



Resume Quick Guide

What is a resume?

A resume is an outline of your accomplishments, work experience, credentials, and education on paper. It's an organized way of sharing the skills you have when applying for a job. It is also a marketing tool to promote what you have to offer to employers and entice them into wanting to know more about you. (Note: This guide does not cover Federal Resumes)

A resume serves several purposes:

- Provide a summary of your skills, abilities, and accomplishments
- Convince prospective employers to interview you based on your qualifications
- Create a professional image of yourself and establish your credibility
- Provide a sample of your communication skills

Types of Resume Formats

There are three major types of resume formats:

Chronological | A chronological resume is the best format to demonstrate career growth. This is the layout with which most people are familiar. In this format, work experience is listed in reverse chronological order with your most recent job first. *This format is most recommended for recent graduates.*

Functional | A functional resume categorizes your skills by function/group, emphasizing your abilities. This is useful if you are changing careers and want to show how your skills are transferable. In the 'Experience' section, a functional job area is stated, followed by several sub-sections, each discussing a different job function, such as supervision and management. Begin with the one you want to emphasize most. If you are customizing your resume for different employers, you can adjust the functional job objective, as well as the order in which you list the functions. Always include an 'Employment History' section that lays out your previous work experience (employer, location, dates worked, and job title).

Combination | A combination resume combines a functional resume with a chronological one. Jobs are listed the same as in a chronological resume. However, instead of simply listing your accomplishments, functional job areas are used to sort accomplishments within a given job or company. A section titled "Employment Experience" comes next with a list of employers and dates in this section. Further descriptions are not needed here as you have already described your abilities in the functional part of the resume. This format is most

useful if you're changing careers and have solid employment history. It's also useful if you want to stress your various abilities. If you spent a long time at one job but moved up through the company, you might want to use a combination resume.

Format: Six Seconds to Impress

Research shows employers spend about six seconds on a resume before deciding if they want to put it in the "keep" or "toss" pile. *Six seconds*. How do you make sure your resume gets put in the "keep" pile? Of course, the content matters but it has to be aesthetically pleasing to make it through the 6 second test. A resume should be organized and shares information about your experiences that are relevant to the job for which you are applying. The key is to keep it clean and easy to read.

White Space | You don't want to submit a resume (or cover letter) that looks too busy (lots of text or crammed). Add spaces between sections and keep the sections brief. Keep your margin size between three quarter inch and one inch and a quarter ($\frac{3}{4}$ " – $1\frac{1}{4}$ ").

Page Length | As a standard rule, your resume should be about a page. If you have many experiences you feel are relevant to the job for which you are applying, then your resume can be two pages. However, keep in mind that employers have limited time to review resumes. It is best to be as concise as possible. Anything more than two pages for an entry or mid-level position may be too long. If you print out your resume, use white or cream colored resume paper.

Section Headers | Use section headers to organize your resume so the reader knows where to find what. Typical section headers are "Education" and "Work Experience". The next page has suggestions for other section headers appropriate for the resume.

Font | Select a clean, professional font for your resume. Times New Roman, Arial, and Tahoma are always safe choices for any professional document. As for the font size, 11 pt to 12 pt is good. If need be, 10 pt font is acceptable, but anything smaller is difficult to read. Always use black font.

Consistency | Keep the font consistent with your resume and any other application materials you are submitting.

There are various formats for resumes. There is no correct way – it is just whatever format with which you feel most comfortable. Select a format that is clean, professional, and easy to read.

Organization & Content: Essential Pieces of a Resume

The content in the resume should be organized, easy to follow, and logical. Though there are many details that can be included in a resume, every strong resume should have these essential pieces (generally in this order, especially for recent college graduates):

Identification Data | Full name, current address (with zip code), email (remember your school email won't be valid a few years after you graduate), and best phone number to reach you. This information should match the information on your cover letter. If moving to another state or country, provide the address of residence that you will have if hired for the job. If not possible as yet, explain why in the cover letter. Do NOT include birth date, social security number, marital status, etc.

