1900 N. Beauregard Street, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22311  
wdc@alexandriava.gov  
Phone: 703-746-5990  
Video Phone: 571-384-5244

## ARLINGTON EMPLOYMENT CENTER

2100 Washington Blvd., 1st Floor  
Arlington, VA 22204  
jobseeker@arlingtonva.us  
Phone: 703-228-1400  
TTY: 703-228-1498

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Digital Link and Page Number Below

<a href="#">STRATEGIES TO HELP JOB SEEKERS</a>	2
<a href="#">SETTING GOALS</a>	3
<a href="#">RETRAINING</a>	4
<a href="#">VETERAN SERVICES</a>	5
<a href="#">JOB SEEKER RESOURCES</a>	6
<a href="#">SOCIAL MEDIA IS EFFECTIVE</a>	7
<a href="#">VALUE OF NETWORKING</a>	8
<a href="#">JOB SEEKER DO'S &amp; DON'TS</a>	9
<a href="#">DEVELOPING YOUR RÉSUMÉ</a>	10
<a href="#">DEVELOPING YOUR COVER LETTERS</a>	15
<a href="#">PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW</a>	17
<a href="#">INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP</a>	18

### Connect with Alexandria Workforce Development Center Online:

-  <https://www.alexandriava.gov/WorkforceDevelopment>
-  <https://facebook.com/WDCAlexandriaVA>
-  <https://twitter.com/WDCAlexVA>
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/workforce-development-center-city-of-alexandria-va>

### Connect with Arlington Employment Center Online:

-  <https://aec.arlingtonva.us>
-  <https://facebook.com/arlingtonemploymentcenter>
-  <https://twitter.com/ArlEmploymentCT>
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/in/arlingtonemployment/>
-  [https://youtube.com/channel/UCP4ZrU\\_SdU152\\_7dKZt61mg](https://youtube.com/channel/UCP4ZrU_SdU152_7dKZt61mg)

## WORKFORCE CAREER CENTERS



ALEXANDRIA | ARLINGTON REGION

[RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

### Each Workforce Center offers:

- Computers, internet access, one-on-one assistance
- Résumé and cover letter writing assistance
- Referrals, applications, and contacts for local employers
- Labor market information
- Job search workshops and training
- Unemployment Insurance claims and filing
- Assessments and referrals to training
- [FastForward](#) and Pell Grant information

### Job Seeker Tools

Workforce Centers provide tools to support your job search Including:

- Skill assessments
- Typing tests
- Career expos
- Soft skills training
- Veteran and disability resources

## STRATEGIES TO HELP JOB SEEKERS

### Learn more about yourself.

What type of job do you want? At what type of job would you excel? Match your skills to your dream job. Check out these websites, take some self-assessments, and investigate careers.

### Take a personality test to find out your strengths.

[16Personalities](#) - Free Personality Test, Be Yourself!

[Truity](#) - Meyers Briggs Test

[HumanMetrics](#) - Carl Jung Typology Personality Test

### Identify your ideal role.

- Write it out fully, with all the relevant parameters, and aspects you see in other job descriptions posted by the companies you long to work for
- Ask yourself why you're perfect for this ideal role
- List the organizations that are aligned with your ideal role
- Write out all the accomplishments, experiences and contributions you've made that make you a perfect candidate for this ideal role

### Learn a new skill while you look for employment.

- Connect with a Workforce Center to explore retraining opportunities
- Research your local community college for training and certification opportunities

### Take control of your own personal growth.

- Push yourself out of isolation

# Begin to Set Goals

It shouldn't come as a surprise that looking for work can be a lot of work, especially if you haven't been in the job market for a while or if you are changing careers. If you want help putting together a résumé, need retraining for a new career or are uncomfortable at the prospect of a job interview, you've come to the right place. Here are some hints to make finding a job or a new career less stressful and more productive.

### Ask Yourself:

- What kind of work do I want to do?
- What are some alternatives?
- What do I absolutely not want to do?
- Should I consider changing careers?
- How much do I need to earn?
- Do I need more training?
- Can I afford to wait for the "perfect" job or do I need to accept the first offer?
- Should I relocate to where my skills are more in demand?
- What companies are hiring?

Now that you've explored your strengths, preferences, and limitations, you can begin to set some long-term goals. While it may take months to achieve your ultimate objectives, you can make progress by setting, and meeting short-term goals. Write down your goals and set deadlines so you can track your progress.

