RESUME WRITING

Your resume is a summary of your qualifications for a specific type of work. It is the most important written tool in your job search because it creates the reader's first impression of you.

Here are important uses for your resume:

Generate interviews with employers

Enclose with applications, cover letters, and inquiries to employers

Give to professional and personal contacts, friends, relatives, classmates, alumni, and former employers who might be able to assist you

Provide as a courtesy and an aid to people who will act as your references

Organizing Your Resume

It is important to organize your resume in a manner that highlights your greatest strengths. Choose sections that showcase your qualifications. Order your sections with the most important or impressive information first. Pick a format that enables employers to visually scan the page and quickly gather the most critical information. Below is a list of categories that can be included on your resume depending on your objective, qualifications, and your experience.

Contact Information

Include your name, address, phone number, and your email address. Be sure to list an email address that you check on a regular basis.

Objective

An objective on your resume is optional, but it can be helpful if it concisely describes your immediate employment goal. Include the kind of job desired with a brief, specific description. Do not use full sentences. If you have two or more kinds of jobs that you are considering, or if your academic background is not closely related to your immediate goal, use the same resume with a different objective for each.

Examples:

☐ An entry-level management position in the hospitality industry

☐ A public relations position that utilizes my communication and sales skills

Qualifications Summary

The summary statement alerts the reader to your marketable skills and strengths. Use key words, industry-specific terms, and skills that convey, in a brief yet powerful statement, what you have to offer to an employer. You may include either an objective or a summary qualification section on your resume — not both.

Example: Highly motivated individual with excellent communication and organizational skills. Resourceful and flexible team member with ten years of experience in human services field.

Education

Identify your degree, area of study, name of educational institution, and graduation date or anticipated graduation date. You may include GPA (if 3.0 or better). Do not list high school you attended since your college information is most relevant.

Honors and Awards/Certifications/Special Skills

Be sure to list any honors or awards you have received, certifications you have earned (lifeguard, CPR, First Aid), or special skills you have learned, such as languages or computer programs.

Relevant Courses

List any courses that are pertinent to your objective and the employer's needs, particularly if your major or field doesn't relate directly to your immediate goal.

Experience

Consider all of your experiences:

- Full-time and part-time work during the summer, academic year, and school breaks
- Internships
- Volunteer work

List positions separately. Include your job title, name of the organization, locations (city and state), and dates you worked. Make sure the font is distinguishable. Next provide concise phrases that describe your most important and impressive responsibilities or accomplishments. Include any results-oriented statements.

Focus on skills. Start each phrase with an action verb (see list) instead of a subject — the subject is implied. This section does not need to include every position you have had. Typically, convey no more than the last 10 years of experience and your most relevant jobs.

Professional Skills

As you compete with other candidates, make a stronger impression by being able to present your relevant strengths. Choose a few qualities or strengths that are particular to you and include them.

Some Examples: Verbal communication, writing skills, teamwork, strong work ethic, flexible, adaptable, computer skills, interpersonal skills, motivation, initiative, analytical skills, honesty, integrity, detail-oriented.

Activities and Interests

Although not required, list in order of importance any activities or interests that might be helpful for an employer to know you better. Note any leadership roles you held.

- Student organizations, professional associations, community involvement, and committees
- Interests such as music, sports, or arts

References

References are people who have known you professionally, academically, or personally and can highly recommend you for a job. Supervisors, professors, and people from your community are common examples of good references. Avoid using family members — they tend to be biased!

Ask permission before listing anyone as a reference. When you give a list of references to a potential employer, contact each reference to let them know who you gave their name to and why. Be sure to give your recommender enough lead time to write a good letter or prepare for a call.

Do not include references on the resume. Create a separate page that includes the name, title, business address, phone number and email address of each of your 3-5 references. You can also collect letters of recommendation and provide them if the employer requests them.

