RESUME CRITIQUE FORM

FORMAT & GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS

- [ ] **Length:** Resume fills and is no longer than one page.
- [ ] **Layout:** Space information evenly throughout page, margins should be .25" - 1".
- [ ] **Font:** Use common, easily read, scanned and printed fonts. Section Headers, 12 - 14 pt; content, 10 - 12 pt.
- [ ] **Paper** (if applicable): Use copier friendly white, off-white, or ivory resume paper. Pay attention to watermark.
- [ ] **Formatting:** Use CAPS, italics and bold to attract reader's eye to key areas of content. Avoid underlining.
- [ ] **Section headings**: (EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, etc.) use consistent font, style, and size (e.g. **ALL BOLD AND CAPS)**.
- [ ] Check for spelling/typographical and grammar errors – don't depend only on spell check - proofread carefully.
- [ ] Use punctuation and formatting consistently.
- [ ] Key word optimize! Use the job description to identify key word and phrases.

CONTACT NAME / INFO

- [ ] Include name on top in between 16- 24 pt font and **bold**.
- [ ] Use only 1 phone number and email address (required), address (optional).
- [ ] Drop labels for obvious facts like phone and email.

SUMMARY | PROFILE STATEMENT / OBJECTIVE

- [ ] Remove Objective. Focus on what one can do for an employer, not what one wants from an employer.
- [ ] Determine if a summary is needed.
- [ ] Write **summary** in a way to highlight skills and personal traits listed in job description.
- [ ] Remove filler/fluff material and lofty, long-term goals.

EDUCATION

- [ ] Include name of school, city & state, degree and major, month and year of graduation with consistent format.
  PALM BEACH ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY, FL
  Bachelor of Science in Biology, May 2022
- [ ] Remove time frame/date range attended. Instead use "expected" or "anticipated" before graduation date, or just MM YYYY of graduation.
- [ ] If multiple degrees, list in reverse chronological order.
- [ ] Only include schools where you have received degrees or are currently attending.
- [ ] Include a major or overall GPA if above a 3.0 and include scale: Overall GPA: 3.2/4.0.
- [ ] Remove high school information unless a freshman or first semester sophomore.
- [ ] List honors or academic awards, define them. E.g. Honors—Socratic style of learning. (optional)
- [ ] Use course titles, not course numbers and list in columns if more than three. Remove coursework; no matter how relevant, it is generally not included.

EXPERIENCE

- [ ] Include paid and volunteer experience if you have relevant skills to showcase.
- [ ] Include employer/organization, city and state, job title, and dates with consistent format. E.g.
  BOLAY, West Palm Beach, FL
  Team Member, May 2018 – March 2019
- [ ] List in reverse chronological order (present to past).
- [ ] Use bullets not paragraphs.
- [ ] Consider separating relevant experience into its own category (e.g. Teaching Experience, Healthcare Experience, Leadership Experience) and combining unrelated work experience under other work experience.
- [ ] Remove personal pronouns, "I."
- [ ] Include descriptive phrases that begin with past tense action verbs. E.g. Managed, Coached, Taught.
- [ ] Remove passive phrasing such as "responsibilities were", "duties included", "in charge of", etc.
- [ ] Avoid using same verbs repeatedly; vary usage.
- [ ] Communicate skills and past accomplishments/ successes. Avoid listing tasks or generic job descriptions.
- [ ] Quantify (#%$) when applicable: How many customers did you serve? With how many team members did you collaborate? How much money did you manage?

SPECIAL OPTIONAL SECTIONS

There are any number of additional sections one can add, they just need to be relevant for how the resume will be used:

- [ ] **Skills section**—software, hardware, programming, languages spoken, soft skills (critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork). Remove listing Microsoft Office products unless you have advanced skills in Excel or Access. Use a column format to increase readability.
- [ ] **Awards & Honors**—or list those in education.
- [ ] **Research**—if applying to graduate programs.
- [ ] **Activities & Interests—**include relevant professional affiliations, awards, honors, campus activities, or community involvement. Interest might include personal hobbies (e.g. cooking, travel, dog training).
  - Define what the activity if it is not obvious.
  - Avoid abbreviations (e.g. AMA).
  - Omit references to specific religious denominations or political parties, unless relevant to jobs applying for.
  - Use a consistent format such as:
    Pre-Health Club, Member, Fall 20XX – Present

REFERENCES

- [ ] Build reference list on separate page. Use same header.
- [ ] Reference information should include: name, title, organization, e-mail, and work phone number (including area code)

Cover Letter Critique Form

FORMAT

- [ ] Margins, fonts, and contact name/info should match the resume in format and style.
- [ ] If applicable, the paper should match the resume.
- [ ] Keep to one page.
- [ ] Follow business letter format (include date, recipient's name, title, organization, and organization address).
- [ ] Address to Dear Mr./Ms. (or Dr.) LastName, followed by a colon, not a comma.
- [ ] Include recipient's name (Research – Google/call the company/organization, your network, or LinkedIn)
- [ ] If you can't identify a human to address your letter, address to Hiring Manager.
- [ ] Add a **RE: POSITION** (e.g. **RE: BUSINESS ANALYST**)
- [ ] Sound positive and confident, avoiding "I think" or "I feel" statements.
- [ ] Use "I" sparingly, starting only one sentence per paragraph and one paragraph per letter with "I".
- [ ] Check spelling (Spell Check AND proofread)

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- [ ] Identify the skills sought in the job description (job description, requirements and desired qualifications.
- [ ] Brainstorm instances when you have demonstrated those skills. Provide a concrete example.
- [ ] Develop a list of key words to utilize.
- [ ] Include the answers to these questions: Why should I hire this person? How is this person going to help my bottom line? How you fit the company culture.

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

- [ ] Do not narrate your life-long dreams and ambitions.
- [ ] Do not commit four inches to a narration of how successful the company/organization is.

OPENING PARAGRAPH

- [ ] **Be memorable**! Start with something that makes me want to keep reading. Examples include:
  - How you became interested in the field.
  - A quote that resonates with the company.
  - Their mission statement and how it is a fit with who you are.
  - Name drop: did someone recommend you apply? Do you know someone at the company?
  - Address being over or under qualified.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S)

- [ ] Identify three to five skills you possess that are listed in the job description and communicate how you have used them successfully in the past.
- [ ] Communicate why you are specifically qualified as a fit for this position and the organization. This may include soft skills and personal traits.
- [ ] Do not state, "As you will see in my resume…" as it is a waste of space.
- [ ] Do not regurgitate your resume.
- [ ] Communicate how the employer will benefit by hiring you.
- [ ] Communicate knowledge of the company or industry (show you've done research) and how you are a fit.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

- [ ] State what you will do next (call to discuss meeting and your qualifications) listing a specific time when you will call or email to arrange a meeting. (If you say you are going to follow up, do so!)

  OR

- [ ] State what you would like the reader to do next, asking for an interview, and writing "I look forward to speaking with you." Or "I appreciate your consideration of my candidacy."

THE END

- [ ] Type "Sincerely" or "Regards", enter four times and type your name.
- [ ] Enter two more times and type "Enclosure" to indicate that your resume is attached. If there are additional documents, type "Enclosures." If you are attaching to an email, neither is applicable.