

Resume Resources

Do you need to write a resume, but don't know how to begin? This workshop will discuss steps you can take and resources available to help you. We will cover:

Improving your computer and word processing skills

Getting an email account

Choosing a method for storing your electronic resume and other documents

Brushing up your writing skills

Determining what to put on your resume and how to organize it

Creating your electronic resume

Other places you can go for help

Resources Mentioned Repeatedly in This Class:

Universal Class: This service offers hundreds of free, self-paced online courses with practice exercises on a variety of personal and professional development subjects. You can access it from the library's website at www.nashualibrary.org/explore/elearning. To take a course, you will need to create an account with a username and password.

Testing and Education Reference Center: This database contains practice tests and study materials for a variety of qualification exams. There is also a resume builder and a career section with self-directed lessons on resume writing and other job search topics. You can access this service from the library's website at www.nashualibrary.org/explore/elearning. To access these resources, you will need to create an account with a username and password.

Adult Learning Center: A private, not-for-profit agency in Nashua that provides education and other personal and professional development services to the greater Nashua area. Educational services include life skills, literacy, college preparation, technology instruction, and English language courses. Other services such as tutoring, career counseling, and child care are also provided. You can learn about their services online at www.adultlearningcenter.org or by calling 603-882-9080.

Improve Your Computer and Word Processing Skills

Before you create your resume, you will need to be comfortable using a computer, and some experience using the Internet will also be helpful. You will also need to know how to use an electronic word processor, which is a software program used to type and print documents.

Computer Classes at the Library

The library holds several free computer skills workshops each month. You don't need a library card,. The current schedule is available at the Reference Desk, or on the library's website at www.nashualibrary.org/attend/computer-classes.

If you have never used a computer before, try our **Computer Basics** class. To increase your comfort level with the Internet, we offer a class called **Internet**. We offer both a basic and an advanced class on the word processing program **Microsoft Word**.

Free Online Courses

The online service **Universal Class** has a category called Computer Training. When you click it, the menu will change to show several smaller categories. The Computer Basics category includes classes such as Computer Basics 101, which covers the basics of computing, word processing, email, and using the Internet. There are also classes on specific software programs such as Microsoft Word.

Other Computer Training Resources

The non-profit **Adult Learning Center** and several for-profit companies in the Nashua area offer more in-depth classes on computing topics for a registration fee.

The library carries many **reference and guide books** on computing and software programs. They are often found at the call number 050. Search the library's online catalog, or stop by the Reference Desk for help from a librarian.

Get an Email Account

You will need an email account in order to send and receive messages related to your job search. You will include the address of your email account in your contact information on your resume. When applying for jobs, you may be asked to submit your application by email, or you may have to apply through a website that requires you to give your email address.

There are many email service providers to choose from. Which one you select, and the address you create for yourself, may have an impact on how you are perceived by employers. For example, the address happykitty@candytime.com sounds less professional than

johnsmith@gmail.com. Depending on your line of work, there may be different expectations or preconceptions, so you may want to seek information about this topic in your field. If you already have an email account, you still may want to consider setting up a second email account to use only for job searching messages.

There are pros and cons to all email services. For example, **Gmail** is free, provides lots of storage and is easy to use. It also provides access to free online software such as Google Docs. However, it is owned by Google, a company which tracks the search history and some other information on its users. This is a very good service for people who are primarily interested in convenience.

Protonmail is run by a company in Switzerland. They do not collect or share any information, and their email is encrypted. Their initial email service is free, but they charge fees if you want more storage. Also, if you reset your password they will encrypt all of your previous email, making it unreadable. This is a good service for people who are very concerned about data privacy, but not a good choice if you are prone to forgetting your password!

If you need help setting up or learning to use an email account, come to one of the library's **Drop-In Technology Help** sessions. These are blocks of time when a librarian is available to work one-on-one with you. The sessions are listed on the monthly computer class schedule, which you can get at the Reference Desk or view on our website.

The **Universal Class** course called Computer Basics 101 includes two sections on using email. There is also a separate class on how to use the email service provider Gmail.

Choose a Method for Storing Your Electronic Documents

If you don't own your own computer, or if you will need to access your document from more than one computer, you will need a way to store your documents for future access.

- **A flash drive** is a small, portable storage device about the size of a pack of gum. It can be plugged into any computer, and you do not need an internet connection to access your documents. Prices vary by brand and depending on how much storage the device provides. The downside to a portable storage device is that it can be lost or stolen.

- You can **send yourself an email message with the document attached**. To work on it again, you will download the document to a computer, and after you make changes you will send a new message with a new attachment. This is a free option that doesn't require you to carry anything with you, but you must be using a computer that is connected to the internet, and you must remember your email account password.
- **Storing documents in “the cloud”** means storing them on the internet so that you can access them through a web browser. There are many companies that provide this service, some for free and some at a cost. After you create an account with a provider, you can upload your documents for storage. You will need to download them to a computer to work on them, and then upload the documents again after you make changes. You must be using a computer that is connected to the internet, and you must remember the website, username, and password for your storage account.

Brush Up Your Writing Skills

Proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling are very important on a resume. If you want to improve your writing skills, or if English is not your first language, these resources may help:

The Writing Skills category of **Universal Class** includes several free, self-paced courses on basic writing skills for native English speakers and for English as a second language.

The **Adult Learning Center** offers free classes in reading, writing, math, and basic life skills for adults. Their preparation classes for the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) include writing skills, and have a small fee. The center provides free tutoring services in many subject areas, including writing.

If you prefer to learn on your own without a computer, take a look in the library's nonfiction section for **books with a call number that starts with 425 or 428**. Remember to look in both the regular nonfiction and the oversize books. If you get lost or you can't find what you need, visit the Reference Desk for help.

