



Developing a Winning RESUME!

NOC Business Division



Get the job made for you!

- *Demonstrate your value to employers*
- *Separate yourself from competing candidates*
- *Obtain the knowledge, skills and abilities to get that big job*

Resume Formats

There is no “perfect” or “right” resume format. The format you choose will depend upon the job you hope to find and your past experiences. Remember the purpose of a resume is to get a job interview. The interview gets you the job.

General Resume Guidelines

The following guidelines are just that---guidelines for what to include in a good resume. Use your common sense and imagination to highlight your background and experience in a well-focused resume. Remember your resume’s function is to get you a job interview.

Length

A one-page resume works well for the recent graduate. If you have extensive work history, two pages are reasonable. Individuals with extensive work history should limit information to what is pertinent to their current job objective. If you do go to two pages, make sure the most important information is stated on the first page.

Appearance

An organized readable layout determines whether a resume is read. Direct the reader’s eye with the format. Make sure it is well-organized and concise. Avoid dense text or script that is difficult to read.

- Consider using high-quality white or off-white paper.
- Always type or word-process your resume and have it professionally copied
- Make sure there are no typographical, spellings, or grammatical errors.
- Information that has been crossed out or handwritten is unacceptable.
- Make sure your resume will copy well; try doing a photocopy test.

Design your resume with a particular objective in mind. Present information important to the objective first and then edit. List your information in descending order of its importance. Be selective about what you include in your resume, but never falsify or exaggerate information. Sell yourself--highlight attention to your special abilities. Concentrate on the positive and use action verbs to describe your background.

Resume Inventory

The following categories are usually found in a resume. These are suggestions you should utilize, but adopt only those that best fit your specific needs.

Necessary Categories

Personal Data

Make sure your name is the most obvious piece of information on your resume. Also include address and phone number, with ZIP and area codes. List a message phone number if you do not have an answering machine, and give an e-mail address. It is not necessary to include personal information such as marital status or health.

Objective

An objective gives your resume a focus, provides credibility, adds direction and suggests commitment on your part. It should be specific enough to tell the employer the kind of work you seek, yet general enough to include the full range of jobs you will consider. This part will take some thought! If the statement is so specific that it would eliminate you from consideration for other jobs in which you have interest, you might consider having a resume for each type of job but not necessarily each job.

Education

List your educational background in reverse chronological order, starting with your highest degree and working your way backwards. Do not go back to your high school degree. Listing your grade point (GPA) is optional. Dissertation and thesis topics are also included in this section as are honors bestowed at graduation time.

Experience

This category includes employment, past and present, as well as volunteer and/or intern experience. Include job titles, employers, responsibilities and dates. Remember to list the city and state of your place of work. Concentrate on the positive and use action words (see “Action Word List.”) A statement of the percentage included if you were self-supporting or nearly so. You may include paid work experience, academic assignments of significant proportion, and extracurricular assignments relative to your desired field of employment. If your experience has not been relevant to your field of desired employment, you should still include a description of your responsibilities. Strive to show growth or contributions you made while in each assignment.

Additional Information

Skills, activities, honors, awards, membership on committees or in honorary societies, public service, or even language ability can be placed under this, or a more specific category.

References

It is acceptable to use the phrase, “Available upon request.” Be prepared with a typed list when requested. Generally, a reference sheet will consist of the name, title, business, mailing address, and phone number of three to five academic or business references. Do NOT use relatives, friends, or other students as references. Be sure to obtain permission from each person you plan to list.

Additional Categories

Qualifications or Technical Skills Statement

Qualifications, or skills, may be established from any prior employment, educational achievement, internship, volunteer experience, and hobby or community service. For your qualifications statement, list your past in terms of the skills you have acquired that are relevant to your resume’s objective. This section is particularly helpful to those who are making a career change or for students whose major is not obviously related to the job objective.

