

## SMARTHINKING's E-structor Response Form

(Your marked-up essay is below this form.)

**HOW THIS WORKS:** Your e-structor has written overview comments about your essay in the form below. Your e-structor has also embedded comments [in bold and in brackets] throughout your essay. Thank you for choosing SMARTHINKING's OWL; best wishes with revising your paper!

Hi Jazzie! Welcome to the Smarthinking Essay Center. I'm Trina T, and I will be assisting you with your résumé today. Let's start by talking about the strong points I found in this draft of your résumé.

### \*Strengths of the essay:

Jazzie, you've done a nice job of organizing the material in your résumé. Starting out with your experience is a great strategy, because that's what interests prospective employers the most.

### \*Jazzie 1985463 has requested that you respond to the Content Development:

Your description of your duties at each job is nicely brief, and there are a lot of advantages to that. A prospective employer will be able to get an overview of your experience very quickly. The trouble is, they won't get a sense of how each job prepared you for work at their businesses. That means they won't know what makes you different from other applicants with similar sets of experience. You need a way to offer them more details about what your skills are and what a professional Jazzie is like in action, without cluttering the résumé. I have a couple of suggestions for ways you might do that.

- Develop your "skills" section. In that section, you can get into greater detail about what you learned during the course of your experience. You can talk about your skill at managing office processes, list the machines you know how to work, explain the types of customer service situations you've learned to manage with tact and professionalism, and (perhaps most importantly) go into detail about what software you know how to use. You could also talk about some of the kinds of work you wound up learning to do that weren't parts of your general job description.
- Alternatively, you could revise your "experience" section so that each job has two points. The first could be a job description, and the second could be a more detailed description of the skills you used. This second point could be written as a standard paragraph or it could be presented as a list of items, with like items separated by commas, and groups of items separated by semi-colons. Below is an example.

Wrote press releases, interviewed award recipients, collected mailing lists, edited mailing lists, constructed surveys; handled employee conflicts, managed customer complaints, [include anything else done in a "filling in for someone else" capacity; used Word 4.0, WordPerfect x.x, Quattro x.x; dial-in and dial-out telephone calls, computer printers [specific types], Xerox machines [specific types], Fax machine, label maker, scanner, check printer, audiovisual presentation equipment [specific types]

You may also want to revise your statement of objectives. Try to think about it from the standpoint of an employer's needs. What would your ideal employer like to see in your objectives statement?

### Organization:

You might want to add a section for References that says "References provided upon request" at the end of your résumé. That is more or less a standard section. You need not provide the references. Just let your prospective employer know you have them at the ready.

**\*Jazzie 1985463 has requested that you respond to the Grammar & Mechanics:**

Just make sure that you have all your punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure details just right.

- Look for little things, like the extra space at the end of your objectives statement.
- Double-check items in lists. If the item makes a complete sentence, put a period at the end. If one item in a list has a period at the end, make all of the items in the list complete sentences and make sure they have periods at the ends.
- Double-check items in series. Those are lists that are written on a line, such as the information you have listed under "Skills". Make sure those are phrased in a parallel way. That is, if one item in the series starts out with an -ed verb, make sure the rest of them do as well.
- Make absolutely certain you have the titles of businesses and non-profits you have worked spelled, spaced, punctuated, and capitalized perfectly, just at the organization writes its own name on its publicity materials.

Attending to such issues will demonstrate your ability to pay attention to detail.

**Summary of Next Steps:**

1. Develop your content so that your employer has the option of looking at a more detailed description of your skills.
2. Consider adding a references section.
3. Proofread for tiny details.

Jazzie, I wish you the best of luck with your résumé and its outcome. We look forward to assisting you in the future at Smarthinking! –Trina

**Find additional resources in SMARTHINKING's online library:**

**You can find more information about writing, grammar, and usage in SMARTHINKING's student handbooks. You can visit the SMARTHINKING Writer's Handbook or the SMARTHINKING ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) Writer's Handbook.**

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**\* Please look for more comments in your essay below. Thank you for visiting SMARTHINKING. We encourage you to submit future essays.**

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# Jazzie Jameson

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Wangle, WY 55555

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## Objectives

To work for a customer service based company with the ability to multi-task and a rewarding fast paced environment .