## Typical reactions to losing a job may include:

- Anger
- Lack of self-confidence and self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Grief
- Embarrassment
- Shame
- Lack of hope for the future

Before you begin a new job search, take some time to think through your situation. Dealing with the social, emotional, and traumatic impact of a job loss may be as demanding as looking for a new one.

**Take some time to think through the past. It is good to have an accurate grasp about what has happened in order to feel better about the future and be ready to move forward with optimism, confidence, and energy.**

## Retraining Opportunities

To be competitive in today's labor market, workers must continue to improve their skills. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American holds more than nine jobs in his or her lifetime. Those who continue to learn are often the most successful getting new jobs or making career changes. Check out these resources:

**Northern Virginia Community College** — visit <https://www.nvcc.edu/> or call 703.323.3000

**Virginia Career Works - Centers** can assist with financial and career development resources to help you go to school through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Application to apply for this federally funded resource can be obtained at the Workforce Centers or on the VCW website at <https://app.virginia.myjourney.com>.

**Adult Education** options include GED (General Education Development) preparation or ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. These classes are available at no cost to you.

Visit the **Alexandria City Public Schools' Adult Education Program** website for guidance at <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/362> or call 703-619-8027

Visit the **Arlington Public Schools' Adult Career Education Program (REEP)** website for guidance at <https://www.apsva.us/ctae/adult-ed-reep-ged/> or call 703-228-8000.

**The VA Ready Scholars program was created for people who are recently out of work due to the economic impact of COVID-19.**

The VA Ready Scholars program is for people who want to gain access to new skills for in-demand jobs. Enroll in and achieve a credential in 30 select training programs offered through the **FastForward Program** at one of Virginia's Community Colleges. More details visit <https://vaready.org/>.



## Veteran Services

Veteran staff in the Virginia Career Works Centers are dedicated to serving eligible veterans (service members and their spouses) who need help finding work, training and credentialing military experience, as well as accessing state and federal veterans' services through:

- Application of preference and/or priority of service to veterans
- Gold Card Initiative (services for post 9/11 era Veterans)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit to businesses for hiring qualified workers including eligible unemployed veterans

### Employment Services Available for Veterans:

- Registration with Virginia Workforce Connection – [www.vawc.virginia.gov](http://www.vawc.virginia.gov)
- Assessment of needs, interests, job skills and abilities
- How to search for employment plus staff assisted job searches
- Information on education and training programs (GI BILL)
  - \* Schools - Community Colleges and Universities
  - \* Obtaining a GED - Adult Education (TJACE and PRACEP)
  - \* Training providers - WIOA programs and computer tutoring
  - \* Referrals and financial assistance
- Community agency and Veteran Affairs information and connections
- Résumé reviews and writing assistance
- Mock interviews
- Free workshops and seminars
- Online job search, job development, and referrals
- Career planning, intensive services, and case management

### Resources Available to Assist in Seeking Employment:

Computers and job related internet access  
Phones, scanners, copiers, and fax machine  
Blank applications and assistance with online applications  
Staffing agency notifications  
Employer outreach, hiring events, job fairs, internships, workshops, and apprenticeships

### For more information on Veteran Services in Virginia please Contact:

Email: [veteran.services@vec.virginia.gov](mailto:veteran.services@vec.virginia.gov)  
Visit Department of Veteran Services at: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/benefits/employment>  
Visit Virginia Values Veterans (V3) at: <https://dvs.v3.com/>



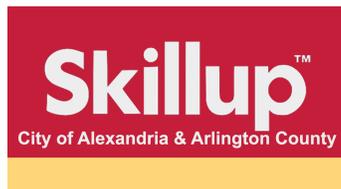
***Thank you for your service!***

## Additional Resources for Job Seekers

Learn more about your transferable skills and research career opportunities at the following web sites:

- [Virginia Workforce Connection](#) - Employment and labor market information in VA
- [VCW Portal](#) - Virginia Career Works job seeker portal
- [MySkillsMyFuture](#) - Build a bridge to your new career
- [CareerOneStop](#) - Your source for career exploration, training and jobs
- [S2sacademy.org](#) - Skills to Succeed Academy
- [VAReady.org](#) - Training for in-demand jobs
- [FlexJobs](#) - Search for remote jobs
- [Snagajob](#) - Search for hourly jobs / urgently hiring
- [Scouted](#) - For recent College graduates
- [GlassDoor](#) - Research company reviews and apply to the jobs that are the right fit
- [ZipRecruiter](#) - Online job posting database, create your profile and upload résumé
- [Indeed](#) - Online job posting database, create your profile, and upload résumé
- [Jobs.Virginia.gov](#) - Opportunities in State government

### SkillUp® Alexandria City & Arlington County



Designed with input from employers, SkillUp® Alexandria City & Arlington County will enable workers and career changers to display the initiative that employers seek, through the Metrix online platform that provides FREE, unlimited access to more than 5,000 courses in English and Spanish. SkillUp® Alexandria City & Arlington County. Visit <http://alexandriaarlington.skillupamerica.org/> for more information

## Why should I use social media to find a job?

While **LinkedIn**, **Twitter**, and **Facebook** are three of the top social media sites, there are hundreds that can help you find a job. Social media opens more doors for job seekers by increasing visibility with potential employers and providing an easy way for getting more information on a particular interviewer or company.

