Writing A Good Resume

What is a resume?

A resume is a summary of your experience, education, skills and qualifications for a specific job. It is a marketing tool which an employer reads, even before meeting you! The purpose of the resume is to create enough interest in you so that you are called for an interview. To be effective, the resume must demonstrate that you have what it takes to do the job for which you are applying for.

What you need to know about resumes

- There is **no one perfect way** to write a resume. One size does not fit all.
- A resume is read in approximately **30 seconds**. Be sure to prioritize the order in which the information is presented.
- Don't be surprised if you must write several drafts. Write down **all of your experience** on paper and revise it later.
- Your resume should contain **key words** and phrases relevant to the job you are seeking.
- **Active, skills-based language** is the best way to write your resume. Use bullet points. Even a quick skim by a reader should give them enough to know whether they want to read more.
- Go beyond duties and responsibilities. Be **specific and results-oriented**.
- When emailing or uploading your resume, the best format is PDF. However, many employers will specifically request MS Word format.

- **Do not** abbreviate except for states or college degrees.
- Include **all experiences** related to the job objective even if they were volunteer experiences.
- Remember that your resume must be **attractively presented**; must have a sense of direction, professionalism, and honesty; must focus the reader on your strongest points as well as your career goals.
- The **best resumes** are customized to each position you are seeking.
- The **old rule** that a resume must be one page does not follow. If a resume must take up more than one page, it should fill up at least half of the second page. Be sure that your name is at the top of the second page, along with Page 2.
- **Proofread** your work. Spelling and grammar mistakes are deadly.

✔️ Formatting essentials

- ➢ The resume must be **reader friendly**: spacing, layout, and headings must be visually appealing.
- ➢ Use **bold, italics, and underlining** for emphasis
- ➢ Use font size **11 or 12** for your resume. You may use a font as small as 10, especially when you need to fit a lengthy history onto two pages. A font style such as Times New Roman or Arial is easy to read.
- ➢ Use a **blank Microsoft Word doc** to start. Resume templates send the message that you can't format a document on your own, and they can limit what you choose to include or update.

- ➢ Use **bullets** instead of writing in paragraphs. Bullets help your reader skim more quickly and guide them through the page.
- ➢ Be **consistent with format**. Use the same spacing font size, placement of headers, etc.
- ➢ Leave some **white space**. One-inch margins are standard. White space not only gives your reader's eyes a break, but it also leaves room to make notes.
- ➢ Make headers larger than body text. Use them to organize your content and make it easier to find **relevant information.**

Resume Space Allocation

- Name and contact info: 5%
- Education: 10-15%
- Relevant experience and/or skills: 75%
- Other (objective, activities, awards, memberships, computer skills, interests, etc.): 5-10%

✔️ Top 10 things to avoid

- ➢ Spelling **errors**, typos, and poor grammar.
- ➢ **Too duty-oriented**, reads like a job description and fails to explain the job seeker's accomplishments
- ➢ **Dates not included**, or inaccurate dates.
- ➢ No or incorrect **contact information** or unprofessional email addresses.

- ➢ Poor **formatting**, boxes, templates, tables, header/footer, etc.
- ➢ Do not include "References furnished upon request".
- ➢ Overly **long resumes** (keep it to one or two pages).
- ➢ Long paragraphs.
- ➢ **Unqualified candidates** (don't apply for positions you aren't qualified for!).
- ➢ **Personal information** not relative to the job (age, height, etc.)

Different Types of Resumes

- Chronological Resume
- Functional Resume
- Combination Resume
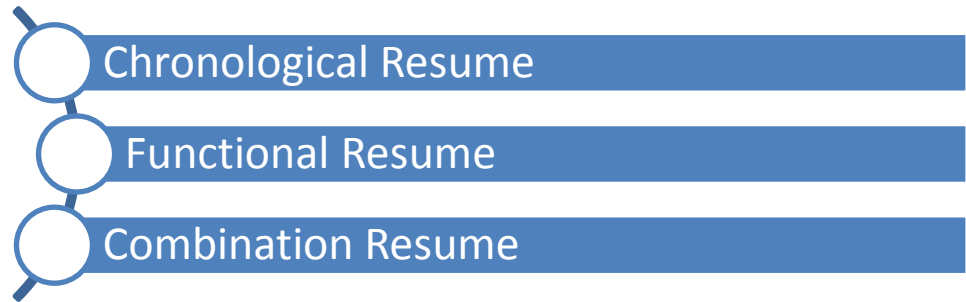
Chronological Resume:
This is a **summary of your work experience**, lists your past jobs in date order, with the most recent job first. It organizes your professional experience around past positions and employers. It includes:

