

cover letter and résumé

Remember to think BIG. Think long-term. At every point in a campaign, everything must look both back to its foundation (brand positioning) but also forward in order to evolve within the consistency of a brand. You must meet deadlines in a linear manner, but you can adapt, move, change the details...make things perfect before everything goes out. You should be obsessing about this. You should not be able to get your mind off of the end goal. Constantly observe, absorb, question, imitate and originate. Your mind should not rest and your sketchbook/job hunt journal should be the witness.

objectives Resumé and cover letter are essential pieces to your “campaign”. The parallel to a campaign in the corporate world is how all communication - from press releases to sell sheets - must fall under the brand (see above). Your visual identity will also be put to its first use and adapted.

This will take multiple rounds and balance aesthetics and visual communication with organization and verbal communication. All designers must be able to communicate with clients both in person and in writing. You must be articulate and draw from all the knowledge you have acquired while in college both in academics and in social skills.

problem You will present finished cover letter(s) and a résumé that live within your brand and display your visual identity. Information to guide you has been presented in-class lectures.

expectations You will be graded on the following:

- Directions were followed accurately with absolutely no errors.
- Ideas successfully conveyed per objective.
- Writing skills displayed in order to persuade in an intelligent and compelling manner.
- Materials support brand positioning statement.
- Ambition - How much did you challenge yourself? Did you plan your time well?
- Cleanliness and Presentation.
- Participation in critique.

schedule

- MON Sept 22: Résumé lecture, begin research and rough drafts
- **DUE WED Sept 24, 8am:** Rough draft of résumé contents due
- FRI Sept 26: Cover Letter lecture, begin research and rough drafts
- **DUE MON Sept 29, 8am:** Cover Letter and Résumé *outlines*, typed and printed

>>> WED Oct 1, 8am HR specialist, Kelly King
Bring sketchbooks to take notes and have questions ready for her!
(receive edits on outlines)

- **DUE FRI Oct 3, 8am:** First Drafts typed and printed (optional design placement, though typography should always be considered) hand in for editing; *BFA Reviews*

Mon Oct 6: receive copy revisions, implement into design
Required Midway Critique some time this week TBD, in groups.
Must have printed work to mark up every day you come to class.

- **DUE MON Oct 12, 8am:** Final Art, soft and hard copies (see Presentation for each)
Nothing mounted, but all pages must be of perfect craft as they would appear to be mailed. The only exception is if you have a specific stock of paper, in which case you will supply a paper sample and turn in the budget again explaining how much this would cost.

RÉSUMÉ

objectives “Simply sending out a résumé, no matter how perfect it is [and it should be perfect!], does not mean that you will be instantly hired...Expecting to land a position by sending out hundreds of résumés in a random, shotgun effect is like expecting to win the lottery....Think of a résumé as an invitation. It’s meant to pique an employer’s interest so they will want to hire you. A résumé should tell an employer enough about you [and remember that this is visual design too] to make them interested, and to get you in the door, so you can sell yourself.”

-Richardson, 90.

problem A designer’s résumé is different than the average, but it is not the place for kooky and conceptual. IF you can do this kooky and conceptual and it works, then it’s brilliant. But if it fails, it fails badly...usually becoming the laughing stock for an entire group of formerly possible employers. Therefore, we will go for the safe version in this course.

The order of the résumé fresh out of college.

1) Objective

Optional, see Richardson, p. 93 and Google Objectives. You decide. If you do this, there are short paragraphs, single sentences, or bullet points.

2) Education

After your first or second job, this will go after your Work Experience. If you have a large amount of relevant work experience, you may choose to move Education down now.

3) Professional Experience

For the first round of text for this project, list everything and we will edit. You should list relevant experience, regardless if it was a “Job” or not. This is more important than work experience at a retail store.

4) Awards (optional)

If you have them. If these are scholarships, you should list them with Education.

5) Skills (optional)

Language? Managing seminars you’ve attended? Financial something? If the only skill to list is software, it may be included under Education or Professional Experience. *For the first rounds, list it under Skills and we’ll see what we have to work with.*

6) References (optional)

Available upon request.

tips 1) 1 page. No more, no less.

2) Give a try at wording the explanations of your professional experience. Read examples. *Attempt* to not use I or me or the past tense. Full sentences are not necessary.

3) Use visual hierarchy. Perfect typography.

4) PROOFREAD. Many many many times. And then a few more times.

5) Follow Visual Guidelines, which should tie it into your cover letter. And your future self-promotional piece. And website. And everything you do.

presentation Final pieces:

Hard copy: should be color on white paper with a paper sample. No mounting necessary.

Soft copy: PDF. Save it and open it on another computer. Is it the same? Check it!

COVER LETTER

objectives “A résumé alone doesn’t do it. Many employers automatically throw away résumés that do not include a cover letter...A cover letter is more than a prelude to the résumé, and expresses your ultimate agenda. A résumé is looked at briefly and only has a limited amount of space to say what you want. The cover letter is the meat that lets you go in-depth to support what you have mentioned in the résumé...A target cover letter will show that you have done your research about the company, and allow your personality to show through.” -Richardson, 94-5.

problem There are many kinds of cover letters. There is an inquiry cover letter, but I will not handle this because the job market is so competitive that jobs do not stick around waiting for this. There is also the letter that answers a job posting directly, which will be an adaptation of your cover letter with specific points showcased. The cover letter we will cover is one that prospects for work and networking connections.

- tips**
- 1) No more than 1 page.
 - 2) 3-4 paragraphs. Think of the first and last paragraphs as your shortest.
 - 3) Have a specific target. For your rough draft have “Mr. or Ms. X,”. “Dear” is not necessary in a business letter. “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir or Madam” means you don’t know someone and they’re just getting a default cover letter begging for a job or something else. It’s not that you *can’t* use these phrases, but that you should try to be more direct so that the reader is immediately more engaged.
 - 4) Don’t ask for an interview. Instead, explain that you will be calling them at a certain time. Even if eventually you will ask for an interview.*
**Later we will discuss what happens when you finally talk to your contact and they explain there are no jobs. Suggest an informational interview. You can use your student power here. Regardless, BELIEVE you can do this. Get in the door. But don’t lay all your plans out in your cover letter. Think of this as a strategic attack you can take in steps.*
 - 5) Re-read your words. Reduce the time you use “my” or begin a sentence with “I”. Word things differently.
 - 6) What can you do for them. Not what they can do for you.
 - 7) Spelling and grammar. Eloquence.
 - 8) Drop names and/or organizations if you can.
 - 9) Don’t be too personal. Don’t be too sterile. ...Figure it out.
 - 10) Follow Visual Guidelines, which should tie it into your résumé. And your future self-promotional piece. And website. And everything you do.

presentation Final pieces:
Hard copy: should be color on white paper with a paper sample. No mounting necessary.
Soft copy: PDF. Save it and open it on another computer. Is it the same? Check it!