

College of Public Affairs and Community
Service
Division of Continuing Studies



Resume Handbook

A Guide for Preparing Resumes & Cover Letters

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The Resume

Your Personal Marketing Tool

The resume is a marketing tool—an advertisement of your qualifications and abilities. Your intent is to communicate in a brief but informative way to employers that you are someone who gets things done!

The resume basically has two purposes:

- 1) It introduces your skills and experiences to potential employers
- 2) It reminds the potential employer of you after your interview.

Types of Resumes

Generally, there are considered to be three styles of resumes:

- Chronological
- Functional
- Targeted

The **chronological** style is a list of where you've worked and what you've accomplished in each position, listed in reverse chronological order. It is the style most commonly used by new college graduates and by individuals changing jobs within a given career field.

The **functional/skills** resume, on the other hand, places the emphasis on what major skills you possess and de-emphasizes where you worked. This allows the candidate to organize experiences, gathered from a variety of settings, according to specific functions or skills. Past employers are listed on the resume, but near the bottom, indicating only title and the dates of employment. This style is most commonly used by career changers who are trying to demonstrate the transferability of their skills from one setting to another or by someone who is re-entering the work force after a period of absence.

The third style is the **targeted** resume. Job seekers use this to style the elements of their resume to specific job areas or positions. The targeted resume can follow a chronological or functional format or both. Other elements of the resume, such as relevant courses and skill statements, will closely match the qualifications for specific job area with the most relevant parts listed first.

Choose the style that you feel will work best for you, given your unique situation. The resume style should be selected based on the type of position; for example, an art major applying for a position in a business would use a targeted resume to define how his/her background meets the needs of the business sector.



Resume Basics

Since the resume typically gets 20-30 seconds of an employer's attention the first time through, **make it easy for readers to find what they are looking for**—layout and format are important! Use lots of white space—have margins of at least .75 inches and indent or use bullets to break up “blocky” looking paragraphs. Use bold type to bring attention to key bits of information (but don't overdo it). Have it laser printed on high quality paper.

- As you write the resume, look at it from the employer's perspective. Is it neat and centered on the page?
- Show results by quantifying any achievements when you can.
- Avoid pronouns and use short phrases rather than complete sentences.
- Begin phrases with action verbs.

Example: “Researched, analyzed and presented summation of customer buying trends during 200_.”

NOT

“I was the individual responsible for...”

List only those experiences that are concurrent with your university education or are relevant to your job search. Do not list personal information such as are or marital status.

Check for accuracy—both in content and in spelling and grammar. Have someone else check it too.

There is flexibility in deciding what categories can be included on a resume. The following categories (or some variation of them) commonly appear in the chronological style resume of a new graduate:

- Objective
- Education, Academic Background
- Relevant, Related or Key Coursework
- Experience, Relevant Experience or Related Experience
- Skills (especially computer related)
- Activities, Campus Involvement or Professional Affiliations
- Honors, Awards, Achievements

Make the categories work for you! List them in what you perceive to be the order of importance to the reader. Select labels that best describe the contents; use only those categories that are relevant to the position for which you are currently applying.

Develop your resume on a software program that allows you to change and tailor the resume to the specifics of each position for which you are applying. Solicit input from former employers and professionals in your field. Have someone review and critique your resume as well. But remember, ultimately, you are the one being represented by this document. You need to be comfortable with it. Finally, remember that you are constantly learning and developing. Consequently, your resume is always a “work in progress”!

Points to Remember

- Seek a well organized visual effect
- Include relevant content
- Obtain a professional appearance
- Quantify when possible; show results
- Employ white space
- Use action verbs
- Print on good quality paper
- Be brief, but informative
- Maintain accuracy
- Proofread
- Spellcheck
- Be truthful
- List your degree correctly
- Have someone else proof or read your resume
- Always send current information on resume; do not write in changes such as a new phone number

Action Verbs

To help you get started...here is a list of sample Action Verbs to show strengths in particular areas. Don't be afraid to look at the verbs in categories other than the obvious ones or to use them in combination i.e. hired, trained and supervised. If you're still not satisfied, use these as a starting point and refer to your thesaurus!

Communicative

Addressed
Arbitrated
Arranged
Authored
Briefed
Communicated
Composed
Contacted
Convinced
Described
Developed
Directed
Documented
Drafted
Edited
Enlisted
Formulated
Influenced
Informed
Interpreted
Interviewed
Lectured
Marketed
Mediated
Moderated
Motivated
Negotiated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Publicized
Published
Reconciled
Recruited
Reported
Spoke
Summarized
Translated
Wrote

Creative

Acted
Composed
Conceived

Conceptualized
Conducted
Created
Designed
Developed
Directed
Established
Fashioned
Founded
Illustrated
Improvised
Instituted
Integrated
Introduced
Invented
Originated
Performed
Planned
Revitalized
Shaped

Financial

Accounted for
Adjusted
Administered
Allocated
Analyzed
Appraised
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Controlled
Developed
Financed
Forecasted
Managed
Marketed
Monitored
Planned
Procured
Projected
Purchased
Reconciled
Researched

Helping

Advised
Advocated
Assessed
Assisted
Clarified
Coached
Counseled
Demonstrated
Diagnosed
Educated
Ensured
Evaluated
Expedited
Facilitated
Familiarized
Fostered
Guided
Observed
Provided
Referred
Rehabilitated
Represented
Supported



Management

Administered
Analyzed
Appointed
Approved
Assigned
Assumed
Attained
Chaired
Contracted
Consolidated
Consulted
Delegated
Designated
Determined
Developed
Directed
Evaluated
Executed
Formulated
Managed
Organized
Oversaw
Planned
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Recruited
Reviewed
Scheduled
Supervised

Organizational

Approved
Arranged
Catalogued
Classified
Collected
Compiled
Consolidated
Dispatched
Distributed
Enlisted
Executed
Expedited
Generated
Implemented
Inspected
Monitored
Operated
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Purchased
Recorded
Revamped
Revised
Retrieved
Scheduled
Screened

Specified
Tabulated
Updated
Validated

Research

Acquired
Analyzed
Calculated
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Conducted
Critiqued
Diagnosed
Designed
Determined
Evaluated
Examined
Extracted
Formulated
Identified
Inspected
Interpreted
Interviewed
Investigated
Located
Modified
Organized
Processed
Reviewed
Researched
Summarized
Surveyed

Results

Achieved
Accelerated
Accomplished
Attained
Awarded
Completed
Contributed
Decreased
Eliminated
Enlarged
Established
Expanded
Improved
Increased
Initiated
Introduced
Launched
Pioneered
Recognized as
Reduced
Resolved
Selected as
Succeeded

Teaching

Adapted
Advised
Applied
Clarified
Coached
Communicated
Coordinated
Developed
Enabled
Encouraged
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Guided
Implemented
Incorporated
Informed
Initiated
Instructed
Integrated
Modified
Motivated
Persuaded
Reinforced
Set goals
Stimulated
Taught
Trained
Tutored

Technical

Assembled
Built
Calculated
Computed
Designed
Devised
Engineered
Fabricated
Maintained
Operated
Overhauled
Programmed
Remodeled
Repaired
Solved
Trained
Upgraded