**Over 90% of companies now use social networking or social media to support recruiting efforts.**

### Having a positive presence on social sites allows the job seeker to:

- Learn about job opportunities quicker than going to an individual company site
- Expand your network and build your brand
- Manage your professional image, build your credibility, and attract recruiters
- Research companies through the company's online presence, as well as through the perspective of current employees
- Locate employees of target companies which may lead to key referrals to the hiring managers
- MOST IMPORTANTLY – market yourself

**LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook accounts are at no cost—FREE. All you need is an email address which the Workforce Center's can help you create. All Workforce Career Centers are equipped with free access to the internet, copiers, phones, and faxes.**

## WHERE DO HIRING MANAGERS AND RECRUITERS LOOK?

Recruiters make most of their hires through the following online networks:



79%

LinkedIn



26%

Facebook



14%

Twitter



14%

Candidate Blog

Image Source Digital Information World

## Value of Networking

Networking is a powerful tool to use in your job search. Networking is simply reaching out to meet people with the specific purpose of identifying job leads. You may talk with someone in person, over the phone, or send an email to let them know you are looking for a job and asking for information about job openings.

### Practice and Plan

Set a goal of contacting a specific number of people each day. Include the following information when contacting someone by email, phone, or in person:

- Your name
- Your desired occupation and salary requirement
- Your current situation
- Job opportunities you are seeking
- What you can offer the employer

### Who, Where, and How

If you are not sure how to start networking or are looking for some pointers, contact Virginia Career Works for help. Some Career Centers, churches, and civic groups have job networking events in communities where you learn about job opportunities, share strategies, and support each other. Start contacting the people who are closest to you: family, friends, and neighbors, but don't stop there. Think of everyone who could be a link to your next job. Anyone you see or meet is a possibility.

### WHO

- Former co-workers
- Faith-based organizations or club members
- People at your gym
- Hairdresser or barber
- Members of professional organizations
- Business leaders
- Career counselors at school

### WHERE

- Internet
- Clubs and civic associations
- Faith-based organizations
- Neighborhood activities
- Volunteer activities
- Sports activities for you or your child
- Parties or social events
- Continuing education classes

### HOW

- Be active and stay vigilant
- Understand high's and low's of the search
- Stay optimistic
- Take personality test to know your strengths
- Visit your local Workforce Center
- Check social media and job boards daily
- Apply for that job!



Vecteezy Art

### Start by really thinking about your work history and education.

What type of position are you applying for? What are your strongest skills? Do you have a strong work history? If not, do you have strong skills to sell to the prospective employer? If the job you desire requires a résumé to apply, choose a functional, chronological, or combination résumé format to fit your style.

#### Follow these tips:

- Keep it simple
- Use a simple, easy-to-read font (size 11 or 12)
- Justify the text to the left
- Try to keep it to one or two pages
- If you use two pages, be sure to put a heading on the second page
- Use bullets, phrases, or lists instead of complete sentences and keep each job to only a few bullets
- Use numbers or digits (\$, %) to quantify accomplishments and strengthen your résumé
- Be consistent with formatting
- Use key words that fit the desired job
- Focus on responsibilities, not duties
- List achievements
- The most important thing to do after you've written your résumé is to proofread!
- If you say in your résumé or cover letter that you are detail-oriented, make sure your résumé or cover letter reflects that
- Print a copy of your résumé and give it to someone else to proofread for errors
- Do not include personal information such as marital status, height, weight, religion, or a photo

## RÉSUMÉ DEVELOPMENT

When creating your résumé keep in mind the audience you are sending to and how you would like to portray yourself and skills. Highlight strengths and be confident in your skills. Some things to consider when creating your résumé:

### Résumé Do's and Don'ts

**Don't:** Think a title speaks for itself. Job titles can often be misleading and can differ from one company to another.

