

HOW TO WRITE A RESUME

A résumé is one of the most important tools to assist you in getting an interview for a job. It brings together your education, work experience, interests, and skills into one comprehensive but brief outline for the employer to read. A résumé should be a good reflection of who you are, since it is the first impression a potential employer has of you, so take your time when preparing your résumé.

Writing a résumé can be a confusing and long process, but with the right guidelines you can create a résumé that does what it is made to do: catch an employer's eye. It is important to think of your résumé as your own personal sales pitch. Ask yourself, "Why should he/she hire me?" When you write your résumé keep in mind all of your experiences, education, and qualifications. Here are a few guidelines we hope will assist you in that process:

Basic Elements of a Resume

Choose the headings that best reflect your experience. Your headings do not have to come directly from this list, as it is not comprehensive.

- HEADING
- OBJECTIVE (optional)
- EDUCATION
- EXPERIENCE
- HONORS AND AWARDS
- SKILLS /HIGHLIGHTS
- REFERENCES (on a separate page)

HEADING: This section of a résumé is one of the most important. It should include your name, address, email address and phone number. Make sure to let your name **STAND OUT** by using bold and enlarging the font size of your name. Use a professional email address (i.e. do not use crzychick@aol.com, starwarsfan@hotmail.com, etc.)

OBJECTIVE: The objective is a one-sentence declaration of the type of job that you are seeking. It appears beneath the heading and is as specific as possible, noting the company you are applying to, the job title you are seeking and skills you would like to use in that job. This should only be included if you can be specific about the position you are seeking. Otherwise, omit it.

EDUCATION: This section of a résumé lists all the colleges you have graduated from, along with their addresses and any degrees you have earned with the date you attained them. If you are in the process of attaining a degree, list the expected date that you will receive it. Do not list your high school unless it is of importance to the employer that you are applying to (i.e. applying to be a teacher at the same high school you graduated from).

EXPERIENCE: An experience section on a résumé can refer to paid or unpaid jobs and should include your job title, the name of your employer, city and state, followed by dates of employment. Next, summarize your contribution to the position, achievements, and/or responsibility assumed. Give numbers when applicable. Make sure to use action verbs to begin your statements (*see the action verb list in this booklet*). Use a present verb tense only when describing a current position. This should not be a job description, but instead should illustrate your accomplishments and results.

HONORS & AWARDS: This is an *optional* section of your résumé and should include scholarships and other related honors. These can be school or non-school related. Make sure to include the date you received the honor or award. For clarification it may be necessary to give short descriptions of the nature or purpose of some of the organizations, awards, honor societies or service organizations. *Only include scholarships that are based on merit, not financial need.*

SKILLS/HIGHLIGHTS : In this section you should inform the reader of any unique, relevant or necessary skills that you have but are not reflected in the other sections of your résumé. For example: foreign languages (conversational, fluent, and bilingual), computer applications, certifications, etc.

REFERENCES: This section should be on a separate sheet of paper that matches the font/format of your resume and cover letter. The heading on this page should also match your resume. You should always secure the permission of anyone you choose to use as a reference before giving his/her name.

Good references might include professors, advisors or employers. Never use relatives for references. Give a copy of your resume to these references so they can speak highly of you when your potential employers speak with them. Employers might ask your references questions such as: “How reliable was this individual?” “what was it like to work with this individual?”, and “What kind of contributions did this individual make in his/her job?” Be sure to list your references in order of how well they know your qualifications and include their name, title, company, city, state, zip, phone, and email address if appropriate.

TYPES OF RESUMES

CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME: The chronological resume lists your work experience from the most recent backwards. This is the simplest of resumes, and it is a useful format if used properly. This resume format is preferred by most employers and works best when you’ve had a long, steady work history and promotions that you want to showcase.

FUNCTIONAL RESUME: The functional resume is arranged around your skills and abilities. For example, if you are strong in communication skills, under that major heading you would list variety of supportive experiences from different jobs, school or volunteer situations. This format is sometimes used by those with little or no work experience, or those who are career changers.

COMBINATION RESUME: The combination resume combines elements of chronological and functional resume to improve the clarity or presentation of a resume. For example, if you have a good work history that supports your current job objective, you could start with a skills section that supports the skills needed in the job you want, then include a shorter work experience.