- Name of the organization
- Location (city and state)
- Dates of employment
- Job responsibilities
- Duties and accomplishments in terms of benefits to the employer

For **each job you list**, include between 3 to 5 major duties and begin each bulleted sentence with an **action verb**.

The **chronological resume** is preferred by employers and should be used if you:

- Have a history of employment that shows stability
- You have been working in the same field for an extended time
- You have had a steady upward progression of titles and levels of responsibility

The **disadvantage** of using a chronological resume is that this format places emphasis on employment gaps. In addition, this style has no flexibility in presenting your transferable skills when you are changing careers or when related work experience is minimal.

Functional Resume:

This format **rearranges your employment history into sections** which highlight your skills and accomplishments. It allows you to emphasize your skills and eliminates the tendency to repeat similar experiences. It is a summary of your work experience organized around skills areas. **Skill areas** are used as section headings. Limit your skills headings to no more than 3 to 5 and use only skill headings that **support your objective**. Examples include:

- Accounting and Budgeting
- Advertising and Marketing
- Counseling and Advising
- Management and Coordination
- Supervision
- Teaching

Under **each skill area**, list the duties and specific job tasks performed and any accomplishments which demonstrate your proficiency. **Bullet** each duty, job task, and accomplishment and begin each bulleted sentence with an **action verb**.

We recommend that you use a **functional resume** if:

- You are changing careers
- Have noticeable gaps in your employment history
- You don't have a great deal of experience related to the position you seek

Combination Resume:

This resume **combines the skills section** of the **functional** resume and the **employment history** of the **chronological** resume. The employment history is a **short summary** of your past employers, their name, location and your job title. If you have a solid work history, include the dates of employment as well. **Employment history** follows immediately after the skills section.

We recommend that **career changers** with a solid work history use a **combination resume**, which allows you to take the best parts of **both functional and chronological formats** and helps to position yourself in as positive a light as possible.

Internships should be considered **work experience** and placed in the work experience section of the resume; however, you must indicate that it is an internship.

Creating Your Resume

To make **customizing your resume** each time easier, start by making a "master resume" that includes everything. This document may be several pages (since it's just for you, it's OK). You can use this inventory to create customized resumes for **each position** you are applying for.

The **heading**, or sections that comprise the resume, outline the job seekers professional capabilities and qualifications to perform a job. The resume is a **marketing tool** and its purpose is to secure a job interview. The headings you decide to include in your resume must be chosen carefully.

Some headings are standard and employers expect to see them when they review a resume. The required headings include your **contact information, work experience, education and training**.

Contact Information (required)
Each resume **must begin** with your name and contact information, including: address, email address, and phone number. Make sure your email address is professional, and that your voicemail is in working order and brief.

Objective or Professional Profile (optional, but highly recommended)
Appears **right after** the contact information section. The objective lets the reader know which position you are applying for. The **professional profile** is an alternative or addition to the job objective. It is a **summary statement** of your major strengths and qualifications and is usually between 3 to 5 sentences long.

