



Resume Guide

The ideal resume is a concise, well-organized, aesthetically pleasing document that describes your background *as it relates to your current career objective*. It is NOT meant to be a complete autobiography that includes both positive and negative experiences – a resume highlights your assets and omits your weaknesses. This guide will give you some general suggestions.

Ways To Organize Your Resume

Choose the format that works best for you!

Functional/Skills Resume:

This style of resume summarizes your functions or experience and avoids or minimizes your employment history. Used mostly if you have strong career related skills in several different areas.

- Organizes information under functional skill headings, such as *Counseling, Management, Public Relations, Communication, etc.*
- Cites examples of how you have used each skill listed;
- Provides great flexibility for a variety of occupational areas;
- Depending on your field, this can be a better option than listing unrelated job experiences.

Reverse chronological:

The traditional style of resume that lists your professional experience chronologically, beginning with your most recent position. This is the most traditional format for resumes.

- Not only organizes your jobs chronologically, but also identifies skills or accomplishments within your jobs.

Major Categories of Information to Include on Your Resume

Name and Address

- Your name should be at the top of your resume and should stand out in some way. Use your full name.
- Full address, including zip code. Include two addresses if applicable, college and permanent.
- Include your phone number, with an area code. If you don't have a phone, it's essential that you indicate a place where you can receive a message. *Make sure your answering machine has a professional sounding message.*
- Include your email address in this section.

Career or Job Objective

- Explain in one sentence the type of position you are looking for OR the types of skills you wish to contribute.
- Be specific. Do not use statements such as "a position that utilizes my skills and experience," or "challenging work in my field of study."
- If you are interested in applying for more than one type of position, prepare more than one resume, each with a different objective. Never combine objectives into one resume to save paper or time.
- If you are applying for a job you feel supremely qualified for, consider putting in a "Summary of Qualifications" rather than an objective.

Education

- Colleges and Universities attended should be listed in reverse chronological order, most recent first. Each entry should include the formal name of the school, dates attended, the degree obtained ("Bachelor of Arts" or "Bachelor of Science"), and your course of study.
- For the degree you are currently working on, list it as you would above but use the phrase "Candidate for Bachelor of Arts in English, May 1999" or "Bachelor of Arts, English, anticipated May 1999."
- It is optional to include your GPA if 3.0 or above. You can choose to include your overall GPA or your major GPA. If you do it the latter way, you need to indicate "Major GPA 3.3".
- If you don't have any experience in the field and are applying for your first professional job, you may want to list relevant courses in this section as a subheading.
- If you have studied abroad, list it in this section as a subheading.
- If you are a freshman or sophomore, it's OK to list high school under education. Juniors and seniors, leave it out.

Experience

- You may want to include full time, part time, summer and volunteer work, student teaching, and internships in this category.
- Make sure to include job title, name of company, city, state and dates worked. Leave addresses and phone numbers to your reference page if necessary.
- Emphasize only those experiences that best relate to your career objective. You don't have to include every experience.
- Job descriptions should include specific duties, accomplishments and achievements, verified by including numbers, percentages, statistics, etc.
- Consider including work-study experiences, especially if it's related to your field, or if through this job you are earning a significant part of your college expenses.

Skills

- If you have chosen a Functional/Skills resume, this should be the main focus of the document. You will need to consider all your experiences and consolidate them into relevant skill categories.
- On a reverse chronological resume, you may want to include a section highlighting your skills in selected areas, such as "Technical Skills, Computer Skills, Language Skills, etc." Be as specific as possible and use "keywords"-acronyms, lingo, etc.-that are common in your field.

Activities, Honors

- List only those that best relate to your career objective. If you have done a lot with an organization that's very relevant to your career goal, use a few bullets under the name of the organization to emphasize what you accomplished.
- Acknowledge leadership positions (president, Captain, etc.) Some resume critics prefer to see only activities in which you held leadership positions.
- If an award or scholarship is not self-explanatory, include a one line description. "John Smith Award recipient-highest design project grade of senior class."
- You might want to separate honors and awards if there are several.

References

- Include a separate sheet of paper that includes the following information for at least 3 people (RMC profs, employers, etc) who can attest to you work skills, work ethic and knowledge. These people should not be friends, neighbors, religious leaders, relatives, etc. Include: name (proper title), address, city, state, zip, phone number, and email. It's a good idea to list their work contact information, unless they indicate otherwise.
- Be professional. Ask these individuals before listing them, and be sure they will give you an excellent recommendation.

Other possible categories might include: Certifications, Licenses, Professional Affiliations, Presentations, Community Involvement, Volunteer Experience, Special Projects, Professional Development, etc...

Resume Dos and Donts:

Do...

- Be consistent in format of entries and verb tense.

- Use high quality paper, either white or off white. Central Ops sells a neutral color resume paper. Kinko's has a wide selection as well.
- Be conservative with the use of highlights such as different fonts, bolding, italicizing, underlining, etc. If your resume will be electronically scanned you should omit these.
- Use concrete, specific nouns and strong action verbs.
- Quantify as much as possible: number of people supervised or trained, amount of budget responsible for, etc.
- Customize to a specific position or company
- Try to limit yourself to one page for a Bachelor's degree or first professional position. It can be two if you have an advanced degree or more work experience.
- Include only the best and brightest in your background.

Don't...

- Misspell words or have incorrect grammar, or rely only on spell check to pick it up.
- Have too many different margins or spaces, resulting in a messy looking resume.
- Use a typewriter, cheap paper, or a low quality printer/copier.
- Use the first person (no "I"s).
- Pad your resume with irrelevant background information.
- List your social security number, personal information such as birthdate or family, supervisor's names (except for the reference page), or reasons for leaving positions.
- Include any mention of salary.
- Include anything that you would not want to be asked about in an interview, such as including a club if you've attended meetings but never actually gotten involved in a project.

Sending Resumes Electronically

Many employers now prefer this method of receiving resumes. If the instructions say to email a resume, you can send it as an attachment. Include a shortened cover letter in the body of your email that includes a sentence like "My resume is enclosed in Word format. Please contact me if you have difficulty opening it."

Some employers will specify that your resume should be sent in TEXT format, or sent in the body of your email. In those cases, the employer is not at all concerned with format. Be sure to take all the formatting and unusual spacing out of your resume before sending it.