RESUME LANGUAGE, FORMATTING, AND TIPS

Resume language is distinct in that it utilizes action verbs and is very direct. Remember, you are trying to communicate all your best selling attributes in a small space. Use powerful words to try and accurately reflect the assets that you would bring to a job. When formatting, remember there is no one absolute format. Create a format that best represents you. A few formatting rules apply:

- Margins can be as small as .5 inches
- Font can be 10pt if necessary
- You should always include a cover letter with your resume
- Do not use the word “I”
- Use few abbreviations
- Do use capitalization to highlight job titles
- Do use bullet points to emphasize job descriptions
- Always use action verbs in job description

11 SIGNS OF A GREAT RESUME

- 1. TARGETED:** Employers want to know exactly what you can do for them. Whenever possible, target each resume to each job. Vague and general resumes that cover many possible job options will not get noticed. While you may qualify for several different positions, it is better to create a different resume for each job and incorporate only the information pertinent to that job description. This will alleviate the tendency to crowd your resume with too much non-related information.
- 2. CONSISTENT:** This is important when sending a paper version of your resume to employers. The look of your resume should be eye catching, not distracting. Be consistent with spacing and margins, allow for lots of white space and borders, and emphasize your important points with font and text styles such as: italics, capitals, underlining, boldface, indentation, and bullets.
- 3. WELL WRITTEN:** Descriptive action verbs-such as *established, implemented, created, and streamlined*- add power to your sentences. It is crucial to start each sentence with an action verb (refer to the list of cluster works.)
- 4. CONCISE:** Employers scan resumes and decide in less than 30 seconds if they want to look more closely at what you offer. Edit with care and delete information that isn't relevant. If you are submitting a paper version, one-page resumes work best.
- 5. SUMMARIZED QUALIFICATIONS:** This is one of the most important parts of your resume. The "Job Objective" or "Summary of Qualifications" section powerfully illustrates your top selling points. This is an ideal way to get noticed-fast.
- 6. SELF-PROMOTING:** Make sure to show your accomplishments, skills, and abilities. Employers want to see proof that you can do the job. Be sure to demonstrate the result of your experience and how others benefited from these results. You can effectively achieve this by including evidence of your productivity by noting any cost or time savings, and mentioning innovations, changes, or actions that show you produced results.
- 7. ACCURATE:** List your skills, qualifications, and experiences in as positive a manner as possible-but do not exaggerate or misstate the truth. Be sure your job responsibilities are adequately described by your job title, and indicate the true level of your abilities. Exaggerating your skills will not do you any good!
- 8. .ABBREVIATION FREE:** Avoid abbreviated words on your resume. It looks sloppy and many abbreviations are not universally accepted.
- 9 .NO PERSONAL INFORMATION:** Including any personal data such as age or height, is seen as unprofessional. Employers must be careful not to violate any discrimination laws, and most organizations prefer that you don't include it.
- 10 .GRAMATICALLY CORRECT:** Review your resume and have someone else read your resume as well. This is the single most important thing you can do once you have written your resume. Mistakes of any kind are extremely annoying to employers and also the fastest way to get your resume into the rejection pile. Spelling mistakes and typos suggest the poor quality of work they can expect from you.
- 11. GOOD PAPER:** If you are submitting a paper version of your resume, use a computer and print it with a laser printer to give it a sharp, professional look. Conservative white, light tan, or light gray are generally acceptable colors. Dark or creative colors are acceptable only for artistic resumes (i.e. graphic design areas). Also, never send out a resume that is obviously a copy

CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME-SAMPLE

Matthew Taylor

2912 Hawthorne Place Corona, Ca (965) 564-8975

mathewtaylor@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Norco College-Riverside Community College District

Norco, Ca

Major Preparation

Riverside Community College

Riverside, Ca

Associates of Arts: Social & Behavioral Sciences

2007

Norco High School

Norco, Ca

High School Diploma

2005

EXPERIENCE

CVS Pharmacy

Corona, Ca

Store Manager

January 2009 - Present

- Train and manage up to 20 probationary employees and achieved significant improvements in their productivity
- Train employees for cashier duties which include: cash, check and credit card transactions
- Supervise 50 employees, scheduled work hours, resolved conflicts, and determined salaries
- Provide customer service on a daily basis
- File, answer phones, and provide various office duties as needed
- Structure and implement professional growth and awareness workshops to employees

