



Resume Writing Guide

An effective resume is crucial to a well-orchestrated job search. It is a personal advertisement that includes a written description of your strengths, abilities, and interests. It gives you the opportunity to present your best characteristics and accomplishments, as well as to demonstrate your potential for future success. The idea is to provide a **clear and concise** picture of your education and experiences as they relate to your career goals. It is neither helpful nor necessary to list your entire life history, and since the recruiter/employer may give your resume only a 15-30 second review, you'll want to make every word count. Many well-qualified people are eliminated from the candidate pool because of poorly written resumes. We don't want you to be one of them!

The main purpose of a resume is to get an interview... not a job!

No two people will give you the same resume advice because there is no "perfect" or "right" format for a resume. Its content, however, should reflect your individuality and personal style. In writing, keep in mind the position for which you are applying and the aspects of your background relevant to that position.

Be Aware! Self-assessment is an important first step! Before you can create an effective resume you need to clearly identify your skills, interests and abilities, and match them with occupations that require such traits. In a sense, you need to figure out who you are, what you have to offer, and where your skills can best be applied. Career Services can help! Contact our office to set up an appointment with a counselor who can walk you through the process.

Common Resume Formats

Chronological

Information is organized in reverse chronological order. Most recent experiences are listed first according to job title or place of employment. It reveals your education, experience, and activities.

A good format choice if:

- You have a good work history and plan to continue in the same career area
- You have no directly related experience in your field

Do not use this format if:

- You have frequent job or career changes
- You have been absent from the job market for a while

Functional

Information is arranged according to specific skill areas or functions (e.g., leadership, teaching). Your qualifications and abilities are emphasized in terms of your responsibilities and these should relate directly to the job you are seeking.

(Functional cont.)

A good format choice if:

- Your job and activity titles are not directly related to your career goals
- You are applying for different positions requiring the same skills (transferable skills)

Do not use this format if:

- You have a good work history and relevant experience

Combination

Information highlights your skill areas and includes a chronological listing of your work history. The advantage is that you can focus employer's attention on certain skills and still give the work history that many employers want to see.

Basic Resume Components

Critical to all Resumes:

- Every resume should be tailored to the specific position being sought.
- The most important information should be placed nearer to the top of your resume.

Your resume should contain the following components:

1. Contact Information:

Your Name Here

45 Ferry Street
Albany, NY 12180
(518) 244-1793
namehy@sage.edu

2. Objective:

An objective states your current goal and should match the type of position you are applying for.

Example:

To obtain a position in elementary education where my organizational and creative skills can be utilized.

3. Education:

Start with your college education. You need to have the proper name of your school, city, state and your degree and major (minors or concentrations can be included). Include only the graduation date (anticipated date if you haven't graduated yet). If you have a high GPA (over 3.0) you may include it, as well as any academic honors (Dean's List, scholarships, Who's Who...). You may also list 6-8 relevant courses if they support your job objective; do not include introductory courses.

4. Experience: This is the section that employers will read most carefully. Make sure to include your position title, the name of the organization, the city, state, and the dates worked. A description of the experience should not start with "I was responsible for" or "My duties included". Use short,

descriptive phrases that begin with an action verb (see lists of skills). For example: “My duties included teaching art” should be “Developed and carried out lesson plans in two and three-dimensional drawing. Administered evaluations....” Begin each statement on a new line beginning with a “bullet”, either *, or -. Experience may include class projects, internships, co-ops, volunteer work, and part-time, as well as full time positions.

5. Activities: In this section you may list the leadership positions you have held, the organizations you belong to, the community work you may have done. Descriptions aren’t necessary unless you feel they will enrich your resume.

