



# A Résumé To Remember: making it to the "Must See" list

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Frances Stocker, MCLIP  
Principal, Kestrel Info Services  
[www.kestrelinfo.com](http://www.kestrelinfo.com)  
[francesstocker@kestrelinfo.com](mailto:francesstocker@kestrelinfo.com)  
<http://twitter.com/kestrelinfo>

# Starting points

## ASSUMPTIONS

- You know résumé writing basics
- You have a “master” résumé
  - Comprehensive, ongoing compilation of relevant achievements and experience
  - Never sent out – for your eyes only
- You will tailor your résumé for each job you apply for
- You will research the employer before you start your résumé or cover letter

# Overview of session

## WHAT WE'LL COVER

- The job posting
- The job and the person
- Creating a compelling impact
  
- The cover letter
  
- Other sources of information

# The Posting (1)

## POSITION SUMMARY

Ourtown Public Library is looking for an enthusiastic, innovative librarian to develop service levels and programs for traditional non-users; develop original outreach services to encourage literacy, technology and social skills; continue developing partnerships with local schools, social service and government agencies.

# The Posting (2)

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Master of Library Science degree
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in program development and services to customers from diverse backgrounds
- Excellent communication and presentation skills
- Fluency in both written and oral French is essential
- A strong public service focus with an ability to take initiative and carry out project completion
- Good planning, organizational and problem solving skills
- Valid driver's license

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# What is a job?

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### 1. Tasks or duties

#### Examples

- Check out books
- Present programs for French speakers

### 2. Responsibilities

#### Examples

- Ensure circulation functions run smoothly
- Develop programs for non-traditional users

# Responsibilities

## DEVELOP PROGRAMS

- Plan
  - Who for? Why? What? Where? When? How? By whom?
- Implement
  - Design, Promotion, registration, delivery according to plan
- Assess
  - Establish whether it met its goals, and how well

# Who is right for the job?

## PERSON SPECIFICATION - KSAs

1. **K**NOWLEDGE
2. **S**KILLS
3. **A**BILITIES or **A**TTRIBUTES

# Knowledge

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS - ABILITIES

- Objective measures of achievement
- Formal qualifications or attainments
- Verifiable, extended application of a skill

# Knowledge

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES

- **Qualifications**
  - MLS etc.
  - Degree in French; French immersion schooling
  - Driver's license
- **Experience**
  - 2 years in a public library setting
  - Practicum working in an outreach situation
  - Camp counselor for teens with a disability

# Knowledge

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Chartered Librarian, UK Library Association
- Post-graduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies, Loughborough University, UK.
- BA, University of East Anglia, UK.

# Knowledge

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Chartered Librarian, UK Library Association. (insert equivalency recognition)
- Post-graduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies, Loughborough University, UK. (including modules on outreach services and social inclusion)
- BA in European Studies (including French language) University of East Anglia, UK.
- French 'A' level (high-school equivalent)
- Studied French at the Institut Francais, Brussels

# Knowledge

## QUALIFICATIONS

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS

- Valid drivers license
- President of debating society, Hometown High School

# Knowledge

## EXPERIENCE (as knowledge)

Page, Hometown Public Library, 2002- 2004

Public Services Librarian, Hampshire County Library (UK)  
2007- 2009

# Skills

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES

- **EXPERIENCE**
  - How you applied your knowledge successfully
  - What relevant things you have done proficiently in a work setting, or as a volunteer, or as a student

# Skills

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES

- **EXPERIENCE**
  - In a work setting
    - Programming for seniors
  - As a volunteer
    - Working with newcomers
  - As a student
    - Working collaboratively on student projects

# Skills

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES

- What you did, and what the result was
  - Developed and implemented a seven week program for seniors which then became part of library's regular programming
  - Worked with French-speaking newcomers for four hours a week, helping them complete forms, set up interviews etc.
  - Took leadership role in several collaborative projects, monitored timelines and ensured projects were completed on time and to high standard ('A' & 'B+' grades)