[Think about your target employer, Jazzie. What kind of objectives would that employer want to see in a résumé? From an employer's perspective, would your objective of working in a "rewarding" environment be a positive factor or a limitation?]

## Experience

6/2000 - Present | **Receptionist**

W&W&W Law Firm | Wangle, WY

- Complete data entry tasks.
- Handle both dial-in and dial-out phone contacts with tact and professionalism.
- Utilize office equipment for purchasing orders.
- Efficiently file business records while observing confidentiality.
- Prepare payroll and financial reports.
- Train and supervise new employees.

[You might consider listing the types of office equipment you've used. An employer would appreciate knowing that you'll be able to jump right in and not need to take valuable company time learning to use equipment.]

6/2008 – 9/2008 | **Customer Service Representative**

Worthwhile Staffing Solutions | Wangle, WY

- Handled both dial-in and dial-out phone contacts with tact and professionalism
- Utilized software for entering customer information into a computerized database.
- Completed sales orders, purchase orders, invoicing, and billing tasks.
- Monitored product inventory.

[Proofread carefully. You need to be consistent with punctuation. Technically, since you aren't using complete sentences here, you don't need end punctuation. In any event, make sure either all of the entries have end punctuation, or none of them.]

4/2004 – 5/2005 | **Assistant Office Manager**

REM Industries | Wangle, WY

- Supervised phone personnel department.
- Handled both dial-in and dial-out phone contacts with tact and professionalism.
- Created and monitored work schedules.
- Set sales appointments.
- Prepared nightly reports.
- Trained and supervised new employees.

[The repetition of “handled . . . with tact and professionalism” may come across as unimaginative to your prospective employer. Tact and professionalism are, in any event, skills – if you include them in your list of skills, you’ll only need to say them once.]

## Education

2010 | **Associate of Applied Science**

- Administration Office Management

[Specify where you got your education.]

## Skills

Experienced with software for data entry and retrieval; update and maintain customer data; familiar with general office equipment including copiers and fax machines.

Skilled in customer service and telephone operations; handle customer inquiries and phone presentations in a professional manner.

[Is the “Skills” section supposed to be in a larger font?]

## Community Volunteering

Habitat for Humanity

- General Office Clerk

United Way

- Coat Drive Helper

Wangle Headstart I

- Classroom Aide

[Your résumé is well-organized and neatly laid out. This will show your employer your attention to detail and facility with word processing.]

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**\*Strengths of the essay:** Hi Wayne! My name is Timothy S and I'll be working with you on your resume today. You have done a nice job starting to outline your educational and professional history and come up with ways to explain the tasks that you have been responsible for. Good work!

**\*Wayne 2925896 has requested that you respond to the Organization:** Wayne, resumes are written so that potential employers have immediate access to as much information about a potential employee as possible. This information should be available at a glance. And it should be able to be understood without too much effort. Right now, it is hard for me to understand the formatting of your information. Keep in mind that people read from left to right and then down. As you have arranged your material, it looks like each responsibility on the right occurred during a particular year or at a particular location. Would it work better to list the responsibilities beneath the job title and put the information about when and where on the other side of the page?

There are lots of ways to organize a resume, but you need to make information clear. For example, you could format your experience like this:

### **The Yellow Scene Magazine, Erie, CO**

***Distribution Manager.*** Oversaw the delivery of the magazine from final print to placement in local businesses. Coordinated three routes and several drivers. Maintained database of postal route information for bulk mailings. Regularly met with business managers to discuss placement of magazine, quantities required, and any concerns. Transitioned materials like fliers, poster, and magazine racks into businesses as required. Monitored database of route descriptions and all magazine traffic on a monthly basis. 2004-2005.

The arrangement of the information depends on what you want the reader to know. In this example, organization is across from its location. Beneath that is the job title and description. At the end of that description are the dates of the position held. Do you see how this arrangement makes sense with the traditional flow of reading?

Remember, you are trying to present information to a reader who might hire you. It is critical that you make the information the reader cares about clear. What does the reader want to know? The employer needs to know that you have completed high school and where and when. The employer wants to know what jobs you've had before and what you did. How can you arrange the material as clearly as possible?