Example of an **Objective** is:

- Seeking a full-time position as an Executive Assistant
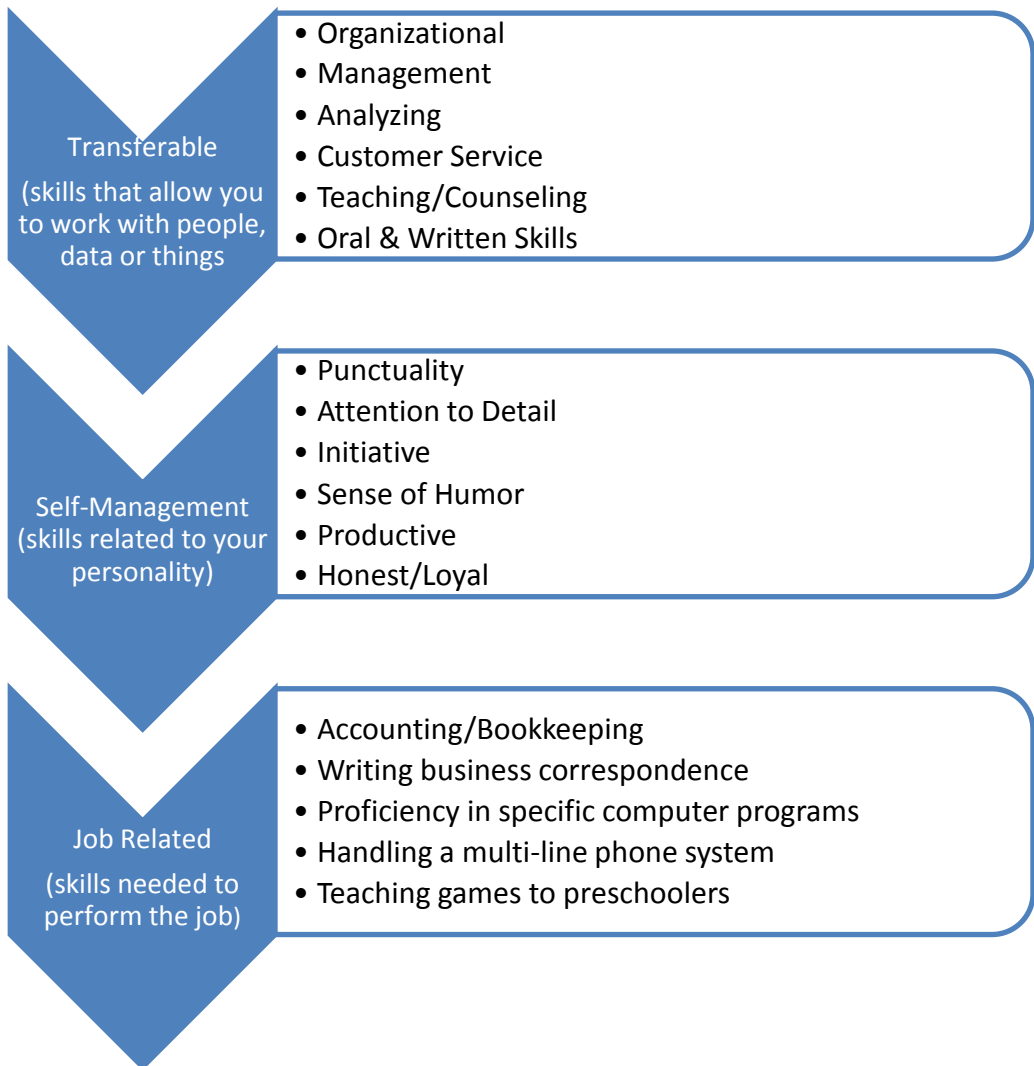- Customer Service Representative

Examples of a **Profile** are:

- A highly organized and detail-oriented Executive Assistant with over five years experience providing skillful administrative support for senior executives.
- Four years of Customer Service experience. Recognized by management for the ability to handle difficult customers. Consistently received excellent feedback from patrons.

Highlights of Qualifications/Areas of Expertise/Skills Summary (optional)
This section allows you to highlight your **most marketable achievements** and skills. The best way to write this section is to consult the **job description** for which you are applying. Remember, each resume must be **customized**. What have you accomplished that matches the employer's needs? What successes have you had that prove your qualifications? You can highlight three basic skill areas: transferable, self-management, and job related skills.

