

Resume Writing Basics

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What is a resume?

A resume is a short account of one's career. The information you provide will include your education, training, work experience, training and skills. The resume will highlight your qualifications for a particular job.

What is the purpose of a resume?

The purpose of your resume is to show an employer that you are a strong candidate for a job with their company and ultimately is the tool that will secure an interview where you can further discuss the requirements of a position and your qualifications.

How does a resume accomplish this?

Your resume will open doors for you by highlighting your education, training, experience, skills and accomplishments.

Step One is to gather information.

1. Education: what schools have you attended, what are their complete addresses, what dates did you attend each school, what was your major area of study or degree program, did you graduate, and if you have not graduated, what is the status or current level of course completion.
2. Experience: List your employers in reverse order, with your most recent employer first. Indicate the full name, city and state of each employer including the dates you started and stopped working there. Bullet each responsibility you had at each company. If you held more than one position because, for example, you were promoted while you were there, indicate each position held and bullet the appropriate responsibilities under each position.
3. Skills (for example): Word, Excel, Internet, Bilingual (specifically indicate other languages you speak fluently)
4. Activities (Optional): List any volunteer or charity work you have done especially if it highlights skills meaningful to the position or field for which you are seeking employment. Listing clubs can be helpful, especially if you held office. Social groups may be helpful depending on what you want your resume to say about you. Achievements or awards can say a lot about who you are and what you are capable of.
5. References: On your resume under references you indicate Available on request. When you prepare your resume, also prepare a list of three personal and three professional references on a separate sheet of paper using the same header as that which is on your resume.

Step Two is to write your resume. Write it in outline form. Do not use fancy fonts, color paper or color ink. Be aware that resumes that are emailed are often times scanned by computer software, not read by a person. Therefore words or phrases of required skills must be appropriately used in your resume in order to be chosen by the software.

Step Three is to proofread, proofread, and then proofread. Spell check does not pick up grammar or spacing errors. If anything in your resume was there to attract a particular employer, the next time you send out your resume, confirm that it contains nothing inappropriate for the employer to you sending it to this time.