

Writing a Resume

The first step in writing your resume is to gather information about yourself and your past accomplishments: schools attended, awards received, degrees attained, organizational memberships, professional organizations, volunteer experiences, and community projects. Include a variety to show that you are a well-rounded person.

Tailor your resume to the job you are seeking. That means that if you are applying for two different types of jobs, you may want to prepare a somewhat different resume for each application. Within your resume, cite your activities and accomplishments in order of their importance to that job. Omitting the unrelated information gives more impact to the accomplishments that are related to the job.

The Heading: Simple but important

The heading of your resume must contain your name, home address, and a phone number (or numbers) where you can be reached easily. Your e-mail address may be included; however, you may not want to use a work e-mail address or one that will be expiring within a short period of time.

Objective

According to VGM (2004), the objective is a one- or two-sentence statement of the direction you see yourself taking if you are seeking a specific career path. This enables an employer to determine if your goals are congruent with the position and the organization for which they are hiring. These goals may be specific or general but should apply to the position for which you are applying.

Education

Begin with your most recent schooling and work backward. If you have completed college, it is not necessary to list high school experience. However, you may do so if you earned special honors or had a higher-than-average GPA. If currently in school, list the degree and license you expect to obtain and the expected date of completion. For each school, list the name of the school, major, degree, and dates of attendance.

Work Experience

Approach this section from the standpoint of “what is the employer looking for in someone applying for this job” and include everything that is relevant to that perspective, volunteer or paid experiences. List your work experience in reverse chronological order as you did with your education. Be sure to include the following information for each job that you have held: job title, dates of employment, company name and address (city and state), responsibilities, special projects you handled, and any accomplishments and promotions.

Use short, powerful statements and strong action verbs (in the past tense) to describe your responsibilities. You may use bulleted statements. These types of statements should be used in place of a job description for each of the positions you held; that is, focus on your accomplishments rather than your responsibilities. What did you accomplish that you want others to know about?

Honors

Because many honors are academic in nature, this information may be included in the education section of your resume. If you include a separate honors section, be sure to include the following information with each honor that you indicate: any honor, award, or memberships in honorary societies; name of the organization that bestowed the honor; and the date(s) that you received the honor.

Personal Information and Activities

List hobbies, interests, and outside activities only if they are directly relevant to the position and company being targeted (Campbell, 2008, Other Information of Interest section, para. 2).

References

The references are not generally listed on the resume. It is sufficient to end your resume with the statement "References are available upon request." Be sure that you have a list of references handy so that you can supply them if asked to do so at an interview. Prior to placing people on your reference list, contact them and ask permission to use their names as references so that they will not be surprised by a phone call. If they are forewarned, they can think about what they will say ahead of time.

Make your resume inviting to read

After deciding on what you want to say about yourself, be sure your resume has sufficient white space. The top and bottom margins should be at least a half-inch long, and the left and right margins should measure at least seven-tenths of an inch wide. Insert white space between your section headings, names of employers, job titles and discussions about your experience. Use bold-faced type for section headings, employer names and job titles. If the document lacks eye appeal, few people will review it (Jobwerx, n.d.).

Campbell, S. (2008). Resume basics. Retrieved from <http://www.1st-writer.com/>
Handsoncv.co.uk Limited. (nd). *How to write a resume. A brief guide to writing a successful resume*. Retrieved from <http://wwwtotalresume.com/writaresume.aspx>
Jobwerx. (n.d.). *How to create a resume that wins interviews*. Retrieved from http://www.jobwerx.com/news/Archives/How_to_Create_a_Resume.html
VGM Career Books (Ed.). (2004). *Resumes for health and medical careers with sample cover letters* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.