



RESUME WRITING BASICS

RESUME KEY POINTS

Resume Purpose & Focus: The purpose of a resume is to get you an interview. Your interview should get you a job. If you're getting interviews from your resume, it's doing its job.

A resume is a marketing piece, not a history piece. Decide carefully what to include and leave out. It's not your life story; it's your personal sales piece.

Formatting & Length: Shoot for 11-12 point font size (not smaller than 10 point), an easy to read font style (Calibri is good), margins a minimum of .8 inches on top, bottom, and sides.

Limit each line to 64 – 70 characters. Any line longer than that may be cut off when submitting in electronic format.

If possible, keep your resume to one page. Use a clean, concise style. Your reader may take only 30 to 60 seconds to read and judge your resume.

Content: When describing a project, work or volunteer experience: what did you do? **Quantify** whenever possible. If you were a lifeguard, typically how many pool patrons were you responsible for during each shift? If you trained new employees, on average, how many did you train? If you helped organize a canned food drive, how many people were the recipients of your donations?

Focus on **transferable skills** more than mundane daily tasks when describing your duties. If you desire to go into public relations, customer service, problem solving and communication should be emphasized far more than faxing, filing and answering the phone. For example, for someone who has served as a waiter, do not list "Served food" as a responsibility. Most recruiters will assume this. However, you may have worked in a very busy restaurant and had to effectively manage multiple tables and tasks. You may have built a repeat client base that requested you each time they returned to the restaurant. You may have consistently sold above the average quota because you suggested additional food items. Each of these reflects higher order skills such as consolidating tasks to provide more effective customer service, effective communication and customer service skills to build a base of clients, and effective sales skills.

RESUME COMPONENTS

Identifying Information

List your name, address, phone number and email address. Consider adding your LinkedIn website URL.

Objective

The objective is a concise statement (generally 1-2 lines) that specifies a position, field of work or skills to be used on the job. Objective statements **should not be general or broad** for those seeking full-time employment. The most effective statements are specific and tell the company what you are going to do for them.

Too broad: “Seeking an entry-level position that will allow me to use my skills to advance my career sounds self-serving.” (This statement says nothing that is relevant to the position you want and nothing specific about your skills.)

Targeted statement: Seeking an entry-level position with ABC Widgets that will allow me to use my widget experience to increase market share of the product in the greater southwest.

Summary of Qualifications

Content for this section is determined by the job/internship description. List the skills and the strengths you have that are directly relevant to the position description.

Education

This entry should include the name of your college, the city and state, the degree you received or expect to receive, and the date of the degree. You may want to include information on relevant projects, courses or honors. Study abroad experience could also be included in this section.

Work and Experience

List your position title, place of employment, city, state and dates. Write bulleted statements that give evidence that you have the skills the employer needs and wants. Avoid “responsibilities included.” Instead, make your descriptions powerful by starting each one with a verb. Here is a list of action words to get you started:

| Action Verbs | |
|--------------|--------------|
| administered | edited |
| analyzed | enhanced |
| appraised | financed |
| audited | generated |
| balanced | improved |
| budgeted | implemented |
| collaborated | initiated |
| communicated | investigated |
| compiled | led |

| | |
|--|---|
| completed conducted consulted contributed coordinated created critiqued decreased demonstrated designed developed directed distributed documented established expedited facilitated | managed negotiated organized planned presented prioritized produced researched reviewed scheduled shared supervised supported trained updated worked wrote |
| Adjectives to Describe Yourself | Adjectives to Describe Your Work or Experience |
| able to handle stress able to listen able to work well with (fluently) bilingual capable collaborative competent creative dedicated effective experienced efficient flexible imaginative innovative motivated multilingual | administrative analytical consistent complete diversified exceptional extensive global intensive in-depth integrated multi-disciplinary reliable responsible well- traveled |

Leadership Activities

List the name of the group you were affiliated with and the position you held, describe what you accomplished and the purpose of the group (if not evident from the group’s name). If space is at a premium, you may simply list the organization and your position

Additional Headings

You may wish to create additional headings that highlight relevant experiences that aren't listed elsewhere on your resume. Some examples: Related Projects, Research Experience, Computer Skills.

SOURCES:

The Center for Communication Practices at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York.

The Univ. of Washington Career Center. The 2013-2014 Career Guide.

http://careers.washington.edu/sites/default/files/all/editors/docs/2013-2014_Career_Guide.pdf

Texas A & M Career Center. Resume Tutorial.

<https://careercenter.tamu.edu/guides/resumes/tutorial.cfm?sn=prospectivestudents>