

# The Resume

Your resume is a marketing tool, the first impression an employer has of you and ultimately leads to a scheduled interview. It must be focused toward your specific career goal and show how your accomplishments and skills relate to the industries and opportunities you are seeking. If you have more than one career goal, you should have one resume targeted toward each.

## Focusing Your Resume

In order for your resume to be focused properly you must:

1. Know what **you** want in terms of function, environment, and industry.
2. Research your target industries and organizations to determine the knowledge, experiences and skills **they** are seeking.
3. Determine the **relationship** between what you want and what they want – the experiences, education and accomplishments you are marketing.

**It is up to you to paint a very clear picture for the prospective employer that you understand their industry, their needs and the type of employee they are seeking – and that you are it.** To do this well you could:

- Review descriptions of the positions that interest you. Identify the skills and experience the employers are seeking, notice the language they use, and use this to highlight what you have to offer that is most relevant to your target market.
- Eliminate tasks from previous positions that are not relevant to your new career goals.
- Think about including volunteer work, other unpaid experiences, involvement with committees, special projects, etc. that showcase skills and experiences that relate to your new goals.
- Eliminate jargon from your current/past positions that is not relevant to your new industry.

# CHRONOLOGICAL FORMAT

## Heading

Include your name, address, phone number and e-mail address.

## Summary

The summary sets the tone for the rest of the resume. It immediately lets an employer know who you are and what you are all about. Your summary should be brief, a few sentences or bullet points, and point out the specific skills and qualities you are offering – **that directly relate to your career goals.**

Sample summary statement starters:

- 10 years experience in... (function or industry)
- Strong background in... (skills or function)
- Established reputation for... (tasks and accomplishments)
- Gained experience in...
- Managed...
- Consistently successful in...
- Developed...
- Place a high value on...
- Ability to...
- Solid history of...
- Recognized for...

## Professional Objective

If you have a clear and focused professional objective that matches the position you are applying for you could include it on your resume. A professional objective is optional; including it may limit your opportunities.

A professional objective:

- Defines the work you want to do within your profession and makes it easier for you to explain when speaking with others. It is important for others to understand what you are looking for so they are better able to assist you.
- Helps you focus and gives direction to your job search. It can be included separately at the beginning of your resume or as part of a summary statement.
- Assists you in developing a good marketing plan. Your marketing plan allows you to target companies and organizations that will lead you to the right position.

- Should be understood and focused. Needs to be written in language commonly used in the industry, not just relevant to your last position or organization.

## Experience

Decide how you would like to market your experience based on what you feel is most relevant to your current career goals. Those experiences that relate to your goal should be grouped under a heading titled “Related Experience” and the rest grouped under “Other Experience”

Within each section, list all positions in reverse chronological order with the most recent first. Include organization name, location, years employed and job titles. Use one or two sentences to explain your overall job responsibilities. Using bullet points, **focus on your accomplishments** at each position – indicating what you did (action verbs), how you did it and the results of your efforts. Accomplishments could include: how you handled issues and challenges and how your actions affected the organization. This will make it easier for the reader to comprehend and pinpoint key words.

## Skills

Include computer skills and any foreign languages that you speak. Use the following to describe your proficiency in a particular language: fluent, conversant, proficient in, knowledge of and familiar with.

## Education

List your credentials in reverse chronological order including your highest degree and university.

## License/Certification

List relevant professional licenses and/or certifications.

## Professional Development and Training

List additional training or courses taken that are relevant to the position. You could also list these under the education section.

## Memberships

List memberships and positions held in professional associations, boards and community groups; avoid acronyms.

## **FUNCTIONAL FORMAT**

When using a functional resume, the emphasis is placed on your qualifications, not on specific employers and dates. You would utilize a functional resume when your objective is very different than your experience and you want to highlight skills and accomplishments not obtained or used in recent work experience. This is often most effective for individuals re-entering the job market or changing careers.

### **Heading**

Include your name, address, phone number and e-mail address.

### **Summary/Profile**

A summary is a statement(s) emphasizing your technical or professional skills accomplishments and strengths. If you are contemplating a career change utilize a summary to indicate your transferable skills.

