

Resume and Cover Letter Guide

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Table of Contents

Resume Testimonials	3
Step One: Assessing Experience and Skills	4
Generate a list of Work Experience	5
Step Two: Choosing a Resume Format	6
Step Three: Writing Your Resume	7
Heading	7
Deciding on Main Categories	7
Objective	8
Education	8
Work/Volunteer Experience	8
Activities and Honors	9
Important Rules of Thumb	9
Step Four: Writing your Cover	10
Step Five: Selecting References	11
Appendix A: Sample Chronological Resume	12
Appendix B: Sample Functional Resume	13
Appendix C: Sample Combination Resume	14
Appendix D: List of Action Verbs	15
Appendix E: Online Resume and Cover Letter Tips	16
Appendix F: Sample Boomerang Cover Letter	17
Appendix G: Sample Reference Page	18
References	19

Student Testimonial

e-mail from former student

Hi Professor Hogelucht!

How are you? I hope you are doing well.... It's been so long since I've seen you! I wanted to share something with you. I applied to a position as a research analyst of sorts with Google up in Silicon Valley. I don't have any connections at that company and I figured my resume submission was a shot in the dark--I'm sure there are thousands of interested people applying there every day. Well, to my surprise, I was contacted by a recruiter who told me my resume--out of the hundreds if not thousands of resumes she sees--was one of the three best she's seen. THREE BEST. To say I was thrilled would be an understatement. I had an interview and was offered the job! The job itself was not very glamorous (or challenging for that matter), and once I told my company about the offer, they made me an even better offer/promotion. I couldn't believe I was now in the "driver seat"--at my age with only a year of post-college experience. HAHA!! I think it goes to show that you don't always have to be the relative of a CEO to get a job at places like this. You just need a fabulous resume. I can't tell you the number of interviewers/recruiters I've met over the last two years who praise my resume and cover letter. I just wanted to THANK YOU. ~Megan (Wall) Downs, Program Controller, General Atomics

There are infinite ways to craft a resume and I do not pretend to present you with the gold medal standard. However, after ten years of teaching resume writing, reviewing the latest literature on resume writing, and talking to employers about resume "do's and don'ts," I feel I have many valuable tips to share in the area of resume writing. In this packet, I have provided tips for writing your resume and cover letter. I also provide some excellent examples to guide your creation of a resume that best highlights your particular skills and abilities. Your resume should read like your own individual calling card. If you take time with the organization and wording of your resume, I assure you it will make you "stand out" from other job applicants! ~Prof. Kim Hogelucht

Most managers spend no more than 30 seconds scanning a resume during the initial screening process. During those few seconds they decide whether to reject the applicant or to place the resume in the "short stack" to evaluate in greater detail (Bolles, 2010).



What might cause your resume <u>not</u> to end up in the short stack???

Step One: Assessing Your Experience and Skills Resume Writing

What are my major skills and abilities?

Take a minute to write down as many skills as you can think of. Look for relevant "life skills" that are transferable and can be used in a variety of different work settings. They may be technical, field-specific, or anything you feel would emphasize your special abilities. (Remember that you can be good at something, but not like it. Write it down anyway.) Following is a list of different skills that can help you get started:

Assembling Athletics Construction Fixing things Hand/eye coordination Manual dexterity Mechanical Operating machir Repairing Using tools	Analytical Collecting data Evaluating Investigating Mathematical Observing Problem-solving Researching nesScientific Statistical	Artistic aptitudes Communication Composing music Creative Designing Foreign language Imaginative Innovative Musical Writing	Counseling Helping Interpersonal Interviewing Listening Negotiating Public relations Social Teaching Understanding	Decision-making Delegating Directing Leadership Managing Marketing Persuading Public speaking Selling Supervising	Administrative Budgeting Clerical Data entry Editing Filing Fiscal analysis Money- management Organizing Record-keeping
Using tools					Record-keeping

I am good at...

Generate a list of your accomplishments:

Prospective employers want to know what you have achieved and how your performance made a difference. Identify the accomplishments of which you are most proud, including challenges or problems you faced, and your solutions. Be sure to write down both paid and volunteer work, class projects, professional and community activities, and any honors or awards received. Do not include high school achievement.