Transferable
(skills that allow you to work with people, data or things)

- Organizational
- Management
- Analyzing
- Customer Service
- Teaching/Counseling
- Oral & Written Skills

Self-Management
(skills related to your personality)

- Punctuality
- Attention to Detail
- Initiative
- Sense of Humor
- Productive
- Honest/Loyal

Job Related
(skills needed to perform the job)

- Accounting/Bookkeeping
- Writing business correspondence
- Proficiency in specific computer programs
- Handling a multi-line phone system
- Teaching games to preschoolers

Examples of Highlights of Qualifications

Executive Assistant
- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access)
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Work cooperatively with a wide range of personalities.
- Improved work flow in fast-paced, intense environment.

Customer Service
- Highly reliable self-starter; can be counted on to complete assignments on time.
- Proven ability to gain customer's confidence and trust.
- Trusted to train and supervise new team members.

Education (required)
- Highlight your **most recent degree**, and the colleges or trade schools you attended; put in reverse chronology (most recent first).
- List any awards, Dean's list, or school projects that pertain to your **career objective**.
- If you do not have a college education, mention your high school and diploma.
- For recent college graduates, under education, include a section entitled **Related Course Work** or **Course Work In Progress**. List exact course titles here. This gives greater credibility to your qualifications.

Experience (required)

Chronological Resume
- A list of employers, starting with your **most recent first**.
- List employer's names, addresses, and dates of employment and job titles.
- Job titles are written in bold face. Listed under each job title is a **short description** of the tasks and accomplishments you performed for each employer. Begin with an **action verb**. Use same verb tense for each verb. Use bullets.

Functional Resume
- Organized around **skills sets** and not formatted around the employer and dates of employment.
- Your **general skill** areas are used as section headings (computer skills, customer service, etc.)
- Under each skill area list those **specific job tasks** and accomplishments that demonstrate your proficiency in that skills area. Begin with a verb. Use same verb tense. Use bullets.

Optional Headings
- Volunteer Work
- Honors and Awards
- Memberships/Affiliations

Use Action Verbs

The action verbs listed here are organized by skill areas to help you think about how your past experiences can apply to skill sets employers seek. Of course, many of these verbs apply to multiple skill areas – use all categories to get ideas for how you might describe your own skills and experience in your resume, cover letter, portfolio, interview, and other interactions.

Analysis

Analyzed	Estimated	Rated
Ascertained	Evaluated	Recommended
Assessed	Examined	Researched
Compared	Forecasted	Scrutinized
Computed	Formulated	Studied
Conceptualized	Integrated	Substantiated
Concluded	Investigated	Synthesized
Confirmed	Justified	Validated
Critiqued	Measured	Verified
Deciphered	Negotiated	
Deliberated	Prescribed	
Determined	Prioritized	
Devised	Projected	
Diagnosed	Questioned	

Teamwork

Brainstormed
Constructed
Designed
Engineered
Envisioned
Fabricated
Illustrated
Produced
Shaped
Visualized

Flexibility

Accommodated
Adapted
Adjusted
Altered
Amended
Balanced
Converted
Grew
Improvised
Tailored

Initiative

Accelerated	Dedicated	Innovative	Pioneered
Accomplished	Demonstrated	Inspired	Revamped
Achieved	Enriched	Introduced	Revised
Acquired	Established	Launched	Spearheaded
Advanced	Expanded	Minimized	Stimulated
Bolstered	Expedited	Mobilized	Suggested
Boosted	Implemented	Modernized	Updated
Built	Improved	Modified	Upgraded
Coordinated	Increased	Multiplied	
Created	Initiated	Overhauled	

Organization

Arranged	Compiled	Processed
Assembled	Consolidated	Purchased
Budgeted	Correlated	Recorded
Calculated	Indexed	Regulated
Catalogued	Linked	Scheduled
Centralized	Orchestrated	Systematized
Charted	Organized	Tabulated
Classified	Oriented	
Collected	Planned	

Problem Solving

Aided	Finalized	Refined	Revived
Alleviated	Fulfilled	Reformed	Settled
Ameliorated	Generated	Rehabilitated	Solicited
Augmented	Identified	Reinforced	Solved
Counseled	Interceded	Rejuvenated	Streamlined
Customized	Invented	Relieved	Strengthened
Debugged	Lightened	Remedied	Supplemented
Eased	Polished	Remodeled	Transformed
Elevated	Procured	Repaired	
Enlarged	Reconciled	Restored	
Extended	Rectified	Retrieved	
Extracted	Reduced	Revitalized	

…And More!