### **Accomplishments**

Using bullet points, list your skills/accomplishments that are most relevant to the position. These bullet points could also be categorized according to job responsibilities. Examples of categories are: Management, Marketing, Operations, and Administration.

### **Skills**

Include computer skills and any foreign languages that you speak. Use the following to describe your proficiency in a particular language: fluent, conversant, proficient in, knowledge of and familiar with.

### **Work Experience**

List in Reverse Chronological order name, location, years employed and job title of your current and previous employers.

### **Memberships**

List memberships and positions held in professional associations, boards, and community groups; avoid acronyms.

### **Education**

List your credentials in reverse chronological order including your highest degree and university.

## License/Certification

List relevant professional licenses and/or certifications.

## Professional Development and Training

List additional training or courses taken that are relevant to the position. You could also list these under the education section.

When you choose a format, it is important for you to determine if the layout is the best way to present your experience, skills and accomplishments. Since resumes are unique to each individual, not all will have the same headings and information.

### RESUME TIPS

- Keep the resume to one or two pages. If you use two pages make sure the content on the second page takes up at least half the page.
- Include your name, phone number and a page number on your second page.
- Use same font type, font size and quality laser printing on your resume and your cover letter.
- Avoid first person (I, he, she), abbreviations, acronyms. Don't use your name in any bullet or sentence.
- Utilize action verbs when beginning sentences or phrases.
- Quantify and Qualify achievements. Measure your results and achievements by providing statistical data and numbers and explain how well you did it. Instead of "Rang up customers and made change" consider "Responsible for generating 20,000 sales transactions in 2 months". Mention if you got an award, bonus, raise, stock options for your accomplishment.
- Include a phone number with an active and professional voice mail.
- Write out all numbers up to and including the number nine. (use numerals for 10-999,999).
- Spell check all documents and have at least two others proofread your resume for spelling and grammar.
- Select a format and be consistent.
- Be truthful. State your abilities accurately.
- Target the position - rewrite to match your experience to the position description. Be sure keywords from the position description appear in your resume (preferably towards the top).
- Mention Customer Service experience - every job involves customer service
- Mention leadership experience - even if it's an office held in a frat or volunteer organization.

## SCANNABLE RESUMES

Many employers use computerized scanning systems to review resumes. Since you cannot be sure whether your target organization uses such a method, you may want to send two resumes – your standard resume and one marked “scannable” at the top. Tips on creating a scannable resume:

- Print from a laser printer or high quality inkjet printer
- Your name, address, phone number and e-mail should appear on separate lines at the top of your resume.
- Avoid using fancy typefaces, *italics*, underlining and vertical and horizontal lines.
- Avoid boxes, shading, hollow bullets or anything decorative.
- Use specific numerical dates, not words, when listing dates of employment.
- Avoid abbreviations and acronyms; it is better to spell them out.
- Stick to standard resume headings in a chronological format.
- Use 8 ½ x 11 white paper, printed on one side and use 10–12 point font size.
- Use adequate margins and spacing, do not fold or staple your resume.
- Place the most relevant information toward the top of the resume.
- State a specific objective – it will be the first key word on the page.
- Submit a cover letter including key words from the job listing if possible.
- Make liberal use of key words that are commonly associated with the job, i.e. Financial Analyst, keywords: budgeting, forecasting, cash flow, etc.
- Following the optional objective include a *summary, profile* or *summary of qualifications* to highlight your skills and accomplishments.