GENERATE A LIST OF YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE:

Make a list of every job you have ever had, for any amount of time. Underneath each job, write the specific skills you gained or used. It's good to have a list of <u>all</u> previous jobs, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem. Keep this list to revise resumes given to different employers.

Jobs:	
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Skills:	
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Leadership Positions:	
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Volunteer Positions:	
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"The other important point to remember when you are writing your Experience Section is to build yourself up. This is not the time to be humble; it is the time to <u>sell yourself</u>. If you don't share your skills and experience, the prospective employer will remain oblivious to your abilities."

Now that you have listed your skills/strengths, accomplishments, leadership positions/activities, and work/volunteer experiences, you are ready to choose the resume format you will use and begin writing your resume.

Step Two: Choosing a Resume Format

There are three basic formats for resume preparation: **Chronological, Functional,** and **Combination** (Rosenberg, 2008; Schuman, 2008; Yate, 2008). There is no magic or prescribed formula, each has its own advantages and disadvantages. The best advice is to choose a format that best portrays your skills and experience at a glance.

Chronological Format: Chronological resumes are the easiest to prepare and read, and most commonly used. Information about your current or most recent position is listed first and then previous positions follow in reverse chronological order. This is a good format for individuals who have had more work experience. See Appendix A for chronological resume example.

Functional Format: The functional format enables you to focus on skills and qualities that can be applied to a number of work situations. It is best suited when you want to de-emphasize your employment record. You might choose this format it you have no work experience, have significant gaps in your employment record, have a pattern of short-term jobs (subsequent to graduation from college), or have held several positions in which you have exercised the same skills. See Appendix B for functional resume example.

Try to come up with three main skill categories. Then, list action verbs with bullets under each category. Some ideas for major skill categories include:

Leadership Skills Communication Skills Technical Skills

The Combination Format: As the name implies, the combination format merges elements of both the functional and chronological formats. It stresses skills and capabilities, but adds positions, employers and dates. The main advantage is that it shows the potential employer where and when you have gained the skills you are highlighting. If you have a stable employment record, it is important to include a job history to help remove some of the suspicions that often rise in the minds of employers reading functional resumes. See Appendix C for combination resume example.

The combination format is often used by job seekers who are making a drastic career change and want to emphasize their transferable skills instead of positions they have held.

Step Three: Writing Your Resume



1. **Heading:** At the top of the page, list your name, address, e-mail, and a daytime telephone or cell phone number where you can be reached or a message can be left. However, more recent research suggests that your name, e-mail, and cell phone number are the only items you need to include (Iram, 2016). <u>Caution:</u> Be sure to review the professional quality of your outgoing message on voice-mail, and include your e-mail address. Check regularly for messages.

Your name should be a larger font than your address.

If you have more than one address (current and permanent) left justify one address and right justify the other:



4567 Parkhurst Lane San Diego, CA 92130 <u>amiller@yahoo.com</u> 619-792-9573

OR

ANITA MILLER <u>amiller@yahoo.com</u> 619.792.9573

2. Based on your skills/activities worksheet, decide on the main sections you want to include on your resume. For a chronological resume, some common sections include: EDUCATION, WORK EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, HONORS, ACTIVITIES

Make these main categories/sections stand out by putting the letters in CAPS and/or **BOLD PRINT.** Also, adding lines above or below each category title helps balance the page out and makes the category stand out

WORK EXPERIENCE

WORK EXPERIENCE

*If using a functional or combination resume, instead of work experience, your main category will most likely be "SKILLS" and you will want to provide three skills under this with bullet points under each skill highlighting how you have exercised that particular skill.

SKILLS

Organization Skills

- possess ability to multi-task full academic load, part-time job, and Resident Assistant Position in my dorm
- understand the value of budgeting time and resources acquired through work and school
- enjoy being efficient and accomplishing tasks in a timely manner
- maintain a high GPA due to my ability to organize my work and my thoughts effectively

Leadership Skills

- and so on.....
- **3. Objective:** Whether to include an objective section is optional (Iram, 2016, Fournier & Spin, 2006). If you decide to use one, state your objective clearly and succinctly. Tailor each objective to each different employer.

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a challenging position at Nike Corporation where I can exercise my exceptional marketing skills and communication abilities.