Edna's Cafe

Riverside, Ca

Cashier

October 2004 - October 2008

- Informed customers of daily specials.
- Explained how various menu items were prepared, describing ingredients and cooking methods
- Stocked service areas with supplies such as coffee, food, tableware, and linens
- Performed food preparation duties such as preparing salads, appetizers, and cold dishes, portioning desserts, and brewing coffee
- Filled salt, pepper, sugar, cream, condiment, and napkin containers
- Escorted customers to their tables
- Described and recommended menu items to customers

HIGHLIGHTS

- Work well in a high pressure environment
- Strong background in all phases of conflict resolution
- Self-starting, goal-oriented strategist whose confidence, perseverance and vision promote success
- MAC and PC literate
- Proficient in MS Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint and Publisher

FUNCTIONAL RESUME-SAMPLE

NANCY ROSE

4589 Mine Road Corona, CA 95876 (951) 555-2198

nancy.rose@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Norco College-Riverside Community College District
Associate of Arts: Social & Behavioral Sciences

Norco, Ca
2007

Corona High School
High School Diploma

Corona, Ca
2005

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

New Church
Office Aide

Norco, Ca
January 2008 to Present

- Answer telephones, directed calls and took messages.
- Compile, copy, sort and file records of business transactions
- Complete inventory, order material and maintain supplies
- Assist in the planning and coordination of church events

Norco College ASNC
Office Aid

Norco, Ca
August 2006 to Present

- Assist in Student Government events on and off campus
- Prepare agenda items for club meetings
- Compile information packets, fliers and brochures
- Complete various office duties as needed
- Provide students with information and assistance on a daily basis

SKILLS

- Work well in a high pressure environment.
- Trained in all areas of data entry
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Applications: Word, Excel, Access, Publisher and PowerPoint
- Extensive experience in customer service.
- Self-motivated, organized and efficient

QUALIFICATIONS

- Skilled at encouraging others and developing rapport.
- Quickly learn procedures and methods.
- Enjoy working with people.
- Dependable - can work without supervision.
- Computer literate - can quickly learn new software.

CERTIFICATES

- Operations & Production Management Certificate
- Office Assistant Certificate

Ethan R. Williams

7658 North Leland, Oceanside, CA 90786

erwilliams@unet.com

Phone: 879.457.3290

Date

Mr./Ms. Recruiter's Name

Recruiter's Title

Company Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

The opening paragraph should state why you are willing and how you became attracted to this particular company and position. Mention specific characteristics of the company that have impressed you. Name the position for which you are applying. If you were referred, mention the source from which you learned of the opening.

In the middle paragraph, draw attention to your qualifications and /or experiences that are relevant to the potential employer. If you have held a particular job or worked on special projects that directly relate to the opening, highlight this experience. Convince your reader that this valuable experience makes you right for the job. Do not repeat the content of your resume, but fill in the blanks your resume leaves open. If you have qualifications that are not noted on your resume, this is an ideal opportunity to discuss them.

The closing paragraph indicated your desire for a personal interview. Repeat your phone number in the letter and offer any assistance to help with a speedy response. You may also ask if the company will be recruiting in your area or if they desire additional information or references. It is also a good idea to follow up each resume and cover letter with a phone call. If you plan to do this, state in the paragraph when you will be calling the company. This closing paragraph should only be a couple of sentences and be assertive in getting you an interview.

Sincerely,

(Your Signature Here)

YourName Typed

REFERENCE SHEET-SAMPLE

Ethan R. Williams

7658 North Leland, Oceanside, CA 90786

erwilliams@unet.com

Phone: 879.457.3290

References

Name of Personal Reference

Job Title of Reference

Employer/ Company

Employer City, State, and Zip

Reference E-mail Address

[(123) 123-4567 Reference Phone Number]

