RESUMES & COVER LETTERS
A Quick-Start Guide
From the beginning...

- **COVER LETTER BASICS**
  - What is a Cover Letter?
  - Company Research
  - Basic Formatting
  - Parts of a Cover Letter

- **RESUME BASICS**
  - What is a Résumé?
  - Basic Formatting
  - Parts of a Résumé
  - Do’s and Don’ts
Cover Letter Basics
What Is A Cover Letter?

- 1st document a potential employer sees
  - First impression
  - Get’s you noticed amongst other applicants

- Introduces you and your resume
  - States interest in a job position
  - Highlights qualifications & skills
  - Relates skills to job requirements
  - Opens a dialogue between you & prospective employer
Before Writing Your Cover Letter

- Research the company
  - Visit their website
  - Find their mission statement & goals
  - Call and ask for information

Incorporate Research Into Your Letter

- Do you…?
  - Identify with their mission statement?
  - Possess the skills to help the company meet its goals?
  - Have experience with the company as a client?
Company Research

- **What’s in a Name?**
  - Human Resources Director
    - Check the website
    - Call the company
    - Ask for correct spelling
  - Effort = A+
    - Willingness to take the initiative
    - Attention to detail
  - Can’t find a name?
    - Address to “Hiring Professionals” or “Selection Committee”
Basic Formatting

- 1-inch margins
- Aligned Left, “Ragged Right”
- Single spaced
  - 1 space between addresses & dates in heading
  - 1 space between heading and greeting
  - 1 space between each paragraph
  - 3 spaces between closing line (“Sincerely,”) & typed name
Basic Formatting

- Breakdown
  - 1 page in length
  - 1 paragraph introduction
  - 1-3 paragraphs to highlight skills & qualifications
  - 1 paragraph conclusion
Dear Hiring Professionals,

I am a recent graduate of Florida Keys Community College with a concentration in accounting, and I would like to fill the position of Bank Teller as advertised on Keys Federal Credit Union’s website. I have banked with Keys Federal Credit Union for several years now and admire your cooperative’s commitment to providing affordable financial services to the community that helped build it. I believe that my customer service experience and education in basic accounting make me a strong candidate to help further this commitment.

My customer service skills have grown as a direct result of my work experience in the hospitality industry. I have worked as a front desk attendant at a local hotel for the past three years. During this time I have...

In addition to this experience, I have also taken several college courses related to the field of accounting...

Please find my resume attached for your reference. I would welcome the opportunity to participate in a personal interview to discuss how my customer service and educational experiences can be helpful to Keys Federal Credit Union. I will call you in the next week to confirm that you have received my resume and application. Please feel free to contact me at (305) 292-1234 if you have any questions before then. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Seeker
Elizabeth J. Seeker  
1234 Sunshine Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
(305) 292-1234  
Lj.seeker@gmail.com  

June 10, 2010  

Human Resources  
Keys Federal Credit Union  
2756 North Roosevelt Boulevard  
Key West, FL 33040  

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Resources for writing cover letters

http://www.careeronestop.org/ResumesInterviews/ResumesInterviews.aspx

http://www.netvibes.com/fkcclibresearch#Career_Resources_Guide
What Is A Resume?

- Lists your employment and education experiences in an easy-to-read format for potential employers
  - Chronicles your experience
  - Details duties performed

- Includes volunteer experience, special skills, certifications, accomplishments, honors, awards, and military service
Basic Formatting

- 1-inch margins
- 1-2 pages in length
- 1 to 2 fonts
  - 10-12 point font
  - Serif fonts vs. Sans Serif fonts
  - Choose clear, easy-to-read fonts
- Limit
  - **bolding** & *italics*
  - CAPS LOCK
    - Exception: Section headings

Is this easy to read? √

Is this easy to read? √

Is this easy to read? ×

Is this easy to read? ×
Basic Formatting

- Use bullets, lines, & borders
- Consistent Grammar
  - Here, *there*, and everywhere? Or…
  - Here, *there* and everywhere?
- Use Numbers to Express Numbers
  - 21 years of experience ✔
  - Twenty-one years of experience ❓
Parts of a Resume

**HEADER**
- Contact information

**OBJECTIVE**
- A brief statement
- Specifies goal

**SKILLS SUMMARY**
- Highlights skills learned in prior careers, volunteer work, school, and real life
EDUCATION
- College diplomas received
- Coursework that relates to desired position

WORK EXPERIENCE
- Start with most recent position

HONORS & AWARDS
- Honor Society
  - Clubs
  - Awards
DO...

- Use Spell Check
- Proofread out loud
- Ask someone else to proofread
- Use quality print paper
- Use the same font for your résumé and cover letter

DON’T...

- Lie or embellish
- Sound overconfident
- Include negative traits
- Tell your life story
- Use large, flashy graphics