4. Education: List education in reverse chronological order (most recent education first). List education before experience when education is your strength, and list experience first when it is your greatest asset. If your degree is directly related to the type of work you are pursuing, list your degree first and work experience second (unless you have many years of work experience and you've been out of college a long time). After several years out of college, GPA is no longer relevant, but be sure to keep your degree earned on your resume (Iram, 2016).* Include your grade point average only if it is above a 3.0.

If you have room on your resume include a list of coursework taken in your major. List study abroad experiences as well. Include community college education if you attended for more than one year.

5. Experience is not limited to paid positions—include volunteer work as well. For work experience section, you will want to follow the format below. Be sure to balance the page out through left justifying and right justifying. You choose what you want to right justify and left justify—just be consistent!

Make each item stand out (for example, use italic print for all job titles, use bold print for all company names, etc.). This makes each category distinct. Be consistent with your use of italic, bold, or ALL CAPS print (Kennedy, 2007).

Also, put work experiences in reverse chronological order (current jobs first).

Spend time wording your job responsibilities!!! This is an aspect of the resume that really stands out and shows your writing ability. Use action verbs in beginning each statement (Iram, 2016, Rosenberg, 2008; Yate, 2008). Please refer to Appendix D for a list of action verbs. Use present tense verbs for current jobs and past tense verbs for previous jobs.

Do not use paragraph format to explain job duties. Use bullets before each job responsibility (Iram, 2016). This is easier to read. Also, avoid the use if "I, me, my."

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marketing Intern

Hogelucht Creative: San Diego, CA

- Create logos for major companies in the San Diego area
- Assist marketing director during tradeshows
- Help with the creation of brand identity packages including logo design and marketing plan for two fortune 500 companies
- Effectively set work priorities based on deadlines
- **6.** Be sure to list your Activities or Honors. You can combine these if you have a few of each or make these separate categories if you have many activities and many honors.

For activities, be sure to list student organizations, professional associations, leadership positions held in college or associations, college sports teams, etc. For honors, be sure to list academic honors such as Dean's list, scholarships earned, etc.

ACTIVITIES & HONORS

- Dean's List, Point Loma Nazarene University
- Member, Golf Team, Point Loma Nazarene University
- Member, Real Estate Club, Point Loma Nazarene University

Fall 2014-Present Fall 2014-Present Spring 2014-Present



Other Important Rules of Thumb for Resume Writing:

- 1. Keep your resume to one page. General rule is one page for every ten years of work. For more than twenty years experience, use the two page maximum rule (Yate, 2008).
- 2. Your resume should be error-free. Proofread it many times and have others proofread it.
- **3.** Cover letter, resume, and references should be on linen resume paper (with a watermark). You can get this paper at any office supply store such as Staples or Kinkos.
- **4.** Leave some white space for an uncluttered organized look~ yet don't leave too much space so that your resume looks sparce—Definitely fill the entire page (3/4 to 1 inch margins).
- 5. Nothing takes the place of a hard copy resume on nice linen paper. Even if you are asked to submit your resume electronically, it would be very wise to send a hard copy in the mail as well (See Appendix E for tips for writing an electronic resume and cover letter).

October 2015-Present

Step Four: Writing your Cover Letter



- 1. If applying for a position based on a job description/ad or networking lead, be sure to try and find a name to which you may address your cover letter. If you talked to multiple people about a position at a company, then send your cover letter and resume to each of these people. If you are applying for a marketing position and you have been requested to send your resume to the Human Resources Director, Cheryl Smith, you should send a letter to Ms. Smith and a letter to the marketing director (find out his/her name).
- 2. Follow a simple format called a "Boomerang Letter" to answer job ads (Fox, 2001). Please see Appendix F for example cover letter.

Paragraph #1: You want to start by repeating parts of the job description back to the reader. They will see that you "get" what they are looking for in a job candidate. Also, explain where you heard about the job. Lastly, preview your two top skills or strengths that qualify you for the position (i.e. business education and customer service skills).

Paragraph #2: State the first skill/strength listed in your preview and provide a detailed example to illustrate where and how you have acquired this skills—be specific (former job at Nordstrom's, project in Marketing at Point Loma Nazarene University, etc.)