**Do:** Provide position titles with descriptions of the work.

**Don't:** Leave the reader guessing where and when you were employed.

**Do:** Clarify dates and places.

**Don't:** Apply for a job in a field you only briefly mention in your résumé.

**Do:** Tailor your résumé so that it is appropriate to the position for which you are applying. Connect your educational or career credits according to their importance to the reader.

**Don't:** Include confusing sentences or be long-winded on your résumé. This will virtually assure you of a place at the back of the line.

**Do:** Organize your thoughts in a clear, concise manner.

Everything you write must be true. Present everything in a positive manner.

## Résumé Formats

### Chronological Résumé

A chronological résumé lists your work experience in reverse-chronological order, starting with your most recent position at the top. This is the most traditional résumé format, and for many years remained the most common.

### Functional Résumé

A functional résumé focus more on relevant skills than work history. While the chronological format highlights work experience with detailed summaries of the achievements within each position, the functional format focuses on the applicant's skill set.

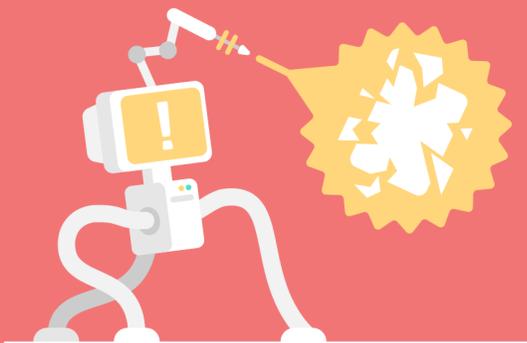
### Combination Résumé

A combination résumé is a mix of chronological and functional styles. This résumé format allows you to emphasize both your work experience and relevant skills. Because your skills and employment history will consume most of your résumé space, you may need to eliminate optional sections such as volunteer work or special interests.

### Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The CV presents a full history of your academic credentials, so the length of the document is variable. In contrast, a résumé presents a concise picture of your skills and qualifications for a specific position. The length tends to be shorter and dictated by years of experience (generally 1-2 pages) which is most of your résumé space. You may need to eliminate optional sections such as volunteer work or special interests.

70% of job applications get disqualified by applicant tracking systems without being read. This statistic emphasizes how important it is to tailor your resume to the job you're applying for.



Source: CareerArc

 novoresume.com

### ACTION VERBS AND KEY WORDS TO CONSIDER USING IN YOUR RÉSUMÉ:

#### Communication:

Advised, Critiqued, Disclosed, Discussed, Entertained, Fit, Graphed, Interviewed, Listened, Mediated, Networked, Presented

#### Teamwork:

Adapted, Contributed, Formulated, Gathered, Helped, Joined, Participated, Supported, Unified

#### Management:

Authorized, Boosted, Chaired, Coordinated, Directed, Endorsed, Guided, Granted, Handled, Headed, Operated

## CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ SAMPLE

# Chronological Resume

Name and contact information

### Janet Chobot

Little Rock, Arkansas • (123) 456-7891  
agardner@email.com

Summary or objective

#### Summary

An exceptionally organized and friendly dental assistant with 3+ years of successful experience working with dental offices and clients.

Professional history

#### Professional History

##### Smith Family Dentistry, Dental Assistant

July 2017 – Present

- Clean and prepare treatment rooms
- Prepare patient to be seen by for dental treatment
- Answer common patient questions about dental procedures, treatments, and issues

##### E&H Dental, Office Assistant

August 2015 – July 2017

- Organized client schedules
- Received patients upon arrival
- Handled client billing and paperwork
- By end of work experience, took on key dental assistant roles

Educational history

#### Educational History

##### Little Road Junior College

August 2012 – June 2014

Certified Dental Assistant Program

Skills and abilities

#### Skills

Dental assistant skills include: DANB certification • X-ray certification • Denture Impressions • Calming personality and demeanor • Hygienic • Minor oral surgery experience

## FUNCTIONAL RÉSUMÉ SAMPLE

# Functional Resume

Name and  
contact  
information

Summary

Skills grouped  
by theme

Any relevant  
professional  
experience

Education

### James Kennedy

555 Cherry Ln  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48111-9626  
(111) 777-888  
jameskennedy@email.com

#### Summary

Customer Service Representative with over three years of experience resolving complex customer inquiries. Passionate about building strong customer relationships, driving brand loyalty, and increasing customer engagement.