For more help with resumes, look at:

[http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document\\_Library/docs/writeman/1\\_13.cfm](http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document_Library/docs/writeman/1_13.cfm)

**\*Wayne 2925896 has requested that you respond to the Word Choice:** Language is another important element in a resume, Wayne, so you are right to focus on it. Your words need to be direct; they should tell the reader exactly what you mean. You also need to use precise words, with no extras. So, when you say that you -had engaging conversations with alumni on the phone|| , the reader wonders why you called them and what you talked about. Additionally, "had engaging conversations" is not a particularly powerful explanation of that work. How else might you express this job? Maybe you "Called alumni for fundraising and contact" or "Spoke with alumni about memories and money". Whatever it is, try to use powerful active verbs to express the tasks that you performed.

Where else can you use more precise and active language to describe what you have done and what you hope to do?

For more help with word choice, look at:

[http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document\\_Library/docs/writeman/4\\_03.cfm](http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document_Library/docs/writeman/4_03.cfm)

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**Grammar & Mechanics:** You need to make sure, Wayne, that all the verbs you are using match in each job. If you are currently performing the job, then the verbs should be in the present tense, but if you are no longer at the job, then the verbs should be in the past tense. For example, you write:

Answered phone, check books in and out

The first item here is in the past tense, 'answered," but the second one is in the present tense, 'check". Are you still at this job or not? How can you make sure that the verbs expressing your responsibilities for any one job use the same tense?

For more help with proofreading, look at:

[http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document\\_Library/docs/writeman/3\\_24.cfm](http://www.smarthinking.com/static/Document_Library/docs/writeman/3_24.cfm)

**Summary of Next Steps:** As you revise, Wayne, please consider:

1. Organization—Reworking your presentation of this material so that the information is easy to read and makes sense to the reader.
2. Word Choice—Using language that is powerful, active, and accurate to describe your responsibilities.
3. Grammar—Making sure that all your verbs match.

As always, use the grammar and spell check functions on your computer and read your essay out loud to yourself.

If you have any questions or need more help, remember you can visit a tutor in the live writing center. Good luck and keep sending your writing to Smarthinking! –Timothy S.

**Find additional resources in SMARTHINKING's online library:**

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Please look for more comments in your essay below. Thank you for visiting SMARTHINKING. We encourage you to submit future essays.

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**Wayne M Apples**

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58585

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**Objective:**

To work alongside qualified teachers to guide students to reach their full potential and to close the achievement gap. **[Simplify this statement in order to eliminate or change the "to" phrases.]**

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**Education:****Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, May 2011****Minor in History****Reading Endorsement [Is this a 2<sup>nd</sup> minor?]**

Cherry State University, Rasperry, IA

Cumulative GPA 3.55 on a scale of 4.00

**High School Diploma, May 2007**

Rasperry High School, Rasperry, IA

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**Extra Curricular Activities****Rockin' Readers**

August 2007 – May 2010

Rasperry Elementary Schools

Read with a struggling reader in the elementary schools

Work one-on-one with students for half hour once a week **[Since this ended in May, which tense should you use?]****Teachers Inc.**

August 2009 – May 2010

Cherry State University

Held fundraisers for money

Did Christmas concert with elementary students, **[What's a stronger word than "did"?]**

Over-saw 20 students do arts and crafts

**Buddy Bands**

August 2007 – May 2009

Rasperry Middle School

Tutored middle school students one-on-one

In 2 years had 3 middle school students I interacted with

**Student Council for Exceptional Children**

August 2008 – December 2009

Rasperry University

**President, Sept. 2009 – Dec. 2009**

Spoke on campus to share awareness of acceptance of exceptional students

Socialized with disabled people through Genesis Development

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**Work Experience:****Caller**

Oct. 2007 – Current employment

Cherry State Alumni Office

Had engaging conversations with alumni on the phone

**Librarian Clerk**

Sept. 2007 – Current employment

Rasperry Public Library

Answered phone, check books in and out

Interacted with patrons who come in

**Front Desk Receptionist**

May 2007 – Current employment

Rasperry YMCA

Answered phones, check people in **[Why are there two items per line here when in other entries, each responsibility is on a different line?]**

Relayed messages, answer questions

Responsible to keep staff &amp; member informed of events

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**References:**

References available upon request