Paragraph #3: State the second skill/strength listed in your preview and provide a detailed example to illustrate where and how you have acquired and developed this skill/strength—once again, be specific with workplace or school project.

Paragraph #4: Summarize the two skills/strengths you discussed that qualify you for the position (double-check that these are the same two skills listed in your preview). Express interest in an interview. Thank them for their consideration of you. Lastly, try to set up future contact (I plan to contact you in two weeks after you've had a chance to review my resume). This gives you a reason to call and puts the ball back in your court should you want to check on the status of the position. Hearing your name again and noticing your interest is sure to be noted.

- **3.** SIGN YOUR COVER LETTER at the bottom above your typed name. The letter is incomplete unless it is signed. It is viewed as unprofessional and careless to not sign your cover letter.
- 4. Put your cover letter on matching linen resume paper. You can usually buy matching envelopes (you can fold resume or buy larger envelopes). When mailing, place your cover letter on top of your resume. Your cover letter introduces you.
- 5. Proofread for errors. You cover letter is the first item a prospective employer views, so you want it to be professional and error free.

Step Five: Selecting References



- 1. Do not put "References available upon request" on your resume. A prospective employer will not be interested in checking references until they are very interested in you (Iram, 2016 & Yate, 2008). Then, it is assumed you will have references available for them. You need to list references on a separate sheet with your letterhead at the top. Possible references include former employers, former professors, your advisor, a long-time friend of the family (such as a pastor).
- 2. You should ask for permission to use a person's name as a reference. You should also keep them posted on your job search process (i.e. when to expect a call, etc.). Feel free to coach references on what your prospective employer may be looking for in a candidate for the job. This gives your reference some time to think of ways in which he/she observed these qualities in you, and he/she can make reference to these examples should they be contacted.
- **3.** Use a separate page for your references: put on matching nice resume/cover letter paper. Include Name of reference, title, company, address, phone, and e-mail. Try to obtain at least three references. Arrange references information attractively on the page. (See Appendix G for example).
- 4. Have several copies of your resume available to hand out at your interview. If the interviewer doesn't ask for a list of your references, it is fine to offer it to him/her at the close of your interview.

The following pages contain examples of job descriptions, cover letters, and resumes. Names have been changed for purposes of confidentiality.

PAUL PHILLIPS

pphillips@ptloma.edu

Current Goodwin Hall 3900 Lomaland Dr San Diego, CA 92106 (619) 849-7979

EDUCATION

(916) 989-5858

6830 Future Way

Redding, CA 95662

Permanent

Bachelor of Arts – Business Administration

- Point Loma Nazarene University: San Diego, CA
 - Major: Marketing GPA: 3.6/4.0
 - Courses: Administrative Communication, Business Finance, Business Law, Ethics, Marketing, Money and Banking, Personal Selling and Advertising

WORK HISTORY

Assistant Financial Advisor American Express Financial Advisors: San Diego, CA

- Provide Asset Allocation Analysis for various clients •
- Research new stocks and briefed financial advisors •
- Create various Microsoft Excel spreadsheets for use in tracking clients, hours worked, and money earned •

Internship – Training Coordinator The Money Store: San Diego, CA

- Facilitated and developed several classes for the Money Store's Corporate Leaning Center •
- Marketed an Employee Performance Appraisals workshop to The Money Store employees •
- Assigned reviewing managers to upper management people as part of a manager training program, bringing • over 60 new employees to various training courses
- Designed reports on Microsoft Access to aid in sorting employees in employee database. Reports showed the employees eligible for training courses
- Participated in the development of a new company-wide employee questionnaire assessing employee skills. It was later used to develop specific job descriptions for the company and the required skills for each job

ACHIEVEMENTS

Dean's List, semester honors for five consecutive semesters Recipient of Grade-Point Average Scholarship Recipient of Lion's Club Scholarship

ACTIVITIES

Member, Baseball Team, Point Loma Nazarene University Member, Chi Beta Sigma, Business Fraternity

2014 – Present 2014 – Present

November 2013 - August 2014

Anticipated May 2018

November 2014 – Present

2014 – Present 2013 - Present 2013 – Present

Appendix B: Sample Functional Resume

Becky Johnson 511 Stadium Way, San Diego, CA 92115 (619) 555-8888 bbuyer@email.com