#### Area of Experience

Retail Sales, Data Entry, Microsoft Office, Typing, Complaint resolution, Service-based selling, Fluency in French and Spanish

#### Skills

##### Process Streamlining

Created customer service email scripts used across the company to interact with customers. Single-handedly created customer service representative training manual, reducing on-boarding process from 8 to 6 weeks. Reduced average customer representative call time by 90 seconds with intuitive online training

##### Complaint Resolution

Answered an average 50+ calls per day from unsatisfied customers related to delays in shipment, order mistakes and lost orders. Achieved 97% average customer satisfaction rating, surpassing team goal by 12%.

##### Service-based Selling

Consistently exceeded application targets by 10%+ with innovative up-selling techniques. Pioneered development of improved system for following up with unsatisfied customers, reducing customer churn by 6%.

#### Experience

##### Cloud Clearwater, 2017

Customer Service Manager: Managed customer relationships via phone and email to obtain payments, resolve inquiries and up-sell programs.

Customer referral program: Spearheaded project, increasing customer base by 15% in less than 6 months.

##### Tradelot, 2016

Customer Service Representative: Resolved customer inquiries via phone and email, consistently exceeding targets and pioneering processes for better customer satisfaction.

#### Education

##### Coral Springs University, 2009–2013

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

## COMBINATION RÉSUMÉ SAMPLE

# Combination Resume

### Name and contact information

#### Alex Lee

Scranton, Pennsylvania • (123) 456-7891 • alex.lee95@email.com

### Summary

#### Summary

A strategically-minded and hard-working sales associate with 2 years of experience increasing sales and increasing brand awareness.

### Skills and abilities

#### Skills

Sales and marketing skills include: Tableau (intermediate level) • Excel (intermediate level) • Salesforce Administration (entry level) • Team player • Hardworking • Creative

### Professional experience

#### Professional History

L&O Financial, Sales Associate

August 2016 – Present

- Utilize Salesforce to help manage client accounts
- Learned and used various data analytics tools, including Excel and Tableau, to provide data insights
- Work collaboratively with other associates and managers to create new marketing strategies

L&O Financial, Intern

June 2016 – August 2016

- Trained on industry financial systems
- Assisted sales teams with day-to-day operations
- Learned skills in sales and developing client relationships
- Accepted as full-time Sales Associate following successful internship