Acted	Committed	Figured	Programmed	Sought
Activated	Consented	Guaranteed	Realized	Specified
Added	Contracted	Indicated	Related	Submitted
Admitted	Disbursed	Instituted	Reserved	Surveyed
Apportioned	Dispatched	Involved	Reviewed	Sustained
Appraised	Displayed	Issued	Satisfied	Traced
Approximated	Enlisted	Licensed	Screened	Transacted
Attained	Excelled	Maintained	Secured	Transmitted
Audited	Executed	Operated	Served	Valued
Certified	Exercised	Performed	Set	
Commissioned	Familiarized	Prepared	Smoothed	

Creativity

Acted	Established	Originated
Authorized	Fashioned	Performed
Chose	Founded	Planned
Conceived	Formulated	Prepared
Conceptualized	Illustrated	Produced
Created	Improved	Proposed
Customized	Initiated	Resolved
Decided	Instituted	Revitalized
Designed	Integrated	Selected
Determined	Introduced	Set up
Developed	Invented	Shaped
Devised	Launched	Structured
Directed	Marketed	Wrote
Enhanced	Opened	
Enlisted	Ordered	

Clerical & Research

Approved	Inspected
Arranged	Interpreted
Automated	Interviewed
Budgeted	Investigated
Calculated	Monitored
Catalogued	Operated
Classified	Organized
Collected	Prepared
Compared	Processed
Compiled	Purchased
Completed	Recorded
Computed	Retrieved
Critiqued	Reviewed
Decreased	Scheduled
Diagnosed	Screened
Dispatched	Specified
Distributed	Summarized
Evaluated	Surveyed
Examined	Systematized
Executed	Tabulated
Generated	Validated
Identified	Verified
Implemented	

Human Resources

Advised	Educated	Motivated
Assessed	Employed	Negotiated
Assisted	Grouped	Recruited
Clarified	Guided	Represented
Coached	Handled	Sponsored
Collaborated	Hired	Strengthened
Consulted	Integrated	Trained
Counseled	Mediated	
Diagnosed	Monitored	

Financial

Administrated
Allocated
Analyzed
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Developed
Forecasted
Managed
Marketed
Planned
Projected
Researched
Tabulated

Teaching

Adapted	Facilitated
Advised	Guided
Clarified	Influenced
Coached	Informed
Communicated	Instructed
Coordinated	Interpreted
Demystified	Lectured
Developed	Persuaded
Enabled	Set goals
Encouraged	Stimulated
Evaluated	Trained
Explained	

Technical

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

Communication

Addressed	Explained	Promoted
Arbitrated	Formulated	Publicized
Arranged	Influenced	Reconciled
Authored	Interpreted	Recruited
Collaborated	Interviewed	Represented
Consulted	Investigated	Sold
Contacted	Lectured	Spoke
Convinced	Mediated	Taught
Corresponded	Moderated	Trained
Developed	Negotiated	Translated
Directed	Participated	Wrote
Drafted	Persuaded	
Edited	Presented	
Enlisted	Presided	

Management & Leadership

Accelerated	Exceeded	Oversaw
Administered	Executed	Performed
Analyzed	Expanded	Planned
Applied	Guided	Prioritized
Assigned	Headed	Produced
Attained	Implemented	Proposed
Authorized	Improved	Recommended
Chaired	Incorporated	Reduced
Consolidated	Increased	Reinforced
Contracted	Initiated	Repositioned
Controlled	Instituted	Retained
Coordinated	Investigated	Reviewed
Delegated	Launched	Revised
Developed	Maintained	Scheduled
Directed	Managed	Sorted
Evaluated	Mediated	Strengthened
Enacted	Negotiated	Supervised
Established	Organized	

Success Words

Accomplished	Rectified
Awarded	Single-handedly
Corrected	Solved
Diverted	Strengthened
Eliminated	Surpassed
Expanded	Turned around
Generated	Was promoted to
Identified	Was responsible for
Improved	
Masterminded	
Pioneered	