Dr. Leo Marvin

Psychology Department Head

ABC Collage

City, State Zip

leomarvin@abccollege.com

(123) 333-3333

Dr. Sandra Martinez

President and CEO

XYZ Corporation

City, State Zip

ceo@xyz.org

(789) 999-9998

Mr. Aaron Randally

Professor

Computer Information Systems

Hood University

City, State Zip

professor@randomschool.edu

(818)246-2468

SAMPLES OF ACTION VERBS THAT DESCRIBE YOUR FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Abstracted	Complied	Enlisted	Influenced	Overcame	Scanned
Achieved	Composed	Ensured	Initiated	Oversaw	Scheduled
Acquired	Computed	Established	Inspected	Participated	Schemed
Acted	Conceived	Estimated	Instituted	Perceived	Screened
Adapted	Conducted	Evaluated	Integrated	Performed	Set Goals
Addressed	Conserved	Examined	Interpreted	Performed	Shaped
Advised	Consulted	Exceeded	Interviewed	Persuaded	Skilled
Advocated	Contributed	Excelled	Introduced	Planned	Solicited
Aided	Contracted	Expanded	Invented	Practiced	Solved
Answered	Converted	Expedited	Inventoried	Prepared	Specialized
Anticipated	Coordinated	Experimented	Investigated	Presented	Spoke
Applied	Copied	Explained	Judged	Prioritized	Stimulated
Approved	Correlated	Explored	Kept	Produced	Strategized
Arranged	Counseled	Expressed	Launched	Programmed	Streamlined
Ascertained	Created	Extracted	Learned	Projected	Strengthened
Assembled	Critiqued	Facilitated	Lectured	Promoted	Stressed
Assessed	Cultivated	Fashioned	Led	Proposed	Studied
Assisted	Dealt	Financed	Lifted	Protected	Substantiated
Attained	Debated	Fixed	Listened	Proved	Succeeded
Audited	Defined	Followed	Located	Provided	Summarized
Augmented	Delivered	Formulated	Logged	Publicized	Synthesized
Authored	Designed	Fostered	Made	Published	Supervised
Bolstered	Detected	Founded	Maintained	Queried	Supported
Briefed	Determined	Gained	Managed	Questioned	Surveyed
Brought	Developed	Gathered	Mapped	Raised	Sustained
Budgeted	Devised	Gave	Maximized	Ran	Symbolized
Built	Diagnosed	Generated	Mediated	Ranked	Tabulated
Calculated	Directed	Governed	Memorized	Rationalized	Talked
Cared	Discovered	Guided	Mentored	Read	Taught
Charged	Discriminated	Handled	Met	Reasoned	Theorized
Chartered	Dispatched	Headed	Minimized	Recorded	Trained
Checked	Displayed	Helped	Modeled	Received	Translated
Clarified	Dissected	Identified	Modified	Reduced	Upgraded
Classified	Documented	Illustrated	Monitored	Referred	Utilized
Coached	Drafted	Imagined	Narrated	Related	Validated
Collaborated	Drove	Implemented	Observed	Relied	Verified
Collected	Edited	Improved	Obtained	Reported	Visualized
Comforted	Eliminated	Improvised	Offered	Researched	Won
Communicated	Empathized	Inaugurated	Operated	Responded	Wrote
Compared	Enabled	Increased	Ordered	Resorted	
Completed	Enforced	Indexed	Organized	Revamped	
	Enlightened	Indicated	Originated	Reviewed	

EXAMPLES OF ADAPTIVE SKILL WORDS THAT DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL TRAITS

Active	Creative	Enterprising	Instrumental	Poised	Sensitive
Adaptable	Dedicated	Enthusiastic	Keen	Positive	Sharp
Adept	Dependable	Exceptional	Logical	Practical	Sincere
Aggressive	Determined	Experienced	Loyal	Productive	Strong
Analytical	Diligent	Fair	Mature	Receptive	Successful
Assertive	Diplomatic	Familiar	Methodical	Reliable	Tactful
Broad-Minded	Disciplined	Firm	Objective	Resilient	Tenacious
Committed	Discreet	Forceful	Open Minded	Resourceful	Well-Organized
Competent	Effective	Honest	Outgoing	Self-Confident	
Conscientious	Efficient	Independent	Personable	Self-Motivated	
Cooperative	Energetic	Innovative	Pleasant	Self-Reliant	