### Education

#### Educational History

Pennsylvania State University

August 2012 – June 2016

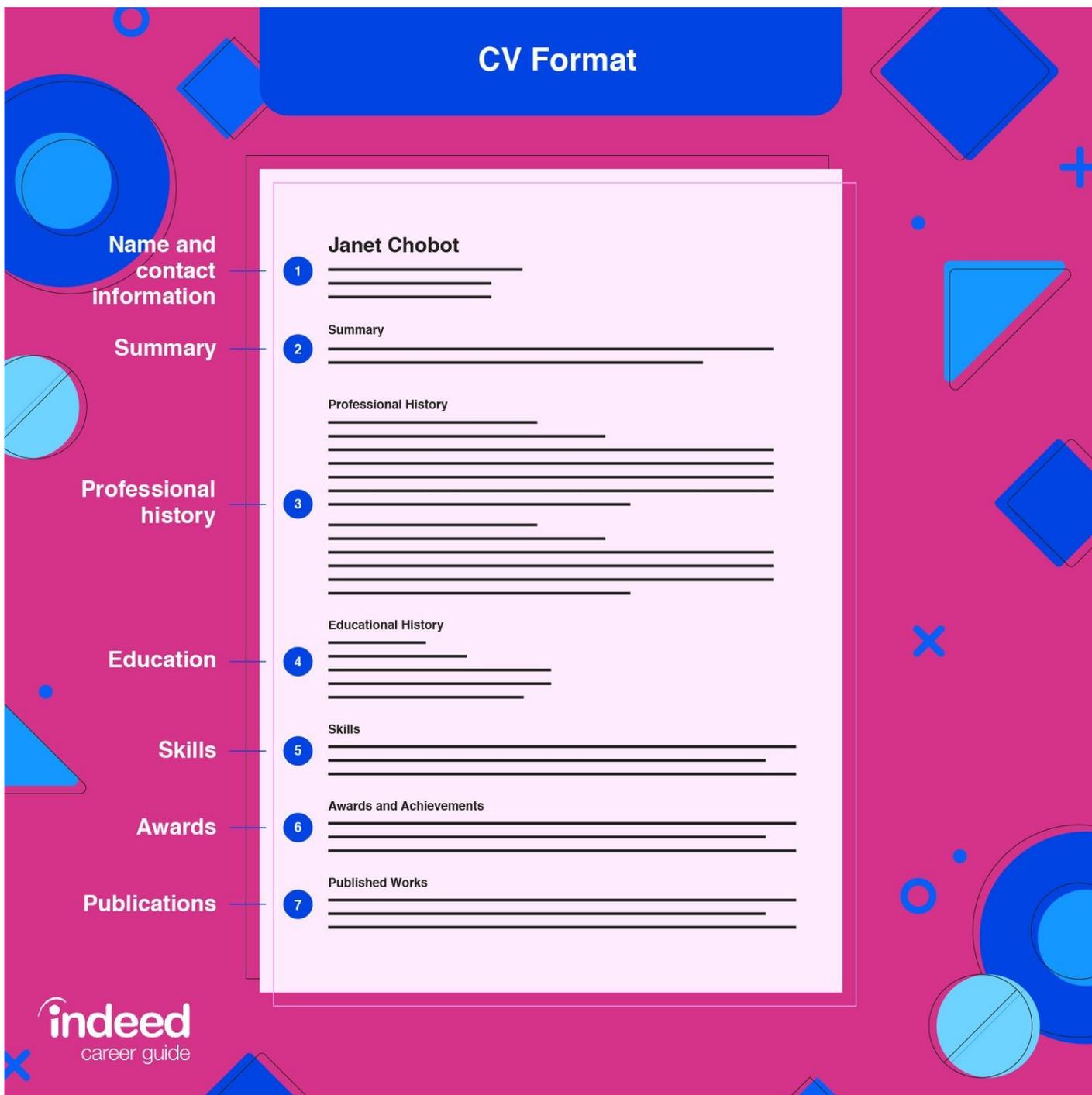
B.A., Communications, 3.95 GPA

### Awards

**Awards include:** Magna Cum Laude, President's Scholarship Award (2014), Academic Honors (2012-2016)

**Extracurriculars include:** Debate Team Captain (2015), Student Government Treasurer (2013-2014), Habitat for Humanity (2012-2016).