Language Ability

You can list this section separately, as a part of the qualifications statement, or in the additional information section if there is a likelihood that this ability will be used by employers. Specify the languages you read, write, and/or speak and your facility in each.

Military

In the functional resume your military experience can be included in the “Experience” category. A chronological resume would list military with under a separate heading or in chronological order under “Experience.”

Publications

List articles you have published and those which have been accepted for publication.

Research

Give the employer insight into your professional abilities and training by listing the past and present research projects in your field in which you have participated.

Extracurricular Activities

Employers often look to extracurricular activities to indicate how you developed your interests and leadership abilities during college. The extracurricular activities you list should include organization in which you have membership and offices you have held. You may also wish to include awards, honors, hobbies, and interests in this category. Avoid listing controversial activities, particularly those that are political or religious in nature.

Action Word List

Examples of action words that describe your functional skills

Abstracted	Defined	Indicated	Proved
Achieved	Delegated	Influenced	Provided
Acquired	Delivered	Initiated	Publicized
Acted	Designed	Inspected	Published
Adapted	Detected	Instituted	Purchased
Addressed	Determined	Integrated	Queried
Administered	Developed	Interpreted	Questioned
Advertised	Devised	Interviewed	Raised
Advised	Diagnosed	Introduced	Ran
Advocated	Directed	Invented	Ranked
Aided	Discovered	Inventoried	Rationalized
Allocated	Discriminated	Investigated	Read
Analyzed	Dispatched	Judged	Reasoned
Answered	Displayed	Kept	Recorded
Anticipated	Dissected	Launched	Received
Applied	Documented	Learned	Reduced
Appraised	Drafted	Lectured	Referred
Approved	Drove	Led	Related
Arranged	Edited	Lifted	Relied
Ascertained	Eliminated	Listened	Reported
Assembled	Empathized	Located	Researched
Assessed	Enabled	Logged	Responded
Assisted	Enforced	Made	Restored

Attained	Enlightened	Maintained	Revamped
Audited	Enlisted	Managed	Reviewed
Augmented	Ensured	Manipulated	Scanned
Authored	Established	Mapped	Scheduled
Bolstered	Estimated	Mastered	Schemed
Briefed	Evaluated	Maximized	Screened
Budgeted	Examined	Mediated	Set goals
Built	Exceeded	Memorized	Shaped
Calculated	Excelled	Mentored	Skilled
Cared	Expanded	Met	Solicited
Charged	Expedited	Minimized	Solved
Chartered	Experimented	Modeled	Specialized
Checked	Explained	Modified	Spoke
Clarified	Explored	Monitored	Stimulated
Classified	Expressed	Narrated	Strategized
Coached	Extracted	Negotiated	Streamlined
Collaborated	Facilitated	Observed	Strengthened
Collected	Fashioned	Obtained	Stressed
Comforted	Financed	Offered	Studied
Communicated	Fixed	Operated	Substantiated
Compared	Followed	Ordered	Succeeded
Completed	Formulated	Organized	Summarized
Complied	Fostered	Originated	Synthesized
Composed	Founded	Overcame	Supervised
Computed	Gained	Oversaw	Supported
Conceived	Gathered	Participated	Surveyed
Conducted	Gave	Perceived	Sustained
Conserved	Generated	Perfected	Symbolized
Consulted	Governed	Performed	Tabulated
Contracted	Guided	Persuaded	Talked
Contributed	Handled	Planned	Taught
Converted	Headed	Practiced	Theorized
Cooperated	Helped	Predicted	Trained
Copied	Identified	Prepared	Translated
Correlated	Illustrated	Presented	Upgraded
Counseled	Imagined	Prioritized	Utilized
Created	Implemented	Produced	Validated
Critiqued	Improved	Programmed	Verified
Cultivated	Improvised	Projected	Visualized
Dealt	Inaugurated	Promoted	Won
Debated	Increased	Proposed	Wrote

