

Resume Guidelines

Your resume is one of the first things employers use to develop an impression of you as a person. Resume writing can sometimes seem a little daunting, especially for someone who is just putting together his or her first one. A resume is typically a one-page word document that highlights your most significant talents and achievements pertinent to the position and/or company you will be sending it to. It should not include all the details of your life. Each word should be chosen carefully in order to make it the most clearly written, concise, organized and easy to read document possible. Remember that the average employer looks at your resume for 30 seconds or less.

Before you begin writing your resume

Consider the Following Things:

1. Research the organization and the position to find out what skills, knowledge, experience, and values are needed for the position you want.
2. Develop a list of all the primary jobs you've held, including any unpaid work, internships and volunteer experiences that show you have the skills for the job. Also list all the skills you have developed at each of these positions.
3. Make a list of three or four of your strongest skills or abilities that make you a good candidate for the target job.
4. For each key skill, think of several accomplishments from your past paid or non-paid history to illustrate those skills.
5. Make a list of your training and education that's related to the new job you want.
6. Remember to include honors, awards, scholarships, publications and presentations in your initial list of accomplishments.

Select a Resume Format

There are several resume styles or formats, with advantages and disadvantages to each.. Chose a resume format that best highlights your situation. The chronological or combination formats are typically recommended for college students. Regardless of your format choice, present your most important points first.

A Brief Description of Resume Formats

1. **CHRONOLOGICAL:** Items are arranged in reverse-chronological order within specific headings. One drawback to this approach is that some of the significant experiences in your background will not be highlighted. However, this format does work well for those with strong or relevant experience. If only some of your experience is relevant, you can divide it into two blocks: "Related Experience" and "Additional Experience."

2. **FUNCTIONAL:** Unlike the chronological resume, the functional resume ignores historical sequence and stresses skills and abilities regardless of where they were developed and demonstrated. This approach offers you a way to group/cluster your education, experience and activities into significant ability categories that support your job objectives. The functional format may be most useful to career changers and those with many diverse experiences. A drawback is that many employers are suspicious of or confused by this format.
3. **COMBINATION:** This approach blends the directness of a chronological format with the highlighting of skills found in the functional format. The combination resume is helpful in communicating skills for individuals whose experiences are limited, widely varied or not clearly related to their job objective.

PARTS OF A RESUME

The following are categories often included in resumes. These are typical headings, but not the only ones you can include. Use them as guidelines in developing your first draft.

1. Name

- Use your formal name (Ex: Elizabeth M. Smith, instead of Liz Smith)
- Your name should stand out from the rest of the text by being larger in font, bold, or CAPS.

2. Address

- You may want to include both a current (you may want to indicate “until May 2003) and a permanent address (usually parents).

3. Telephone Number

- Use your home phone number and be sure employers will be able to leave a message. Make sure you change your answering machine so that it sounds professional.
- Inform your roommates of your job search so that they will be sure to take detailed messages if necessary.
- If you choose to list a cell phone, be sure you check your messages and be cautious where you answer the phone. Don't pick up in areas that are out of range or noisy.

4. E-mail

- Include only if you check for messages regularly and if it looks professional. For example don't include e-mail addresses such as hotmama@yahoo.com.

5. Education

- It is customary to list the schools you have attended in reverse chronological order.
- High school information is typically not included for a college graduate
- Be sure to include your degree, major/minor information, university name, city and state and date your degree was/will be granted. (May 2003),
- Grade point averages are optional but you may want to include your GPA if above a 3.0
- You may also include academic honors, related coursework, or study abroad information

6. Experience

- Describe your job in a way that clearly highlights relevant skills

- This information is key to making you stand out from other applicants
- Elaborate on your paid and unpaid work experiences while in college
- Be sure to include your job title, the name and location of where you worked, and the dates you were employed.

Experience (Con't)

- Each position should include a brief description or 3-5 bullets which explain the accomplishments and skills developed at this work setting.
- Describe each accomplishment in a simple, powerful, action statement which must include: a strong action verb (See Action Verb List) + details (who, what, where, why, how, quantities) + outcome/result.
- Keep statements focused on the skills and experiences necessary for the position. (See Skill Categories with Corresponding Action Verbs)
- Emphasize past results, accomplishments, and level of responsibility.
- Use alternate headings to separate experience that is most directly related to your target job.