# Abilities or Attributes

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES or ATTRIBUTES

- What you're capable of
- Competencies you can achieve in the near future
- Talent, potential
- Characteristics, disposition

# Abilities or Attributes

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES or ATTRIBUTES

- Usually 'soft' skills
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Learning abilities
  - Leadership
  - Problem solving
  - Analytical skills

# Abilities or Attributes

## KNOWLEDGE – SKILLS – ABILITIES or ATTRIBUTES

- What you have done and what the result was
  - Volunteer fundraiser
    - Telephoned prospects, explained purpose of call, listened to prospect's views, offered alternatives, made good judgment about when to end the call
  - Member of supervisors' committee
    - Participate in meetings, undertake tasks/ responsibilities, report back in a timely fashion, listen and speak confidently, make presentations etc.

# Assessing the match

KSAs	The Posting	☑	☒
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MLS</li> <li>• French</li> <li>• Program Development</li> <li>• Drivers license</li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/org/prob. solving</li> <li>• Original outreach</li> <li>• Projects</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• customers with diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ? ?	x  x
Abilities/ Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public service</li> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Enthusiastic</li> </ul>	✓ ?  ✓	

# FINDING YOUR STRENGTHS (1)

## FINDING YOUR STRENGTHS (1)

*"Demonstrated familiarity with...services to customers from diverse backgrounds"*

- Define (high-quality) service, customer and diversity in your own words
- Look for anything in your résumé that matches  
Examples:
  - Server at Tim Hortons in a city centre
  - Educational visit to Rome – lived with Italian family for four weeks
  - Practicum with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind

# FINDING YOUR STRENGTHS (2)

## FINDING YOUR STRENGTHS (2)

“innovative librarian”

- Innovation may mean
  - Suggestions for how to improve a service
  - Identifying a better way of doing a task
  - Developing, implementing and assessing something that hadn't been done before.

# EXPRESSING YOUR STRENGTHS (1)

## WRITING COMPELLING SENTENCES

- No parroting from the job posting
  - ✗ "Served customers from diverse backgrounds"
  - ✓ *"Provided services to customers from many cultural backgrounds"*
  - ✓ *"Served a mixed population, including visible minorities, newcomers, and non-English speakers"*

# EXPRESSING YOUR STRENGTHS (1)

## WRITING COMPELLING SENTENCES

- No clichés
  - ✗ "Superior communication skills"
  - ✓ *"Wrote report on..."*
  - ✓ *"Developed and delivered presentation on/about..."*
  - ✓ *"Compiled staff instructions..."*
  - ✓ *"Carried out weekly pre-school program..."*

# EXPRESSING YOUR STRENGTHS (1)

## WRITING COMPELLING SENTENCES

- Show:
  - You know what the requirement is
  - You have the knowledge, or the skill, or the ability to do it
  - You have done it, or something comparable
  - You can provide an example of how well you did it

# EXPRESSING YOUR STRENGTHS (2)

## SKILLS & ABILITIES

- List relevant courses taken under “Education” or “Professional Development”
  - *Programming for Newcomers – iSchool, University of Toronto, 2009*
- Include volunteer or student experience under one or more of:
  - “Volunteer experience”
  - “Additional skills”
- Mention the element of the posting you’re addressing
  - *“...a partnership with a local charity”*
  - *“Organized youth club visit to...”*

# Résumé Dos and Don'ts

- DO

- Use the name you use for banking etc.
- Keep it to 3 pages, 11+ point font
- Explain gaps in the story
- Check spelling – especially the organization and the recruiters' names
  - !! Dear Sir or Madman
  - !! Library? or Libraries?
  - !! Add "public", "librarian" etc. to your autocorrect list
- Print it, read it, fix it, leave it, re-read it, send it.