Examples of adaptive skill words that describe your personal traits

Active	Open Minded
Adaptable	Outgoing
Adaptive	Personable
Adept	Pleasant
Aggressive	Poised
Analytical	Positive
Assertive	Practical
Broad-minded	Productive
Committed	Receptive
Competent	Reliable
Conscientious	Resilient
Cooperative	Resourceful
Creative	Self-confident
Dedicated	Self-motivated
Dependable	Self-reliant
Determined	Sensitive
Diligent	Sharp
Diplomatic	Sincere
Disciplined	Strong
Discreet	Successful
Effective	Tactful
Efficient	Tenacious
Energetic	Well-organization
Enterprising	
Enthusiastic	
Exceptional	
Experienced	
Fair	
Familiar	
Firm	
Forceful	
Honest	
Independent	
Innovative	
Instrumental	
Keen	
Logical	
Loyal	
Mature	
Methodical	
Objective	

The top 10 pitfalls in resume writing

1. **Too Long.** Most new graduates should restrict their resume to one page. If you have trouble condensing, get help from a technical or business writer or a career center professional.
2. **Typographical, grammatical, or spelling errors.** These errors suggest carelessness, poor education, and/or lack of intelligence. Have at least two professionals proofread it before submitting. Don't rely on spell-checkers or grammar-checkers on the computer.
3. **Hard to read.** A poorly typed or copied resume looks unprofessional. Use a computer. Use a plain typeface, no smaller than a 12-point font. Asterisks, bullets, underlining, boldface type and italics should be only to make the document easier to read, not fancier. Again ask a professional's opinion.
4. **Too verbose** (using too many words to say too little). Do not use complete sentences or paragraphs. Say as much as possible with a few words as possible. *A, an* and *the* can almost always be left out. Be careful in your use of jargon and avoid slang.
5. **Too sparse.** Give more than the bare essentials, especially when describing related work experience, skills, accomplishments, activities, interests and club memberships that will give employers desired information.
6. **Irrelevant information.** Customize each resume to each position you seek (when possible). Of course, include all education and work experience, but emphasize only relevant experience, skills, accomplishments, activities and hobbies. Do not include marital status, age, sex, children, height, weight, health, church membership etc.
7. **Obviously generic.** Too many resumes scream, "I need a job---any job!" The employer needs to feel that you are interested in that position with any company.
8. **Too snazzy.** Of course, use good quality bond paper, but avoid exotic types, colored paper, photographs, binders, and graphics. More and more companies are scanning resumes into a database, so use white paper, black ink, plain type, and avoid symbols, underlining or italics.
9. **Boring.** Make your resume as dynamic as possible. Begin every statement with an action verb. Use active verbs, describing what you accomplished on the job. Don't write what someone else told you to do; write what you did. Take advantage of your rich vocabulary and avoid repeating words, especially the first word in a section.
10. **Too modest.** The resume showcases your qualifications in competition with the other applicants. Put your best foot forward without misrepresentation, falsification or arrogance.

Sample Chronological Resume

Name

Campus

Street Address
City, State, ZIP
Phone Number

Permanent

Street Address
City, State, ZIP
Phone Number

OBJECTIVE:

Be specific for example- Sales/marketing position in the personal computer industry

EDUCATION:

List most recent degree first institution and date of graduation or expected graduation. Point out areas of specialization in academic work, honors.

If applicable, include:

Thesis Title
Faculty Research Advisor
Publications

You may wish to add addendum that identifies the courses you have taken, grouped into two or three meaningful categories.

EXPERIENCE:

Your job title, name of organization, description of your duties, including the variety of assignments, amount of responsibility, number of people supervised, and special accomplishments, dates. Include military service if applicable.

EXTRACURRICULAR/LEADERSHIP:

Job title, name or organization, brief (optional) description of what you did, and dates.

REFERENCES:

State “Available upon request” or give names, titles, business mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of two or three business references. Do not use relatives, friends, or other students.