Alternative Heading Examples

Training	Special Skills	Areas of Knowledge
Computer Experience	Banking Experience	Professional Training
Technical Knowledge	Related Experience	Other Experience
Internships	Selected Accomplishments	Achievements
Volunteer Work	Affiliations	Relevant Coursework
Honors and Awards	Special Skills	Computer Skills
Activities	Interests	Campus Activities
Community Service	Memberships	Professional Accomplishments
Scholarships	Presentations	Publications

Additional Categories to Consider

1. Objective

- Make a concise, positive statement about your work goals. Indicate the position or job you want, the skills you will bring to the job or a combination of position and skills.
- The more focused you are the better, but don't include an objective that is too limiting
- Avoid utilizing generalities like "working with people" and "challenging position."
- A vague "catch-all" objective usually reflects a feeling of uncertainty about what you want and may weaken an otherwise strong resume.
- Everything else that you select to place on your resume should support your job objective.

2. Summary of Qualifications/Keyword Summary/Skills and Achievements

- A summary is placed near the top of your resume and includes 3-5 bullet points, which highlight your key qualifications for the position you are applying for.
- It may also include important items which don't fit well anywhere else on a resume.
- Using a summary ensures the employer sees your key selling points even if quickly scanning your resume.
- Summaries should be brief and very focused; they will likely be changed for each position you apply for.

3. Volunteer Experience

- Volunteer experience can be elaborated on the same way as work experience, or you can simply list where you volunteered and the dates.

4. Outside Interests

- Resumes can include student organization memberships, participation in athletics, fraternity/sorority involvement etc. but be sure to keep it professional.
- Outside interests can be elaborated on and described like work experience or simply listed including the organization, your position (if appropriate), and the dates of involvement.

5. Awards and Honors

- Name the award and date received. Can include academic/non-academic achievements.

6. Publications/Current Research

- Include the title of the research, where it was published and the date of publication
- You may also include a list of current research topics

7. Scholarships

- Include information about scholarships received

8. Presentations

- Include presentation title, location and date information

9. Professional Affiliations

- Include any professional memberships, which relate to your job objective.

10. Related Coursework

- List courses that you feel will add to your qualifications and are not implied by your major or minor.

11. Special Skills

- Including fluency in a foreign language, computer skills, or special training.

12. References

- References can be handled in a variety of ways. Currently the most preferred method is listing your reference names, addresses, and phone numbers on a separate sheet of paper. On your resume you may indicate that References are available upon request, but this is not necessary. Make sure each of your references has agreed in advance to write reference letters or answer phone calls concerning your candidacy.

Other Important Resume Information

1. Do not exceed one page unless you have significant experience and have information to fill at least half of the second page.
2. Use quality 8 ½ x 11 bond paper.
3. Follow the 2/3rds rule. Make sure that at least the first 2/3rds of your resume contains relevant information to the position you are applying for.
4. Make sure your resume is graphically appealing. It should be centered on the page and the amount of white space should be balanced—not too much or too little.
5. Proofread to eliminate all errors. Ask at least three people to proof your resume.
6. Avoid too much underlining, too much boldface or too many bullets. Keep it simple.
7. Avoid using the word "I" in your resume.
8. Always include a cover letter with your resume.
9. Do not list your references on your resume. Attach a separate reference page.
10. Emphasize results. The language you use to describe your responsibilities can make a big difference in how prospective employers view an experience.
11. Don't tell white lies. Inflating job titles, fudging dates of employment or exaggerating your job responsibilities can only get you into trouble. Many employers do take the time to check out the information you have provided.
12. Don't provide personal statistics.
13. Don't include salary information.
14. Develop more than one resume if you have several job targets. Many graduates want to investigate entry-level positions in different industries and careers.

[Resume Action Verbs](#)

[Resume Critique Document](#)