EDUCATION

B.A. Business Administration Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego, CA Cumulative GPA of 3.60

Study Abroad Florence University of the Arts: Florence, Italy Courses taken: International Business and Italian Candidate for Graduation May 2017

Fall 2015

SKILLS

PURCHASING/RETAIL AND CATALOG

- Selected merchandise for retail
- Determined price strategy and markups on products
- Examined merchandise and selected colors
- Prepared contracts with full backup data

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Initiated changes in products to increase sales
- Analyzed merchandise for defects in design and material to improve quality of merchandise
- Sorted comparative merchandise and produced reports on inventory

ADMINISTRATION

- Coordinated, implemented, and supervised maintenance of all office records and systems
- Acted as liaison between sources and retail stores
- Coordinated purchase orders and
- Ensured customer satisfaction through timely and effective communication
- Supervised up to ten employees daily
- Trained employees from the Buyer's Assistant Training Program

HONORS & ACTIVITIES

Dean's List Business Department Scholarship Spring 2013-Present 2009

BRAD JENSEN 3445 Beaver Dam Road, San Diego, CA 92114, (619) 223-2233

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Designated "Sales Person of the Year" three years in a row
- Directed turn-around of sales force with declining production
- Achieved a 57 percent increase in sales volume within first year as manager
- Recommended new product line that resulted in \$3.5 million dollar increase in business
- Designed system for inventory control resulting in 30 percent reduction in merchandise loss

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

Sales Promotion

- Prepared and supervised sales promotion projects for major business organizations
- Created newspaper, radio and television advertising campaigns for new product lines
- Represented company at trade association meetings to promote products and services

Sales Management

- Recruited, trained and supervised local and regional sales staff
- Developed and implemented sales training and development programs
- Assigned territories, established quotas and supervised achievement of goals

Market Research

- Organized and directed market research projects to determine customer needs
- Prepared sales forecasts, made recommendations on product design, pricing and distribution
- Composed detailed reports of survey results for corporate management team

EDUCATION

Point Loma Nazarene University~San Diego, CA Major: Business Administration Minor: English	May 2010		
Mira Costa Community College~San Diego, CA	Aug 2007-Dec 2008		
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY			
<i>Sales Manager</i> AEROTECH RESEARCH CORPORATION~San Diego, CA	Aug 2009-Present		
Assistant Sales Manager QUALCOMM COMMUNICATIONS~San Diego, CA	Aug 2007-Jan 2008		

Appendix D: List of Action Verbs (Yate, 2008, pg. 69-70)

			_		
accepted	accomplished	achieved	acted	adapted	addressed
administered	advanced	advised	allocated	analyzed	appraised
approved	arranged	assembled	assigned	assisted	attained
audited	authored	automated	balanced	budgeted	built
calculated	cataloged	chaired	clarified	classified	coached
collected	compiled	completed	composed	computed	conceptualized
conducted	consolidated	contained	contracted	contributed	controlled
coordinated	corresponded	counseled	created	critiques	cut
decreased	defined	delegated	demonstrated	designed	developed
devised	diagnosed	directed	dispatched	distinguished	diversified
drafted	edited	educated	eliminated	enabled	encouraged
engineered	enlisted	established	evaluated	examined	executed
expanded	expedited	explained	extracted	fabricated	facilitated
familiarized	fashioned	focused	forecast	formulated	founded
generated	guided	headed up	identified	illustrated	implemented
improved	increased	indoctrinated	influenced	informed	initiated
innovated	inspected	installed	instigated	instituted	instructed
integrated	interpreted	interviewed	introduced	invented	launched
lectured	led	maintained	managed	marketed	mediated
moderated	monitored	motivated	negotiated	operated	organized
originated	overhauled	oversaw	performed	persuaded	planned
prepared	presented	prioritized	processed	produced	programmed
projected	promoted	proposed	provided	publicized	purchased
recommended	reconciled	recorded	recruited	reduced	referred
regulated	rehabilitated	remodeled	repaired	represented	researched
resolved	restored	restructured	retrieved	revamped	revitalized
saved	scheduled	schooled	screened	set	shaped
solidified	solved	specified	stimulated	streamlined	strengthened
summarized	supervised	surveyed	systemized	tabulated	taught
trained	translated	traveled	trimmed	upgraded	validated
worked	wrote				

1. **Uploading your resume is simple. However, you want to make sure that your online resume is in the correct format.** Job banks usually specify what format is required. Some common formats include:

Microsoft Word: Almost all professionals use Microsoft Word, so this tends to be the software application preferred by most companies and job boards. **PDF:** A PDF is similar to a picture of your resume. The benefit of a PDF is you are guaranteed that your resume will appear exactly as you see it. A PDF cannot be altered.