Sample Functional Resume

Name

Street Address
City, State, ZIP
Phone (include area code)

OBJECTIVE

Be specific

EDUCATION

List most recent degree first followed by major, institution, date of graduation, honors, if applicable and if you feel they are important.

QUALIFICATIONS OR AREAS OF EFFECTIVENESS

In this section, isolate three to five of your strongest demonstrated skills. The skills you select should be essential to the type of job you have identified in your “Objective.” For each skill you have chosen summarize your accomplishments and experiences that pertain. You need not mention the specific job in this section, as you will do so in the “Employment History” section. Be specific in discussing how you demonstrated your skills and, whenever possible, concentrate on the results you achieved in using the particular skills.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Job title, employer, duties, and dates.

ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP

List activities related to leadership

REFERENCES

Available upon request.

Sample General Resume

Name
Street Address, City, State, ZIP, Phone

OBJECTIVE

Be specific

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, and ABILITIES

Use bullets and list specific knowledge, skills, and abilities that have been acquired through professional and educational experiences.

EDUCATION

List most recent degree first, followed by institution and date of graduation or expected graduation. Point out areas of specialization in academic work, honors.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Job title, employer, duties, and dates.

ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP

List activities related to leadership

REFERENCES

Available upon request.

Job Search Correspondence

Every resume you send will need an accompanying cover letter, which can be used to inquire about possible job openings in your field or to apply for known vacancies. The main function of a cover letter is to entice the employer's interest in you so he/she will read your resume. The letter should be concise; you should be able to tell your story on one page. You can go into detail in your interview, should you get one. You may develop one basic letter than can be changed slightly for different positions for which you are applying. It is essential, however that you type each letter individually. Mass-produced letters are usually recognized as such and connote a lack of sincere interest in the organization to which you have written. While your letter should follow a standard business format, try to make it as personal as possible. Identify the individual who will be in a position to say "you're hired," and direct your correspondence to him/her. In order to personalize your letters, obtain information about the business, industry, agency, or school in which you are interested and refer to this knowledge in your letter. Your letter is often first contact between you and a prospective employer and your research will leave a good impression. There are several types of letters which one may use in a job campaign. These may be divided into two broad categories: (1) letters of application; and (2) follow-up letter of various kinds. All letters you write should be in good form, carefully planned, and contain the desired information. The following basic rules should be observed regardless of the type of letter.

1. Use resume paper, and matching envelope, of the usual business correspondence size, (8 1/2" x 11").
2. Always use a typewriter or word processor for your correspondence, and type only on one side of the paper.
3. The letter should be neat in appearance and proofread carefully for form, spelling, punctuation, and English usage. The letter is the applicant's personal representative.
4. Keep the letter brief and to the point. Employers will lose interest if they are required to read through irrelevant information.
5. Candidates should define the objectives of their letters and then attempt to determine how these objectives can best be met.
6. In all letters avoid such things as negative approaches, boastfulness, exaggeration, insincerity and inconsistency.

Letters of Application

Identify the position for which you are applying and the way in which you learned about it. If the letter is unsolicited, identifying the position for which you are applying is all that is necessary. Indicate why you are applying for this particular position. Keep in mind that the potential employer presumes you are a qualified applicant. Indicate your main qualifications, keep the letter sales-oriented, refer the reader to your enclosed resume, and request action! Under no circumstances should you adopt a subservient attitude.

Thank You Letter

After an interview, it is advisable to send a thank you letter to the recruiter, both as a professional courtesy and as a method of establishing communication with the company. The letter should be mailed within one or two days of your interview. The letter need only be two or three paragraphs in length. State the date and place you had your interview and reiterate your strongest selling points. If you interviewed with more than one person, send thank you letter to either the main contact person or the individual who will make the hiring decision (or both, if you feel it is appropriate).

Letter of Acknowledgment

1. Plant Visit Invitation

Acknowledge it and, if interested state what dates would be convenient for you, avoiding weekends and holidays. Do not delay. Procrastination makes a bad impression.