## **ELECTRONIC RESUME**

This generally refers to a resume that is sent to an employer via the Internet or e-mail. Some organization homepages will include a form that you can complete on-line and submit. Some websites geared toward job search assistance also include this type of resume service. Before you post your resume, you should consider that you will not have any control over who will see your resume, including your present employer. Investigate any on-line employment services that may want to charge you a fee and verify their success before you join. Some tips for creating e-Resumes:

- Save your resume as a text file in a word processing program and send it as an attachment along with a professional e-mail stating your purpose for forwarding your resume. If possible, follow up with a phone call or an additional e-mail requesting confirmation of receipt. If the recruiter is not able to open an attachment for fear of a virus, copy and paste the resume text into the body of your e-mail when you apply for a job.
- Text files lose all formatting and tabs, so use spaces instead of tabs and Uppercase as a highlight to replace bold.
- If you have a choice use PDF format. PDF will give consistent format and is compatible with every computer.
- Limit each line in your resume to 72 characters. Most e-mail programs wrap around after 72 characters. Avoiding the 73<sup>rd</sup> character will make your resume much easier and enjoyable to read.
- Showcase your strong points first.
- Don't forget to use spell check. Using technology as an aid doesn't mean you can forget old fashioned proofreading.
- Include a cover letter. Many applicants submitting resumes via The Internet eliminate this step. Recruiters want to see how you write, and they also want to see how you market yourself for a particular position.
- Backup all of your work on a disk and on your hard drive.

## ACTION VERBS

Use this formula when writing your accomplishments:

**Action verb + what/who the action pertained to + how you achieved the accomplishment OR, why you did it OR a more detailed description of what it was you did = include results of your actions if possible.**

achieved	composed	found	monitored	represented
acted	computed	furnished	motivated	researched
adapted	conducted	gathered	negotiated	resolved
added	consulted	generated	notified	restored
administered	contributed	governed	numbered	retained
advised	controlled	guided	observed	reviewed
amended	coordinated	handled	obtained	revised
analyzed	corresponded	helped	operated	selected
applied	created	hired	ordered	scheduled
appointed	defined	identified	organized	screened
appraised	delegated	increased	originated	selected
approved	defined	informed	oversaw	served
arranged	delivered	initiated	participated	set up
assembled	demonstrated	illustrated	performed	simplified
assessed	designed	implemented	persuaded	solved
assigned	determined	improved	planned	staffed
assisted	developed	instituted	positioned	standardized
audited	diagnosed	instructed	practiced	streamlined
authorized	directed	interacted	posted	supervised
automated	distributed	interpreted	prepared	supported
balanced	edited	interviewed	presented	tabulated
bought	encouraged	introduced	programmed	taught
budgeted	enforced	investigated	produced	tested
built	ensured	invented	publicized	trained
calculated	established	joined	purchased	transacted
catalogued	evaluated	judged	qualified	transferred
centralized	examined	launched	questioned	translated
changed	executed	lectured	raised	unified
clarified	expanded	led	received	updated
checked	expedited	leveraged	recommended	upgraded
coached	experimented	liquidated	reconciled	used
collaborated	facilitated	located	recorded	utilized
communicated	financed	maintained	recruited	verbalized
compared	focused	managed	reduced	verified
complied	forecasted	measured	related	wrote
completed	formulated	merged	reported	worked

## Cover Letters

Your cover letter is an opportunity for you to sell yourself and highlight those skills that qualify you to work for the particular organization for which you are applying. The cover letter gives you the chance to emphasize what you have to offer and how you could “fit in” to the organization. It is important to include in your cover letter information about the organization, i.e. organization’s products, recent growth, (if applicable), and management style. This will arouse the reader’s interest; showing you are specifically interested in the organization and not sending out generic letters to every potential employer. Try to send your cover letter and resume to the individual responsible for hiring. Always address your letter to a specific individual. Make sure you proofread your letter for spelling and grammar.

### Basic Cover Letter Format

Your Address

Date

Contact Name

Contact Title

Organization Name

Organization Address

*Salutation:* Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name of Contact:

*Opening Paragraph:* Explain your reason for writing in a way that grabs the reader’s interest. State the specific position for which you are applying and how you learned of the position. Indicate your knowledge of the organization and what you have learned about them.

*Body:* Briefly describe your qualifications and how your past performance has prepared you for this position. If you are changing careers it is important that you clearly specify your transferable skills.

*Closing Paragraph:* Be proactive and take the initiative to schedule an interview. Indicate a specific time you will contact the employer to arrange an appointment.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature*

Type Your Name

Enc.