- DON'T

- Mention references – save space; take details to interview

# Cover letter

- Beginning
  - Salutation – use a name if possible
  - What you're applying for (in full) and where you saw the posting
- Ending
  - *"I hope I have an opportunity..."*
  - Close – *'sincerely'*
  - Name and qualifications – Frances Stocker, BA, MCLIP

# Cover letter

- Middle

- Research the employer – show you care!
- Write one or two sentences that illustrates why they are the employer of choice for you

*"Ourtown Library's current Strategic Plan indicates the importance the Library places on reaching underserved members of the community, and the advertised position offers the opportunity to be directly involved in extending library services to more people. I believe my skills and abilities can contribute significantly to this goal."*

# Cover letter

- Middle

- Why you're the one – with examples
- Don't repeat the résumé, build on it, and highlight strengths

*"As you will see from my résumé, I have experience of:*

- *Working as a partner with a government agency*
- *Experience of working with marginalized groups."*

# Cover letter

- Middle

- Opportunity to mention abilities/attributes
  - *"interested in applying my user development skills to encourage literacy"*
- Bring together information dispersed in the résumé
  - *"experience working with diverse cultures, demonstrated in different environments."*

# Cover letter

- Middle
  - The difference you can make
    - *"demonstrated ability to plan, organize and deliver projects on time and to the required standard"*
  - Commitment to success in the job
    - *"an opportunity to contribute to a rewarding goal, as well as continuing to provide a high standard of library services to the people of Ourtown."*

# Overqualified?

- Résumé
  - Tone down employment record
    - Remove job title
      - “Librarian, Home Valley Library” instead of “Chief Librarian”
    - Tone down responsibilities
      - “Supervised” rather than “managed”
      - “Undertook circulation desk responsibilities” instead of “circulation supervisor”

# Overqualified?

- Cover letter
  - Talk about extending experience
    - *"wish to use my existing skills to widen my experience"*
  - Say what you bring to the job to show that it's a win-win situation
    - *"mature experience of customer service, resolving customers' problems..."*
  - Commitment to success in the job
    - *"become part of a forward-looking organization, which offers long-term opportunities for rewarding employment."*

# Experience

- *"Placements are vital to understanding the different kinds of work and environments to work in."*
- *"Networking and mentoring have been important. The librarian I worked with on a student practicum... recommended me for the two positions I currently hold."*
- *"My first employment in a library setting was a five-month contract... I believe that experience helped me gain my current position."*

*Results of the 2009 LTAIG salary survey. Sarah Falker. BCLA Browser Vol. 2, No. 1.*

<http://bclabrowser.ca/index.php/browser/index>

# Other sources

Ulla de Stricker (de Stricker Associates: <http://www.destricker.com/>)

- *Constructing an engaging and compelling résumé*
  - [http://www.sirsidynixinstitute.com/seminar\\_page.php?sid=96](http://www.sirsidynixinstitute.com/seminar_page.php?sid=96)
- *Where do you fit? Understanding your career type*
  - [http://www.destricker.com/en/past\\_presentations.html](http://www.destricker.com/en/past_presentations.html)
- *Résumés for Dummies* by Joyce Lain Kennedy
  - *Print or ebook*
- *Your virtual brand* by Meredith Farkas in *American Libraries*
  - <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/columns/your-virtual-brand>
- *Results of the 2009 LTAIG salary survey* by Sarah Felkar in *BCLA Browser*
  - <http://bclabrowser.ca/index.php/browser/index>

# Job Sites

- The Partnership
  - <http://www.libraryjobs.ca/>
- Canadian Library Association
  - [http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Job\\_Search&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1964](http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Job_Search&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1964)
- Special Library Association
  - <http://careercenter.sla.org/search/index.cfm?>
- iSchool, University of Toronto
  - [http://joomla.ischool.utoronto.ca/component/option,com\\_jobline/](http://joomla.ischool.utoronto.ca/component/option,com_jobline/)
- Federal Government
  - <http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>
- Provincial Government
  - <http://www.gojobs.gov.on.ca/Search.aspx>



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## PUBLICATIONS

### *Hawk's Eye on Public Libraries*

A Canadian focus on the library landscape

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