Action Verb List for Resumes & Cover Letters

Management Skills
Administered
Analyzed
Assigned
Chaired
Consolidated
Contracted
Coordinated
Delegated
Developed
Directed
Evaluated
Executed
Organized
Oversaw
Planned
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Reorganized
Reviewed
Scheduled
Supervised

Communication Skills
Addressed
Arbitrated
Arranged
Authored
Co-authored
Collaborated
Corresponded
Developed
Directed
Drafted
Enlisted
Formulated
Influenced
Interpreted
Lectured
Mediated
Moderated
Negotiated
Persuaded
Promoted
Proposed
Publicized
Reconciled
Recruited

Spoke
Translated
Wrote

Research Skills
Clarified
Collected
Critiqued
Diagnosed
Evaluated
Examined
Extracted
Identified
Inspected
Inspired
Interpreted
Interviewed
Investigated
Organized
Reviewed
Summarized
Surveyed
Systemized

Technical Skills
Assembled
Built
Calculated
Computed
Designed
Devised
Engineered
Fabricated
Maintained
Operated
Pinpointed
Programmed
Remodeled
Repaired
Solved

Teaching Skills
Adapted
Advised
Clarified
Coached
Communicated
Conducted
Coordinated

Developed
Enabled
Encouraged
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Guided
Informed
Instructed
Lectured
Persuaded
Set goals
Stimulated
Taught
Trained

Financial Skills
Administered
Allocated
Analyzed
Appraised
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Developed
Managed
Planned
Projected
Researched

Creative Skills
Acted
Conceptualized
Created
Customized
Designed
Developed
Directed
Established
Fashioned
Illustrated
Instituted
Integrated
Performed
Planned
Proved
Revised

Revitalized
Set up
Shaped
Streamlined
Structured
Tabulated
Validated

Helping Skills
Assessed
Assisted
Clarified
Coached
Counseled
Demonstrated
Diagnosed
Educated
Facilitated
Familiarized
Guided
Inspired
Motivated
Participated
Provided
Referred
Rehabilitated
Reinforced
Represented
Supported
Taught
Trained
Verified

Clerical or Detail Skills
Approved
Arranged
Catalogued
Classified
Collected
Compiled
Dispatched
Executed
Filed
Generated
Implemented
Inspected
Monitored
Operated

Ordered
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Purchased
Recorded
Retrieved
Screened
Specified
Systematized

Stronger Verbs for Accomplishments
Accelerated
Achieved
Attained
Completed
Conceived
Convinced
Discovered
Doubled
Effected
Eliminated
Expanded
Expedited
Founded
Improved
Increased
Initiated
Innovated
Introduced
Invented
Launched
Mastered
Originated
Overcame
Overhauled
Pioneered
Reduced
Resolved
Revitalized
Spearheaded
Strengthened
Transformed
Upgraded

From To Boldly Go: Practical Career Advice for Scientists, *by Peter S. Fiske*

Resume Writing Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Stress your assets, highlight your qualifications, and make sure the employer gets to know what you have to offer.

- Keep your resume relevant and up to date.

- Make sure your resume is well-written. Have several different people proof read it.

- Be consistent in format, i.e. indentation, capitalization, font, and spacing.

- Use Boldface to highlight important points.

- Leave at least one inch margin space and avoid abbreviations.

- Try to fit your resume on one page, unless doing so would mean leaving off information about yourself that relates directly to the job.

- Be accurate in the facts you give.

- Begin phrases with action verbs in the past tense, except current positions, which should be described in the present tense.

- Use high-quality 8 1/2 x 11 white bond paper.

- Ensure that resume looks appropriate for print and online presentations.

DON'T:

- Mention your liabilities.

- Include personal information such as age, marital status, health, or race.

- Date the resume, attach an advertisement, or list salary requirements.

- Write "resume" on top of the page.

- Indicate "see resume" on job applications, instead complete the application and attach a resume.

- Round up your GPA.

- Begin a phrase with "I" or use complete sentences.

TOMPKINS CORTLAND
COMMUNITY COLLEGE