## CURRICULUM VITAE (CV) SAMPLE



**CV Format**

**1** Name and contact information

**2** Summary

**3** Professional history

**4** Education

**5** Skills

**6** Awards

**7** Publications

**Janet Chobot**

Summary

Professional History

Educational History

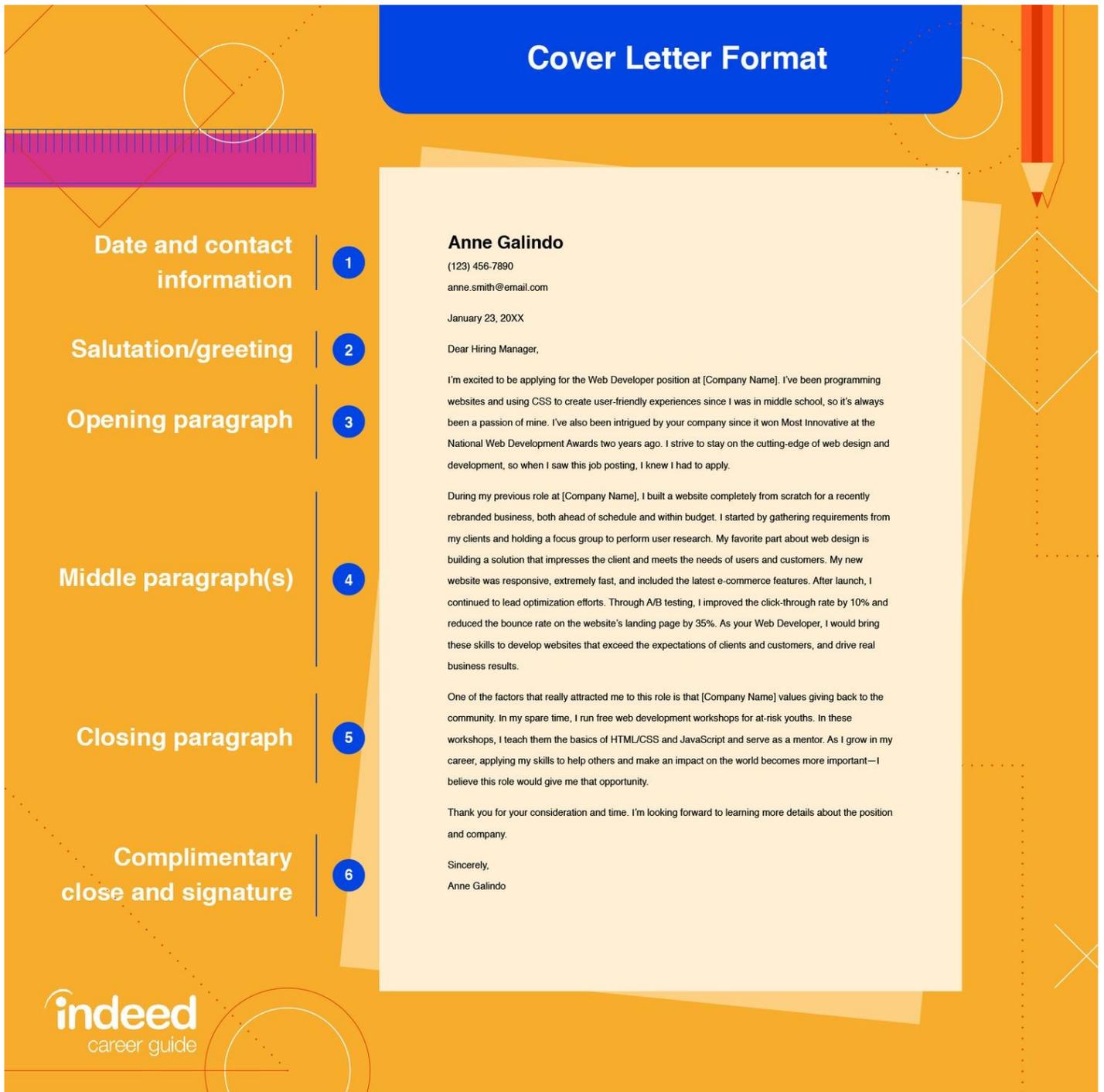
Skills

Awards and Achievements

Published Works

**indeed**  
career guide

**A cover letter** is as important as your résumé because it is the first impression you make with an employer. Whether you send a résumé by mail or email, always include a cover letter. It is an introduction that describes your qualifications and emphasizes how well you fit the employer's job description. Change each résumé and cover letter to respond to each job opening.



The infographic features a central white document titled "Cover Letter Format" with a sample letter. To the left, six numbered steps are listed: 1. Date and contact information, 2. Salutation/greeting, 3. Opening paragraph, 4. Middle paragraph(s), 5. Closing paragraph, and 6. Complimentary close and signature. The background is orange with geometric patterns and a pencil illustration.

## Cover Letter Format

**Anne Galindo**  
(123) 456-7890  
anne.smith@email.com

January 23, 20XX

Dear Hiring Manager,

I'm excited to be applying for the Web Developer position at [Company Name]. I've been programming websites and using CSS to create user-friendly experiences since I was in middle school, so it's always been a passion of mine. I've also been intrigued by your company since it won Most Innovative at the National Web Development Awards two years ago. I strive to stay on the cutting-edge of web design and development, so when I saw this job posting, I knew I had to apply.

During my previous role at [Company Name], I built a website completely from scratch for a recently rebranded business, both ahead of schedule and within budget. I started by gathering requirements from my clients and holding a focus group to perform user research. My favorite part about web design is building a solution that impresses the client and meets the needs of users and customers. My new website was responsive, extremely fast, and included the latest e-commerce features. After launch, I continued to lead optimization efforts. Through A/B testing, I improved the click-through rate by 10% and reduced the bounce rate on the website's landing page by 35%. As your Web Developer, I would bring these skills to develop websites that exceed the expectations of clients and customers, and drive real business results.

One of the factors that really attracted me to this role is that [Company Name] values giving back to the community. In my spare time, I run free web development workshops for at-risk youths. In these workshops, I teach them the basics of HTML/CSS and JavaScript and serve as a mentor. As I grow in my career, applying my skills to help others and make an impact on the world becomes more important—I believe this role would give me that opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration and time. I'm looking forward to learning more details about the position and company.

Sincerely,  
Anne Galindo

**indeed**  
career guide

## Cover Letter Tips

- Type your cover letter and résumé - do not handwrite
- Always send original cover letters to employers, not copies
- Use 8 1/2" x 11" paper
- Use the same color of paper as your résumé
- Do not use present or past employment business stationery
- Always proofread your cover letter
- Remember to sign your cover letter
- Be positive
- Don't mention needed salary, fringe benefits, or vacation time
- It is not appropriate to include your photo on a résumé or cover letter
- Highlight your most relevant achievements
- Keep your cover letter short; one page is recommended
- Personalize each letter



*Stock Free Images*

### Tips on Uploading your Résumé Digitally

An electronic résumé is a format to use online when you need to upload your résumé. An electronic résumé can be pasted into a job web site or an email. Many employers direct you to apply for jobs online and paste your résumé into a job bank. To make sure your résumé looks clean when an employer receives your information, use these tips:

