

## Resume Advice

- Proof carefully to ensure no spelling, grammar, punctuation, or typographical errors are in your resume.
- Know as much as possible about your defined audience and write the resume for your target.
- The resume must match your skills and abilities to a potential employer's needs. A resume must address your market value and quickly answer the question, "Why should I hire you?"
- Highlight features and benefits. What skills do you possess and how will they contribute to the goals and objectives of the targeted organization, individual or agency?
- Use the power of vocabulary to make your resume more interesting to read.
- Write the resume in third person and avoid using the pronoun I.
- The five major sections of a resume are 1) Heading, 2) Introduction, 3) Employment Section, 4) Education Section, and 5) Miscellaneous Sections.
- Miscellaneous sections can include Professional Memberships in Associations, Awards and Recognition, Computer Skills, Languages, Exhibitions, Reviews, Publications.
- Salary history or compensation requirements should not appear in the resume. Include in the cover letter if at all.
- A cover letter should always accompany your resume.
- The resume should be a positive document. It must tell the truth, but not necessarily the whole truth. Don't lie, but you need not tell all, either. Keep negative thoughts and concepts out of your resume.

## Resume Formats

There are several styles in which résumé information is formatted. These are: Targeted versus Inventory Styles, Chronological versus Functional Styles, and Combination Style.

A **Targeted Résumé** is used when you know the job title and industry that you are approaching for employment. It emphasizes skills, abilities, and qualifications for specific jobs.

An **Inventory Résumé** is used when you may be searching for multiple job titles or in multiple industries. It lists generally marketable skills and accomplishments.

A **Chronological Résumé** is the most frequently used format, and should be used if you have a stable, consistent work history and consistent professional growth with increasing responsibility. It lists the most recent or current employer first, and works back approximately 10 years, listing companies, dates, and responsibilities. For each position, give the title of your job, name of the organization you worked for, and years you worked there. Next relate the duties and accomplishments of that job. When describing your jobs, use action statements, not sentences. For example, instead of "I illustrated children's books." Write, "Illustrated children's books."

Three to five statements per job are usually enough. No job should have more than 4 lines of information under it.

A **Functional Résumé** is best for those who have employment gaps, are changing careers, have changed jobs frequently, or have not had positions that relate directly to the job they want. It lists skills, abilities, credentials, qualifications, and accomplishments without stating where they were acquired. It focuses more on achievements than on the sequence of employment or on where you were employed or learned your set of skills. It places the experience most relevant for the job you are seeking first, and employment dates and company names last. Identify 3 or 4 skills required for your target job. For each skill, identify 3 to 5 concrete examples to demonstrate that ability. Again, use action phrases, not complete sentences, when writing your list. Arrange your skill headings in order of importance. If you have a vacancy announcement, match the arrangement of skills to those listed in the announcement. The last part of the résumé is a brief work history. Write only job titles, company names, and employment years. If you have work history gaps, you could fill them by adding volunteer work, community activities, or family responsibilities to your job list.

A **Combination Résumés** may be as varied as the histories they summarize. One variation begins with a chronological format, but then subdivides each job description into skill categories. Another variation uses a functional format but, for each example skill, identifies the organization where the skill occurred. It is best for students, new graduates, or someone with a steady work history and consistent growth in responsibility. These résumés may be as varied as the histories they summarize.

## Style, Design, & Accuracy

A résumé should be easy to read, clear, and create a professional impression. Although for many artists it is tempting to be as creative with a résumé as with their artistic endeavors, you should be very selective in varying from the standard formats. Though some “creatives” may appreciate your efforts, those who are screening résumés such as Human Resource Managers and even Art Directors may not, especially if it makes the résumé difficult to copy (i.e. using colored paper), read or scan quickly (odd formatting or type smaller than 10 point) or send by email (electronic submissions which use software or formatting different from that the company requests). Keep in mind design basics, using consistent fonts and other design elements throughout, balanced margins, and enough white space to assure the pages don't feel cramped. Unless you have a very long work history, your résumé should be no more than 2 pages. Be sure to proof read your résumé, and have someone else proof it as well. Be absolutely sure there are no grammar or spelling errors.

### Digital Résumés

To prepare a résumé that is most likely to fulfill requirements for digital online submission, open your existing résumé and save it as a pdf file. This will eliminate formatting codes. You can use the computer's built-in text editor application to edit the résumé. Your best bet would be to call or email to find out how they want it sent if they didn't already specify.

The success of a résumé posted on an online job search site depends on the number of **keywords** it contains and the number of times its' words match the keywords requested by an online employer. You may want to consider adding keywords to your résumé by researching a number of job descriptions that interest you. Assure that the skills you list in your résumé include the words used in the required skills section of the employment announcement, and that you also use the full names of professional organizations, required software applications, or common industry jargon words. In addition to adding keywords, you should consider subtracting personal information you do not wish to become public information. For instance, it is best to omit your home address, and the address of your current employer.

Many companies use computers to document and sort the hundreds of résumés they receive. They scan paper résumés into a database. When managers want to fill a position, they program the computer with keywords that describe the skills and qualifications they want in an applicant. The computer can then search the database for résumés that include these skills, and those with the most matches are forwarded to the manager. To make your résumé more “scan-friendly”, use white or off-white paper with black letters; use Arial, Helvetica, or Courier fonts; use font sizes 10-14 only; do not underline or italicize text; do not use asterisks or parentheses; do not use boxes, graphics, columnar formatting, or horizontal or vertical lines; put your full name on it's own line at the top of the page, and put telephone numbers on their own lines as well.