CLUSTERING YOUR SKILLS

MANAGEMENT:	COMMUNICATION:	RESEARCH:	CREATIVE SKILLS:	DETAIL SKILLS:
Developed Planned Organized Executed Supervised Scheduled Assigned Directed Coordinated Analyzed Prioritized Delegated Hired Fired Recommended Trained Trouble-Shot Evaluated Led Administered Contracted Controlled Reviewed Problem Solved	Influenced Persuaded Helped Directed Reasoned Sold Developed Recruited Negotiated Medicated Arbitrated Reconciled Merged Wrote Interpreted Listened Enlisted Read Spoke Presented Arranged Marketed Obtained	Recognized Problems Clarified Surveyed Interviewed Investigated Inspected Gathered Synthesized Analyzed Examined Diagnosed Reviewed Organized Evaluated Critiqued Perceived Collected Wrote Tabulated Consulted Interpreted Conceptualized Extrapolated Decided	Innovated Developed Imagined Conceptualized Designed Planned Synthesized Integrated Abstracted Generated Perceived Memorized Discriminated Intuited Visualized Fashioned Shaped Directed Choreographed Performed Acted Played Originate	Validated Retained Checked Executed Dispatched Followed Through Implemented Enforced Met Deadlines Arranged Managed Time Collected Condensed Compiled Purchased Systematized Tabulated Organized Classified Collated Retrieved Recorded Processed Compared

TEACHING SKILLS:	MANUAL SKILLS:	HELPING:	FINANCIAL:
Influenced Motivated Briefed Lectured Managed Motivated Communicated Advised Presented Guided Coached Tutored Instructed Enlightened Stimulated Developed Curriculum Adapted Facilitated Clarified Initiated Set Goals Developed Explained Invented	Operated Tended Controlled Assembled Maintained Cultivated Built Constructed Moved Shipped Improved Handled Restructured Created Adjusted Planned Arranged	Related Empathized Guided Supported Serviced Referred Attended Counseled Cared Used Sensitivity Listened Perceived Understood Acted with Team Mentored Advised Used Intuition	Calculated Computed Planned Analyzed Managed Budgeted Kept Books Kept Records Audited Appraised Research Worked with Details Allocated Administered Developed Prepared Solved

TOP TEN PITFALLS IN RESUME WRITING

1. **TOO LONG:** most new graduates should restrict resumes to one page. If you have trouble condensing, get help from the Career, Transfer & Job Placement Center (CTJPC).
2. **TYPOGRAPHICAL, GRAMMATICAL OR SPELLING ERRORS:** These errors suggest carelessness. Have at least two others proofread your resume before submitting. Do not rely on spell or grammar checkers on your computer alone.
3. **HARD TO READ:** A poorly typed or copied resume looks unprofessional. Use a plain font (Times Roman, Helvetica, etc.), and a point size no smaller than a 10 (11 in the body of your resume). Asterisks, bullets, underlining, bold and italics should only be used to make the document easier to read.
4. **TOO VERBOSE:** Using too many words to say too little. Do not use complete sentences or paragraphs. Say as much as possible with few words as possible (this is where the action words come in handy!). Be careful in your use of jargon and avoid slang.
5. **TOO SPARSE:** Give more than the bare essentials, especially when describing related work experience, skills, accomplishments, activities and club memberships that will give employers desired information.
6. **IRRELEVANT INFORMATION;** Customize each resume to each position you see (when possible). Of course, include all education and work experience, but emphasize only relevant experience, skills and accomplishments. Do not include: marital status, age, sex, children, height, church memberships, etc.
7. **OBVIOUSLY GENERIC:** Too many resumes scream “I need a job-any job!” The employer needs to feel that you are interested in that position with that company.
8. **TOO SNAZZY:** Of course, use good quality paper, but avoid colored or pre decorated paper. Become familiar with converting your resume from word to pdf files, as companies are requesting resumes via email.
9. **BORING:** Make your resume as dynamic as possible. Begin every statement with an action verb. Use active verbs, describing what you accomplished on the job. Don’t write what someone else told you to do; write what you did. Take advantage of your rich vocabulary and avoid repeating words, especially the first word in a section.
10. **TOO MODEST:** The resume showcases your qualifications in competition with the other applications. Put your best foot forward without misrepresentation, falsification or arrogance.

ONE MORE THING;

*Your resume should never travel alone!
When providing your information to a potential employer,
you should be providing them with: Cover Letter, Resume and Reference Sheet.
(In that order, paper clipped together)*