- Use a standard font such as Times New Roman or Arial. Avoid using decorative fonts
- Keep font the same throughout the document. Avoid using more than one font
- Use a normal type size, usually in the range of 11 to 12 font size
- Limit the number of characters per line to 65 (partly dependent on font size)
- Avoid graphics and shading
- Keep formatting simple. Use ALL CAPS for major headings but avoid bolding, italicizing, and underlining
- Do not use bullets or lines. If you use bullets, they generally get replaced by an asterisk (\*)
- Left justify text with no tabs
- Use separate lines for your name, address, phone, email, and LinkedIn profile
- When saving your file, save in Microsoft Word and in a PDF format
- Typically the PDF format of your résumé is the format to be uploaded digitally

**Many different types of cover letters can be sent to employers. The situation determines what to include in your cover letter and your strategy to request an interview. No matter what, be sure to ask for an interview, as the purpose behind the cover letter is to market yourself and secure that interview.**

# PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

**The most important thing to do in an interview is to sell yourself! Many people don't get the job because they fail to prepare for the interview. A few tips to help:**

- When an interviewer says "Tell me about yourself," talk about your accomplishments, skills, and abilities, NOT your family, hobbies, or interests
- Look the interviewer in the eyes. Smile. Be an active participant in the conversation
- Try to turn "trick questions" into positives, such as "What's your greatest weakness"? Respond with "I like to get things done before I go home at night, and sometimes work late because I lose track of time"
- When the interview is coming to a close, finish by asking for the job. For example: "Mr. Smith, I want this job. I can offer you (state your skills, abilities, talents)"
- Demonstrate how you can help the company
- Prepare your questions

**A great way to prepare for an interview is to role play. Ask a friend or relative to play the role of interviewer. The more you practice, the more comfortable you will feel in an actual interview. During the interview, try your best to address the fears and concerns employers may have.**

## **Convince them:**

- You put in an honest day's work
- You are humble and positive
- You can be counted upon
- You are pleasant and professional
- You take pride in your work, appearance, and behavior
- You are trustworthy

## **Sample Interview Questions**

- Why do you want to work as a ....?
- What qualifications do you have?
- How did you feel about being laid off?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- How long have you been looking for a job?
- What motivates you to do a good job?
- What is an example of how you successfully addressed a major work challenge?
- Do you prefer to work alone or in a group?
- Would you rather be in charge of a project or work as part of the team?
- What would you do if one supervisor told you not to do something and another supervisor told you to do it later?

## Interview Do's and Don'ts:

- Don't:** Avoid eye contact.
- Do:** Eye contact translates to honesty and confidence. Look the interviewer in the eye when answering questions.
- Don't:** Embellish or fabricate details, facts, or experience.
- Do:** Be honest and choose your words carefully. Honesty always pays off in the end.
- Don't:** Leave large gaps or absences in your employment history.
- Do:** Explain gaps by saying, "returned to school," "helped friend start a new business," "traveled," or other reasons. If your reason is health related or due to a disability, it is your personal decision whether or not to disclose this fact. (Unless your disability prevents you from performing the duties of the job successfully, it is probably not necessary to disclose.) If the gap is less than one year, don't list it. There is no written rule that says you must account for every month of every year.
- Don't:** Forget to include any activities you may have done during an employment gap.
- Do:** List these in your skills and accomplishments; they may include qualifications useful for the position.
- Don't:** List a specific pay rate desired.
- Do:** Use a pay range that reflects the typical wages in your area.
- Don't:** Use words like "fired" or "let go."
- Do:** Use words to describe the situation like "left for other opportunities," "looking for new challenges," or "laid off."

### Reasons People Don't Get Hired

NOTE: It is understood that there are cultural norms where people exhibit some of these behaviors, so it may be important to have such conversations with employers. It is important that we are all understanding of each other's cultures and not force those to abandon their culture & beliefs.

- Poor personal appearance
- Overly aggressive
- Inability to express information clearly
- Lack of interest and enthusiasm
- Nervousness, lack of confidence, and poise
- Emphasis on money or salary too soon in the interview process
- Lack of tact and courtesy
- Negative attitude about past employers
- No eye contact with the interviewer
- Application form is incomplete or sloppy
- No sense of humor
- Late for interview
- Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time
- Vague responses to questions
- No follow-up phone call or "thank you" note mailed or emailed







# **VIRGINIA** **CAREER WORKS**

---

ALEXANDRIA | ARLINGTON REGION

<https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us>