Information that does NOT belong in Your Resume:

- 1. Titles:** Resume, Fact Sheet, Curriculum Vitae, etc. Never use any of these variations as a heading for your resume.
- 2. Availability:** Let the subject of availability come up at the face-to-face meeting. After meeting you, an employer will often be prepared to wait until you are available, and will probably appreciate your integrity.
- 3. Reason for Leaving:** Mentioning the reason you left your previous job in advance and on paper can only damage your chances for being called in for the interview.
- 4. References:** It is inappropriate and unprofessional to list the names of references on a resume. Interviewers are not interested in checking your references before they meet and develop a strong interest in you.
- 6. Abbreviations:** With the exception of educational attainments (B.S., M.A.), and those required by the postal service, avoid if possible all abbreviations. Of course, space constraints might make it imperative that you write “No. Wilshire Blvd.” instead of “North Wilshire Boulevard.” If that is the case, be sure to be consistent.
- 7. Mention of Age, Race, Religion, Sex or National Origin:** Government legislation was enacted some years ago forbidding employment discrimination in these areas. In addition, do not include marital status or number of dependents.
- 8. Health/Physical Description:** Unless your physical health (Phys. Ed. Instructor) and/or appearance (model, actor, media personality) are immediately relevant to the job, leave these issues alone.

Tips to remember:

- Your first step should be to list skills, experiences and accomplishments that you have to offer an employer. Don’t worry about format until later.
- Do not use a computer resume template. They are very difficult to edit. They also do not upload very well on some web job search sites.
- Be concise – your resume should be preferably 1 and no more than 2 pages. Remember, the purpose of a resume is to get you an interview, not to tell your life’s story. Focus on

information relevant to the job. The average time spent by an employer reviewing a resume is 30 seconds!

- Give enough information – your resume should be able to “stand on its own.”
- Develop your resume for the type of job you want and keep the employer’s needs in mind.
- Select words that will mean something to the potential employer. Use the jargon of your chosen field where appropriate.
- Your resume should be visually appealing. Leave enough space around the edges to “frame” your resume and make sure the type is sharp and dark.
- Print your resume on good quality bond paper-white or off-white. Avoid exotic colors. If you are looking for a job in a competitive area, consider having your resume professionally printed. Purchase some matching blank sheets and envelopes to use for cover letters and mailing.
- Have someone else proofread your resume. It should be easy to read and no misspelled words or typographical errors.
- If the employer is going to see your resume instead of meeting you face-to-face you must have a resume that stands out and is impressive. Employers may receive hundreds or thousands of resumes in the mail.
- An employer should be able to scan your resume and pick up the key points in 30 seconds or less.
- You should always have an up-to-date resume. You never can tell when a great opportunity will come your way.
- You will probably need to write several drafts or refinements of your resume before you “get it right”. Have a faculty member, advisor or Career Services staff member critique your drafts and make suggestions for improvements and corrections. Make an appointment to meet with a Career Specialist.

Action Verbs

Communication

- 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

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
- consulted
- delegated
- designated
- determined
- developed
- directed
- evaluated
- executed
- formulated
- generated

- consolidated
- managed
- organized
- oversaw
- planned
- prioritized
- produced
- recommended
- recruited
- reviewed
- scheduled
- supervised

Organization

- 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
- systematized
- 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
- systematized

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

- accepted
- adapted
- advised
- analyzed
- applied
- appraised
- aroused
- asked
- assessed
- assigned
- attended
- calmed
- categorized
- challenged
- chose
- clarified
- coached
- commanded
- communicated
- complimented
- considered
- cooperated
- coordinated
- corrects
- defines
- demonstrates
- designated
- developed
- directed
- disciplined
- doubted
- elaborated
- elicited
- emphasized
- enabled
- encouraged
- evaluated
- excited
- explained
- explored
- facilitated

- guided
- hypothesized
- identified
- implemented
- incorporated
- indicated
- inferred
- informed
- initiated
- inquired
- instructed
- interested
- integrated
- investigated
- judged
- linked
- listened
- mentored
- modeled
- modified
- motivated
- observed
- organized
- persuaded
- pondered
- postulated
- praised
- provoked
- questioned
- reinforced
- rephrased
- rewarded
- set
- simplified
- solicited
- speculated
- stated
- stimulated
- structured
- synthesized
- systematized
- taught
- told
- thanked
- theorized
- trained
- tutored

Technical

- analyzed
- assembled
- audited
- automated
- built
- calculated
- computed
- converted
- designed
- devised
- documented
- engineered
- enhanced
- fabricated
- identified
- implemented
- installed
- maintained
- operated
- overhauled
- programmed
- remodeled
- repaired
- researched
- solved
- standardized
- tested
- trained
- upgraded