Web Page Form: Some job boards ask that you fill in the blanks on a resumelike form. In this case, you are not uploading your file.

***Important Tip:** Make sure your file can be opened and put the appropriate label on the file. Check to see if the company requires certain information for filing purposes. If not, be sure to include your "last name," the word "resume," and the date (i.e. Hogelucht, Resume 2-22-17)

2. Keywords are important!

Resumes are scanned for keywords by a search engine. The keywords are determined by the employer and typically address skills needed (i.e. leadership, communication, etc.) and technical skills required (list computer programs). The job description is a great place to start looking for keywords, as many times keywords are determined by those skill areas listed in the job description. Despite your skills and abilities, if you don't pay attention to key words, you may be cut early on.

- 3. **Update your resume regularly.** Many companies require that your resume be current. Therefore, it is a good idea to keep your resume up-to-date, so a prospective employer can see the most accurate picture of your skills.
- 4. **Cover letters for e-mailed resumes are shorter than a traditional, hard-copy cover letter.** Your e-mailed message is your cover letter. In your message, you should state the position for which you are applying, mention briefly the skills and/or experience you have that qualifies you for the position, and thank them for their consideration.

John Stanford

3344 Elmhurst Street San Diego, CA 92106 619-252-6787 jstanford@hotmail.com

August 8, 2016

Mr. Dave Wilson Director of Customer Service ABC Printing Company Santa Barbara, CA 98488

Mr. Wilson,

I am someone who is willing to work hard, is a team player, and who will flourish in a highpowered, high energy company, so please consider me for the position of Marketing Services Coordinator. I became informed of your need for a Marketing Services Coordinator through your ad posted on Monster.com. Due to my educational and customer service experience, I feel I would be an excellent candidate for this position.

Having a major in Business Administration, I have acquired the skills of teamwork, financial analysis, management and accounting. Having worked in various group settings in my marketing and administration classes at Point Loma Nazarene University, I have become skilled in research, data collection, writing formal business reports, and marketing plans. These skills would all be beneficial in such a position as a Marketing Services Coordinator.

Furthermore, customer service is one of the most important functions in a company. Ensuring good customer service means having the ability to communicate with customers and to coordinate the efforts of outside salespeople and printing-plant personnel to deliver what the customer wants. I have acquired this experience, having previously worked for both Nordstroms and Kinkos, which allowed me to work and interact with a variety of people. I worked to not only provide customer satisfaction, but also to meet or exceed the goals of each store.

Due to my business education and customer service experience, I believe you will find I am well qualified for this position. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this opportunity. You may reach me at 619-334-8070, or I will call to follow up within the next two weeks. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Leave 4 spaces to sign—provide signature above typed name]

John Stanford

Strong opening, heard of job – 2-3 skills or strengths

Explain first skill *backed with specific example

Explain second skill *backed with specific example

Summary of skills, sets up future contact

Becky Johnson 511 Stadium Way, San Diego, CA 92115 (619) 555-8888 bbuyer@email.com

References

Dr. Tom Wilson School of Business Point Loma Nazarene University 3900 Lomaland Drive, 92106 619-849-2277 twilson@pointloma.edu

> Sharon Jackson Marketing Director Help Software Inc. 2248 Ocean Bluff Drive. San Diego, CA 92126 858-273-4857 sjackson@aol.com

Don Schneider Supervisor of Sales Vector Inc. P.O. Box 190 San Diego, CA 92130 619-481-3847 dschneider@hotmail.com

(Please Note: References are on a separate sheet. Include name of each reference, title, address, phone, and e-mail arranged attractively on one page. Put on the same nice paper as resume and cover letter.)

References

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Notes: