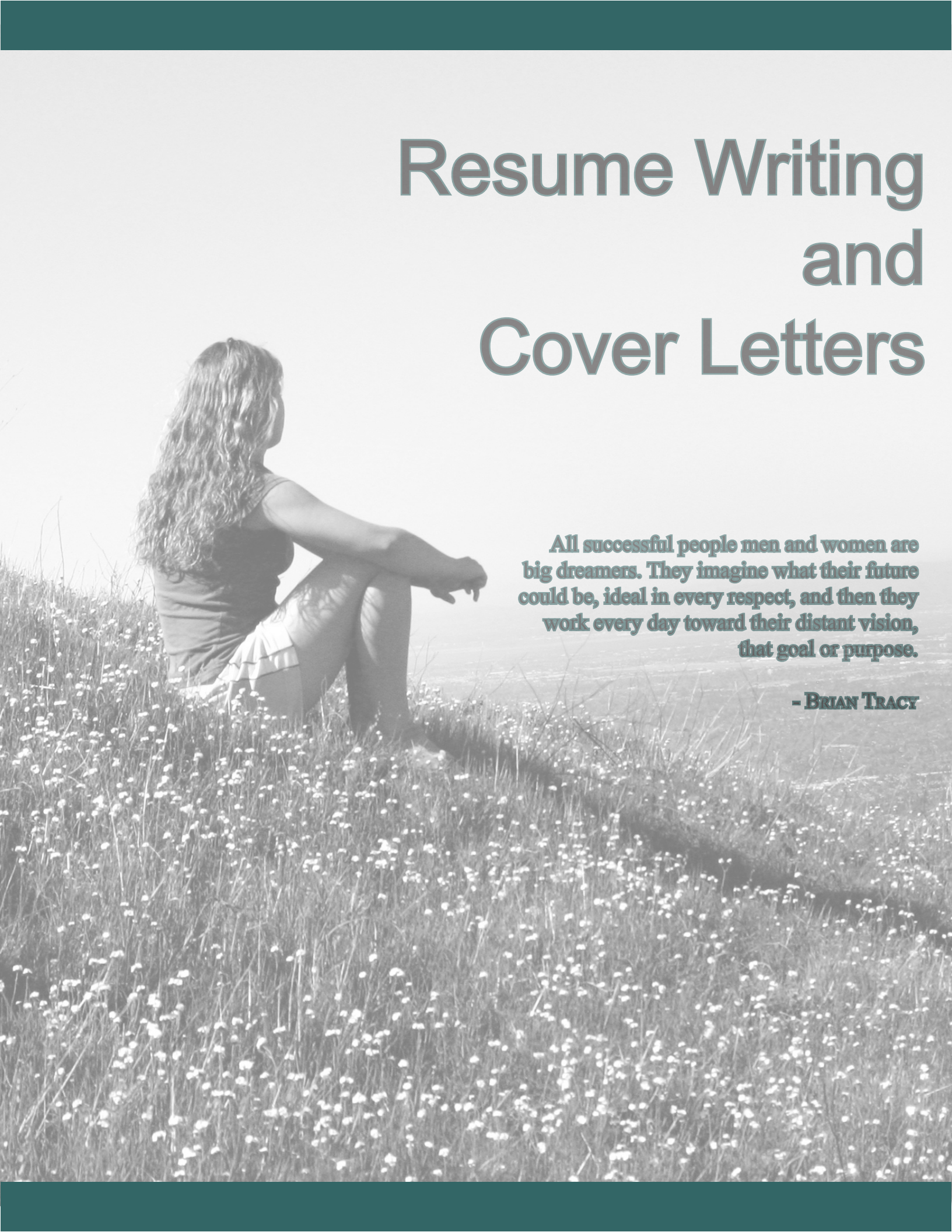


# Resume Writing and Cover Letters

A black and white photograph of a woman with long, wavy hair sitting in a field of daisies. She is looking out over a body of water under a bright sky. The image is used as a background for the text.

**All successful people men and women are big dreamers. They imagine what their future could be, ideal in every respect, and then they work every day toward their distant vision, that goal or purpose.**

**- BRIAN TRACY**

# RESUME WRITING & COVER LETTERS

## WHAT IS A RESUME?

A resume is your calling card when you apply for a job. Usually, your resume has to sell an employer on giving you an interview. Interviews get the job; resumes can only get an interview. Very often, personnel people will pattern the interview on the resume they have received from you. Thus, it is essential that you have a resume and that it be a good one.

A resume should contain brief but sufficient information to tell a prospective employer :

Who you are

What kind of job you would like

What you can do

What you have done

What you know

Your resume is often the first contact an employer will have with you, so it is important that you present yourself to your best advantage. Your resume must look professional and read professionally. A lot of thought and hard work goes into a good resume.

## PARTS OF THE RESUME

- **Be sure to place your name, your current FULL address, and your current phone number at the top of the page.** Make it easy for an employer to reach you.

**Note:** If you are away from home much of the time, you might want to list an alternate “message” number (a friend or relative who would see that you got the message). *If you move, or change your phone number remember to change the same on your resume.*

- **It is wise to have an objective.** The employer needs to know what general kind of a position you are seeking. You do NOT need to explain your long-term objective; he is only interested (as far as the resume is concerned) what you want to do at the present. Objectives should be short and to the point.

**Example :** A responsible position in the printing industry, utilizing training and “hands-on” experience in photo typesetting and camera-ready layout.

This kind is too general or flowery:

A management or supervisory position where the ability to conceptualize and follow through on new or existing programs is needed, as well as a position with growth and upward mobility that would utilize maximum potential.

- **Point out your strongest experience first.** If you have had little work experience in your field, but do have the training for this kind of position, put down **Education** first. If you have work experience in this field, but, so far, little training, put **Work Experience** first.
- **Under EDUCATION, list some courses you have taken that will show the employer that you have knowledge about this field.** If applicable to your technology, list machines you can use, skills you have acquired, languages you have studied. Be sure to list any other training (other than-Columbus State Community College) that you may also have had in this field.

- **When describing what you did on previous jobs, use action words** (some are listed on separate sheet). Describe job duties and skills, not just job title. If you have done something in a previous job that relates in any way to your objective, be sure to include this.

- **Do Not Mention Salary** From previous employment or expectations for your new position.

- **Include accomplishments.** If you have had any jobs where you can say that you made specific “accomplishments” for your new position.

**Example:**

**Salesperson**

Sold widgets traveling over five state area

Accomplishments include:

- Increased widget sales 30% over previous year
  - Cut company expenses 15% by efficient route planning
- Cashier**
- Operated cash register, made change
- Accomplishments include:
- Commended by supervisor on excellence of performance

- **Do not forget VOLUNTEER work in the general area of your field.** Extensive HOBBY work in your area can also build up your credibility. Be sure to include co-ops, internships, or field experiences. Experience is experience, paid or not.

- **When giving personal information - using birth date, marital status, etc., is sometimes beneficial, sometimes not.** This is definitely a personal preference. However, for most positions, no one will care about the color of your hair, your eyes, etc.

- **REFERENCES - it is generally acceptable to simply put “References available upon request”.** If you list names, etc., some of your references may move, quit jobs, etc., and you will have to do the resume all over again. An alternative to listing references on the resume is to have them on a separate sheet of paper, and take this sheet to your interview.

## GENERAL TIPS

- **Keep your resume to one or two pages** - do not go beyond two pages; nobody wants to read a book.
- **Keep it clear and direct.** Employers want to look at a resume and quickly tell if they want to interview the person. Make sure that the employers can quickly pick out major areas of information.
- **Know what your skills are, and what types of jobs you are looking for.** Do not be so general

that no one knows what you want to do. Give your resume a job focus in your “objective”.

- **Use the kind of resume that presents your background in the strongest way.** There is no one way to do a resume. You may wish to emphasize jobs you have held; you may wish to emphasize skills you have developed on several jobs; you may need to center in on your education and related training.
- **Type your resume on a computer.** Typewriters do not make clear copies. Check and re-check for correct spelling and/or typing errors - these can ruin a good looking resume.
- **Graphics can help make or break the appearance of the resume.** Make important points stand out by indenting, using space, using dots or dashes, using quotation marks, underlining.
- **Professionally printed resumes look best, and can usually be copied at a quick-print shop at little expense.** Have the printer use a good quality paper - white, off-white, cream or beige.

**Note :** Do NOT have your resume printed on bright paper.



## FINISHING TECHNIQUES

Use this list to make sure you have identified all your skills and that your format is clear and concise. See how many of these you can build into your resume :

- Educational activity such as training
- Money management
- People-handling activities
- Organization-building activities
- Talking with or to people
- Selling something (ideas or-products)
- Activity with customers or clients
- Working with groups
- Troubleshooting or problem solving skills
- Activities dealing with data
- Writing examples
- Leadership traits
- Extra-curricular or volunteer work
- Particular values or interests of individual

## POINTS TO PONDER

- **Overall appearance :**  
Do you want to read it?
- **Layout :**  
Does the resume look professional, well-typed and printed. Do key sales points stand out?
- **Length :**  
Could the resume tell the same story if it were shortened?
- **Relevance :**  
Has extraneous material been eliminated?
- **Writing Style :**  
Is it easy to get a picture of your qualifications?
- **Action Orientation :**  
Do sentences and paragraphs begin with action words?
- **Specificity :**  
Does resume avoid generalities and focus on

specific information about experience, projects, products, etc.

- **Accomplishments :**

Are all accomplishments and problem-solving skills emphasized?

- **Complete :**

Is it important information included?

## WORDS FOR RESUME PREPARATION

Capacity	Managed
Consistent	Capability
Directed	Contributions
Ability	Supervised
Substantial	Competence
Effectiveness	Initiated
Potential	Maturity
Created	Organized
Specialist	Management Led
Administrative	Trained
Performance	Technical
Coordinated	Record
Professional	Improved
Increasing	Expanded
Enlarged	Successful
Achieved	Building
Capable	Accomplished
Developing	Competent
Effected	Qualified
Sold	Designed
Proficient	Developed
Efficient	Consistent
Complete	Knowledgeable
Positive	Experienced
Evident	Productive

*(List continued on following page)*

Effected	Qualified
Sold	Designed
Proficient	Developed
Efficient	Consistent
Complete	Knowledgable
Positive	Experienced
Evident	Productive

## THE COVER LETTER

Resumes are mailed to the prospective employer under the cover of a letter. The “cover” letter applies for a specific job, highlights appropriate skills and/or experience by referring to an enclosed resume, and requests an interview. It should convey “I am interested in you. Here’s why you should be interested in me. Can I have an interview appointment?”

- The cover letter should be personal and directed towards one particular employer. If you are sending your resume to 15 different potential employers you will need to write 15 different cover letters. Each letter will have a somewhat different focus depending on how your skills relate to the employer’s needs. Never use a form cover letter to accompany your resume.
- Cover letters should be 1/2 - 3/4 page in length; 3 - 4 paragraphs (see example) and typewritten. Be concise, direct and creative. Open with an idea that captures attention and leads to your strongest selling point.

## GENERAL TIPS

- **Address the letter, using name- and title, to the particular person with whom you wish to have an interview.** This can be difficult information to obtain - you may have to do some company research to identify the particular individual. If you are sending your resume to a Personnel Director, obtain his/her name. Call the firm and ask the operator for the name you want; be sure to get the correct spelling and title.

- **Adapt your cover letter carefully to the requirements of the job opportunity.** If you are answering an ad with stated requirements relate your experience/skills to those requirements. If you are sending your resume to a company “blind” (a company you feel may need your services but has no job opportunity posted) you will need to research the company to be sure how your background will match the company’s needs.
- **Make one or two SPECIFIC references to your enclosed resume.** Be sure your references relate to the position for which you are applying.
- **The closing is an important as the opening.** Try to suggest a possible interview time. Keep the initiative for further contact in your hands whenever possible.
- **Use simple, direct language in writing a cover letter.** Avoid jargon (ex: as per, pursuant) and trite language (ex: thank you for your attention to my request)

## Sample Resume

# LARRY B. ELTON

2330 Blake Street, Berkeley CA 94704  
(415)437-4288

**Objective:** Senior position in engineering management

### HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Business oriented; able to understand and execute broad corporate policy.
- Strength in analyzing and improving engineering and administrative methods.
- Effective in facilitating communication between management and project team.
- Proven ability to manage both large and small groups and maintain productivity.
- Successful in negotiating favorable design and construction contracts.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### Management

- Developed innovative, cost-effective concept in project management of specialty chemical plant, assigning the design engineering to outside contractors.
- Supervised recruitment and staffing of over 40 project team professionals.
- Wrote detailed execution plans for major design and construction projects, involving:
  - preliminary schedule
  - preliminary cost estimate
  - approvals of contractor construction plans.
- Wrote comprehensive summary for senior level management, incorporating monthly reports from specialty engineering, project engineering, and construction management

#### Construction Management

- Wrote 800-page Construction Management Guide documenting standardized construction procedures and reporting.
- Increased productivity 12k by introducing a popular 4-day/48-hour workweek alternative.
- Successfully headed off loss of over a million dollars, due to potential business failure of primary contractor, by negotiating directly with subcontractors.

#### Engineering/Product Development

- Conceived and patented highly profitable design for a Refrigerant Recovery System which realized a profit of over \$15 million in a period of 5 years.
- Trained 25 skilled salespeople to effectively demonstrate patented equipment to various industries.

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

#### 2003-Present :

Project Manager  
Atlantic Richfield Co-Walnut Creek CA

#### 1997-2002:

Project Manager  
Allied Chemical Co (now Allied Signal), Morristown NJ  
*Employment History continued on next page*

*Employment History con't :*

**1994-1996:**

Project Engineer

Sun Oil Co-(now Sun Co.), Philadelphia PA

**1987-1993:**

Engineer

Pennwalt Corp - Philadelphia PA

**1984-1986:**

Captain

U.S. Army Infantry

**EDUCATION**

**University of Washington, Seattle WA**

Bachelors of Science in Chemical Engineering

**Pennsylvania State University and Temple University**

Graduate studies involving:

- project staffing
- engineering drawings
- construction contractor
- definitive cost estimate

# Sample Resume 2

3180 RACE ST • COLUMBUS OH 43204  
614-493-2577 • RHEINEM@COLUMBUS.RR.COM

## REBECCA L. HEINEMAN

To work in a team environment where my communication skills and initiative allow for continued success in completion of daily and project related tasks, also allowing me to utilize growing knowledge and new skills.

### Background

#### CORE COMPETENCIES

- Communications Oriented
- Problem Analysis and Resolution
- User Training
- Customer Focused

#### SOFTWARE:

Windows 3x/9x/NT/2000/XP, Microsoft Office 97/2000/XP Pro, Norton Anti Virus, McAfee Anti Virus, Remote Desktop, PC Anywhere, VNC, NetMeeting Clarify, Telnet, FTP,

#### HARDWARE:

Desktop PCs & Workstations, Laptops, Ethernet Protocols, Mother Boards, Video & Sound-Card configurations, Monitors, Varied Optical Drives, RAM variations, IDE/EIDE/SATA Hard Drives, Scanners, Printers and other various devices

### Professional Experience

#### 2002 - Current

Cardinal Health

Dublin OH

#### *Technical Support Analyst*

- Support and evaluate internal and external client problem/requests via phone and email in regards to hardware, software, MS Office Suite, Proprietary business applications needs and support.
  - Support Pharmaceutical Ordering Software for Pharmacies and Hospitals Nationwide.
    - Answer inbound support requests.
    - Troubleshoot customer issues pertaining to the product ordering process.
    - Troubleshoot customer issues pertaining to Operating Systems, Networking and Internet resource related inquiries.
    - Create documentation for processes and procedures deployed to the operational support team.
- Dedicated and out-going contributor to team goals and objectives with strong communicational skills

#### Key Contributions & Accomplishments:

**Customer Support & Satisfaction** – Achieved high level of customer satisfaction through patient, methodical approach to problem resolution, with majority of calls resolved within company's timed requirement.

**Professional Development** – Expanded background knowledge in company business unit workings, continued school coursework to strengthen communication skills and technical writing abilities



**Nov. 2001 – Dec. 2001**      Computer Merchant      Marysville OH  
*Deployment Engineer / Contracted for Scotts Lawn*

- Migration of Windows 9x computers to Windows 2000 Professional.
- Basic Troubleshooting
- Ensured consistency in critical employee related email data
- Performed quality assurance checks.

**Feb.2001 – Oct. 2001**      Com-Net/Signature Technologies      Miamisburg OH  
*Project Support Specialist*

- Planning, installation and troubleshooting of beta software at various remote locations
- Built to order client PC's to meet customer deployment requirements
- Updated and supported remote location's technology assets in a post deployment role
- Maintained active records on each remote site (e.g. – locations, physical hardware, software, etc.).
- Wrote technical and training manuals for administration and users new to various software

Supported company network resources (general maintenance, rebuilds, hardware and software issues, disaster recovery planning and implementation, etc.).

Key Contributions and accomplishments :

- Key support documentation written regarding site specific installations
- User training at site on hardware and software usage

## Educational Experience

Columbus State Community College  
Associate in Technical Communications

Columbus, OH  
January 2007 – Current

Devry University  
Network Security –not completed  
GPA : 3.3

Columbus, OH  
October 2005 – August 2006

Miami Jacobs College  
Network Engineering Diploma  
GPA: 3.5

Dayton, OH  
2000-2002

**Certifications** : A+, Network+, MCP

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

James Morgan  
3 Hemlock Drive  
Silver Springs, Maryland 20904  
301-223-5844

March 6, 2008  
Mr. Wayne J. Anthony  
Director of Engineering  
Aztec Electronics Company  
70 Circle Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Anthony,

It was with a great deal of interest that I read in yesterday's "Electronics" about your new contract for manufacturing digital multiple access discrete communications systems. I am interested in applying my knowledge of this system as a design technician with your company.

I have worked on the development of similar systems for the Computronics Corporation; the details of my duties are in the enclosed resume. My supervisory experience as a design technician is particularly strong and I feel it would allow me to make a direct and immediate contribution to Aztec.

I would like the opportunity to discuss employment possibilities with Aztec. I will call your office the week of March 15th in hopes of arranging an appointment to discuss my qualifications.

Sincerely,

James Moran

**Enclosure**

## Notes

# Helpful Websites

## Sample resume and cover letter sites :

- <http://www.jobweb.com/resumes.aspx?folderid=116>
- <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/sampleresumes/a/sampleresume2.htm>
- go to <http://www.google.com> and do a search on “sample resumes” or “sample cover letters”

## Where to post a completed resume :

- <http://www.monster.com>
- <http://www.dice.com>
- <http://www.careerbuilder.com>

## Interview Coaching :

- [www.interviewcoach.com](http://www.interviewcoach.com)