Determine What to Put on Your Resume and How to Organize It

Before you start writing your resume, you will need to decide what information to include, and how you want to organize it. There is no one-size-fits-all layout for resumes, so you will need to learn about the different options to decide which one is the best fit for you and for the job you are applying for.

If you have never written a resume before, start by learning about the three basic resume layouts:

- **Chronological:** A list of your previous and current jobs organized by date, highlighting your experience and accomplishments in each position.
- **Functional:** A list of your skills and accomplishments, regardless of when or where you acquired them.
- **Combined:** A blend of both chronological and functional, this type highlights your most relevant skills and accomplishments, and also gives prospective employers a picture of your work history.

Resumes can also have additional sections, such as an objective statement; history of formal education and professional development; lists of certifications, awards, or memberships; languages spoken; and many others. These are not required but you may wish to include them if they are relevant to your job application and add to the impression you want to make.

The online service **Universal Class** has a course called Resume Writing 101 that includes 13 lessons to introduce you to the different types and parts of a resume and guide you through the process of creating your own.

Many **college and university websites** offer guidance on how to create resumes, since this is a common question among students entering the workforce. For example, Purdue University's writing lab offers a nice overview of resume basics on their website:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/resume_workshop/index.html.

The website **Ask a Manager:** <http://www.askamanager.org/> has great information on resumes as well as many other topics about how to navigate the workplace. Some of it is funny, some of it is really useful. Unfortunately, it does have a lot of ads.

You can find **articles on resume topics** in many places. If you are searching on the Internet, be sure to consider the date of the article and the source. You can also find tips for job applications in a specific field by looking at publications related to those fields.

You can also find books on cover letters and resumes in the non-fiction section of the library under the Dewey Decimal number 650.14. Ask at the reference desk if you need help finding them.

Create Your Electronic Resume

When you sit down to create your resume, you will need to think about the “look” of the document: the style and size of the content and section headers, margins, the design of lists, and other embellishments such as horizontal lines and grids. These elements are entirely separate from the information and structure. You can find many design samples and suggestions in the same books, articles, and online resources mentioned in the previous section.

Resume templates are pre-formatted blank resumes that you can fill in with your information. These allow you to create your resume more quickly, without having to adjust each formatting element yourself.

Free Resume Templates

The word processor **Microsoft Word** comes with many design templates you can use, either at home or on the library’s computers. To access the templates, open the program and click on the File tab, then the New tool on the left side menu. Locate the template category called Resumes & CVs. Browse for one that you like, open it, and begin filling in the various sections. Don’t forget to save your work.

In the **Testing and Education Reference Center**, under Career, there is a Resume Builder that will guide you through the creation of your resume. It starts by offering 8 templates to choose from, and then allows you to pick the sections you want to include and determine their order. The builder then guides you through each section one at a time, giving you tips, prompts, and suggestions to help as you fill in the information. Your account will save your progress so that you do not need to finish all at once. At the end, you can download your resume in one of several usable formats. This service is free for you because the library pays for a subscription.

In the database **AtoZdatabases**, in the box labeled Find a Job, there is a link to Cover letters, Resumes, and Tips. If you follow that link under Step 2 you will see a number of templates for resumes and cover letters. It has templates in the Chronological and Functional styles, as well as a style that it calls “Plain.” You can open these templates in Microsoft Word and fill your own information. Like the Testing and Education Reference Center, this service is free to you because the library pays for a subscription.

Websites That Claim To Be Free

Beware of websites that claim to offer free resume templates, or that say they will create your resume for you for free. No one is going to create a polished resume for you for free, unless the final product is extremely plain. If it sounds too good to be true, there must be a catch. Usually, the website will allow you to do all the work of writing and building your resume, but when you reach the end you will not be able to save or download the document until you pay for a subscription.

One way to avoid this trap by reading the website's terms of use or user agreement, which can often be found through a link at the very bottom of the website. If there is a section about payments or subscriptions, you know that the site is not really free, and at some point you will be asked to pay.

Another way to spot these websites is to read their "About" page. For example, the website resume.com does not mention payments in their legal information. However, on their About Us page, they describe themselves as "a free resume hosting" service. Hosting means keeping your document online. That is the service they provide for free.

Other Places You Can Go For Help

- **New Hampshire Employment Security:** They offer some free services, resources, and tools for job seekers. You can find information online at www.nhes.nh.gov or by calling 1-800-852-3400.
- **Adult Learning Center:** Their adult skills program includes career & job readiness counseling. Learn more by calling 603-882-9080.
- **Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter:** Their employment/education program assists job seekers with skills such as resume writing and interviewing, as well as providing funds for educational services and other outreach to aid individuals seeking employment. Call 603-889-7770 for more information.
- **College Career Centers and Alumni:** If you are a graduate or a current student, you may be able to get career-related help from your college or university, or through the school's network of alumni.
- **Work Ready NH:** Work Ready NH is a tuition free work readiness program associated with the Community Colleges of New Hampshire. You can get more information online at <https://www.ccsnh.edu/workforce-training/workready-nh>.
- **NHWorks.org:** New Hampshire Works is part of the State of New Hampshire's department of Business and Economic Affairs. Their office in Nashua is at 6 Townsend West, and their phone number is 603-882-5177.
- **Job Corps:** Job Corps is a program administered by the Federal Department of Labor that offers free educational and vocational training to people between the ages of 16 and 24. Their recruitment agent is at the library most Thursdays from 2:30 to 4:30. You can find out more about them at their website: <https://www.jobcorps.gov/>.