2. Offers of Employment

Acknowledge receipt of offer, restating title of position and salary and expressing your appreciation. Indicate the date you will let the company know your decision and be sure to act before that date.

Letter of Refusal

In declining the offer of employment, express your appreciation for the offer and for the company's interest in you.

Letter Seeking Additional Employment

Indicate an interest in the company and its offer, if an offer of employment has been made. Be specific about the information that you need. Express your appreciation for the cooperation that you anticipate.

Letter of Acceptance

Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment; restate position, classification, compensation offered, and the starting date if previously established. Refer to the date of the original offer letter. Indicate your travel plans and anticipated arrival date if the initial assignment is at a considerable distance from your home. Express your appreciation.

Job Search Letters

Components of a Cover Letter

Your street Address

City, State, ZIP

Today's Date

Ms. Jane Doe

Vice President, Marketing

Wiggetts, Inc.

123 Grand Avenue

Houston, TX 70890

Dear Ms. Doe:

The opening paragraph should arouse the interest of the employer. State why you are writing and give information to show you interest in this specific organization. If it is a letter of application, name the position for which you are applying and how you heard of it.

The middle paragraphs should create a desire on the part of the employer to know more about you. Explain why you are interested in working for this employer. Point out your achievements or qualifications in this field, especially those that meet the job description or requirements.

Refer the reader to your general qualifications on your enclosed resume. Highlight important points from your resume. Also highlight points that will be of particular interest to this specific organization.

The closing paragraph should pave the way for the interview by asking for an appointment, or by offering to call the employer in the near future, or by some similar suggestions to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply.

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Your Name-typed

Enclosure (You are noting that you have enclosed your resume.)

Letter of Inquiry

18240 Magnolia Place
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Today's Date

Mr. John Smith
Vice President
ABC, Inc
2301 Walnut Grove Lane
Raleigh, NC 27695

Dear Mr. Smith

In paragraph one identify the objective, state the position you are seeking and other jobs interested in at that specific company.

In paragraph two refer to your resume. Be sure and point out qualifications and special interests especially things involved with your specific job interest with that company.

In paragraph three be sure and try to arrange for an interview with their company. Include a date of when you will contact their office about the interview at their convenience.

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Your Name- Typed

Enclosure

Letter of Application

(Your Address)
000 Lakeland Ave.
New Rochelle, NY 10077

Today's Date

Ms. Mary Richards
Director of Campus Relations
XYZ Corporation
Albany, NY 10056

Dear Ms. Richards:

In the opening paragraph be sure and identify the position in which you are interested in. Include the reasoning behind why are you are interested in this specific position.

In the second paragraph refer to your resume and any experience you have especially experience that would involve the position you are interested in. Also, include any qualifications and relevant background information that pertains to this company.

In the last paragraph try and arrange for an interview. Include time and date of when you will be contacting their company and make sure you show interest.

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Your Name- typed

Enclosure (note that you have enclosed you resume)

Letter of Acceptance

18240 Magnolia Place
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Today's Date

Mr. John Smith
Vice President
ABC, Inc
2301 Walnut Grove Lane
Raleigh, NC 27695

Dear Mr. Smith:

In the first paragraph, write to confirm receipt of their letter offering you a position at their company and the annual salary of (AMOUNT). Include that you are pleased to accept this offer and you are proud to be accepted into the position with their company.

In the second paragraph arrange your next communication with them for more details of the position such as starting and time. Include again a thank you for the offer and their consideration through the process.

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Your name typed

Components of a Thank You Letter

Your Address
City, State, ZIP
Date

Name and title of interviewer
Address
City, State, ZIP

Dear Mr. /Mrs. Last Name:

Thank you for the interview on (date) at (location or university). I am very interested in the (position, kind of work) and hope that the interest is mutual.

I am enthusiastic about the prospect of joining your organization. (Describe what about the organization is sparking your interest.) My (name your background, skills, or educational emphasis) would enable me to make the transition to a position in your firm with relative ease.

OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH:

Enclosed is (anything which would strengthen your candidacy for the position). (Tell why are enclosing this item and how it relates.)

If you have any questions, please call me at (area code/phone number). I look forward to the opportunity to discuss further (name opportunities at (name of employer)).

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Your name typed

Enclosure(s) (include if appropriate)

Dressing for the Workplace

Depending upon your current fashion statement, whether it be the latest club scene or merely college senior casual, venturing into the world of work may be cause for a drastic shift in your wardrobe. Some of your individualism, at least from 9 to 5, might have to be shelved, or kept in the closet. In most business and technical settings, when it comes to your appearance, conservative and conformity are the order. Each company will have its own guidelines, so it is important so you know your future or potential employer before you meet them. How liberal or conservative is the dress code? Don't try to set any new standards, especially in the interview. When in doubt, it is better to be too conservative than to be too flashy. For men and women, suit is the best bet.

Some guidelines:

Men

- A two-piece suit will suffice in most instances.
- Solid colors and tighter-woven fabrics are safer than bold prints or patterns.
- Bright ties focus to the face, but a simple pattern is best for an interview. (A tip for larger men: use double Windsor knot to minimize bulky appearance.)
- Wear polished shoes with socks high enough so no skin is visible when you sit down and cross your legs.

Women

- A suit with a knee-length skirt and a tailored blouse is most appropriate.
- Although even the most conservative organizations allow more feminine looks these days, accessories should be kept simple. Basic pumps and modest jewelry and makeup help to present a professional look.
- Pants are more acceptable now but are not recommended for interviews or on the job itself until you're sure they are permissible.

Casually Speaking: The New Office Wardrobe

Relaxed workplace attire is becoming the norm, not the exception. At many companies across the nation, "Casual Friday" has spread to the rest of the week. This is great news for graduates.

For Men

1. A two- or three- button linen suit in a neutral color
2. Cotton chinos or nice khaki pants, with or without pleats
3. A black blazer twill and/or cashmere, or in a lighter-weight fabric such as wool crepe
4. High-quality crew-neck or turtleneck sweaters (cashmere, wool, or cotton blends)
5. Long-sleeved sport shirts that can be worn without a tie
6. Casual Vests
7. Patterned or colored socks in a heavier knit than dress socks
8. Lightweight denim or chambray shirts paired with fun or stylish neckties
9. Loafers or other shoes that bridge the gap between casual and dress

For Women

1. At least one linen or silk-blend suit (either skirted or with slacks) to form a foundation for your wardrobe
2. High-quality tailored cotton slacks
3. Lightweight cardigan, crew-neck or "twin set" sweaters
4. Casual skirts in a modest length
5. Cotton polo-style or Crisp dress shirts
6. Vests or Appropriate jewelry
7. A belt can dress up a casual outfit
8. Heels are preferable for shoes

Stay AWAY From

1. Shorts and Sandals
2. T-shirts with words or pictures
3. Worn-out jeans (and any jeans at more conservative companies)
4. Athletic wear---sweats, gym shoes, baseball caps, team logo jackets
5. Anything that's damaged, threadbare or not impeccably clean
6. Dress shirts worn as casual shirts
7. Size extremes---ultra baggy pants and/or too-small and cropped T-shirts or sweaters
8. Leggings in place of pants or skirts
9. "Grunge" clothing (the over-30 crowd sees it as plain old sloppy)

The Final Check

And, of course, your appearance is only as good as your grooming. For interviews especially, create a final checklist for yourself.

- Make sure your hair is neat
- Use makeup conservatively
- No runs in stockings
- Shoes polished (some suggest wearing sneakers on the way to an interview and changing before you enter the interview site)
- Women should avoid excessive jewelry; men should refrain from wearing earrings
- No missing buttons, crooked ties or lint

You want your experience and qualifications to shine. Your appearance should enhance your presentation, not overwhelm it.



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