

## How to Write a Good Résumé

The old saying “you only get one chance to make a first impression” rings especially true when it comes to preparing your resume. Writing a good resume is easier said than done. As a rule, your resume should simply be an overview of your qualifications. At the same time, it tells potential employers a great deal about you. Therefore, you must be conscious that your choice of words, layout and format will influence your chances of being selected for an interview. It is also important to target the resume to your immediate job search. If you have more than one occupational goal, you need to tailor your resume accordingly or develop an additional one.

### **Below are some helpful tips to get you started.**

There are 3 widely accepted formats for resumes.

#### **Chronological**

The chronological resume is probably the one most widely used, and also the most preferred by employers. Your career objective goes at the top of the resume. You then list your work experience in chronological order, starting with your last employer. It is important to include employer names, dates of employment, work locations, a brief description of the responsibilities in each position, accomplishments and awards received. You are not required to list hobbies and interests, however, it is strongly advisable to mention them, if they are relevant to the position to which you are applying. Do not forget to mention all professional associations to which you belong.

#### **Functional**

The functional resume is quite different to the chronological resume, because this resume is organized by skill categories. Its purpose is to focus on your skills and accomplishments, and it is generally used when making a career change. The first item is your career objective, followed by several paragraphs describing various job responsibilities or skills. These descriptions should go under general categories intended to reflect your experience and abilities, such as Project Management or Writing and Editing. It is important to list the categories in order of importance, so the skills you want to emphasize the most appear first. Please note that you must provide the names of previous employers in the respective skill categories.

#### **Combination**

Just as it suggests, the combination resume merges both the functional and chronological formats. Your objective goes at the top of the resume, followed by a section detailing your job functions. Like the functional format, the descriptions are categorized by skill. In the next section, you will list the employers and employment dates in chronological order. It is not necessary to include job descriptions, since your experience and abilities are described in the functional section.

Regardless of the format you select, you must include your education. Depending on your career growth, you may list your education at the top or the bottom of your resume. The general rule of thumb is if you have five years of experience or less, your education should be at the top of the resume. If you have more than five years of experience, it should be at the bottom.

Here are some basic Dos and Don'ts to keep in mind when resume writing.

## Do:

- Keep it brief (two pages).
- Use bullet sentences.
- Use words from the job description (Increasingly, organizations use electronic databases to store resumes. Since searches are generally done with key words, you should include in your resume words from the job description to increase the chances that it will be sourced).
- Proof read your document to ensure that there are no grammatical or spelling errors.
- Include your full name, address (permanent and current), telephone numbers, and email addresses.
- Emphasize and list accomplishments. For example, it is important to include details such as the size of the projects you managed, sales volume increases, number of employees you managed, and awards received.
- Be sure to highlight the experience that is most relevant to the position to which you are applying.
- Be honest. All the data that you provide in your resume and the interview will be verified by the hiring organization.
- Clearly state your career objectives, and tailor them to each employer or position.
- Use a font that is easily readable.
- Ensure that your paragraphs are evenly spaced.
- Be sure to include any courses you are taking, or certifications or training that relate to your career objective.
- Be sure to use action words.
- Write with the intention of creating interest. Remember to write what the reader wants to hear.

## Do not include:

- Photographs of yourself
- Abbreviations or nicknames
- Graphics and charts
- Personal information such as height, weight, marital status, or religion
- Reasons for leaving past employers
- Weaknesses

If you have a resume you would like us to review, please email it to us.



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