Education | Include your university, major, type of degree (ex: Bachelor of Arts or Science), GPA, relevant course work, expected or graduation month and year. If applicable, list the names of the relevant courses (ex: *Integrated Marketing Communications*), not the course code (ex: BMGT450). Do not include your high school information.

Professional Work Experience | Each entry under work experience should include the name of the company/organization, your title, the time you started and finished (month and year), city and state, and at least 3 bullet points describing your accomplishments and skills relevant to the position for which you are applying. Your work experience can include part-time work, full-time work, volunteer work, and internships. List your most relevant experience first. Anything beyond 8 years (especially if it is not relevant) should not be included. Do not put on your resume any job or internship from which you were fired.

Extracurricular/Leadership Activities | Extracurricular/leadership activities indicate your interests, leadership abilities, and willingness to accept responsibility. Your involvement in clubs, athletics, and social organizations indicate to an employer that you have attempted to broaden your background with activities outside of school and work. Be sure to include title/positions that you held and avoid abbreviations or acronyms.

Honors and Awards | If you have received a scholarship, academic award, made the Dean's List, or joined an academic honor society, you should include it here. Making the Dean's List can be put in the 'Education' section also.

Certifications | If you have any special certifications (ex: CPR, CNA, CISSP, PMP, CPA, CFA), you should include them here along with what month and year you received them.

Skills | Any computer skills you have (ex: Microsoft Office, MAC OS, Adobe Creative Suite) should be added here. If you speak any languages, be sure to include them in this section along with your level of proficiency and if it extends to reading and writing as well (bilingual – grew up speaking two languages; fluent, proficient, conversational, etc). Also, you can add typing speed (words per minute (WPM)) if it is above sixty.

Resume Sample: Chronological Resume

Susan M. Applestone

3523 Tree Ridge Road, Germantown, MD 12345 | susan.m.applestone@yahoo.com | 123-458-4516

Education

Bachelor of Science, Accounting

Expected: May 2016

University of Maryland, College Park

GPA: 3.52/4.00

Relevant Coursework: *Management; Business Finance; Principles of Accounting; Principles of Finance; Integrated Marketing; Business Writing; Business Law; Information Systems*

Associate of Science

May 2014

Montgomery College

GPA: 3.5/4.00

Experience

Intern

Sep. 2014 – Apr. 2016

ABC Accounting

Bethesda, MD

- Assisted in recording and organizing monthly financial transactions for over 30 clients
- Created monthly journal entries for internal transactions
- Prepared monthly spreadsheets of operating expenses of 8 internal departments and 40 program offices
- Assisted with data entry of actual and forecasted department expenses

Server

May 2012 – Aug. 2014

Lucky Restaurant

Rockville, MD

- Received orders from guests and efficiently processed them with kitchen staff
- Booked reservations and ensured all accommodations
- Handled cash, credit, and debit payments in an accurate manner
- Addressed guest concerns and complaints through effective problem solving and customer service

Extracurricular & Leadership Activities

Guided Study Session Leader, Business Finance, The Universities at Shady Grove Sep. 2015 – Present

- Collaborate with faculty members to develop cooperative learning techniques
- Coordinate and lead two weekly sessions of supplemental instruction for Robert H. Smith undergraduate students

President, Student Event Board

Sep. 2012 – May 2015

- Developed and implemented long-term marketing strategies targeted towards the college community
- Helped promote an average of 60 events each semester for the whole student body
- Operated marketing tables at events ranging from movies to live music performances

Honors & Awards

Recipient, Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame Scholarship

Nov. 2012

Recipient, Dean's List

May 2013, May 2015

Skills

Computer: Microsoft Office Suite; MAC OS; Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn

Language: Fluent in Spanish

Resume Sample: Functional Resume

Jane Johnson

6784 Millertown Road, Columbia, MD 21044 | Johnson.jane@hotmail.com | 586-548-5221

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Administrative professional with 8 years plus of experience in high level organizational management, event planning, fundraising, and project management. Fluent in Russian and Spanish. Able to navigate challenging situations while using limited resources. Business skills complemented with lifelong interest in providing advocacy and support for underserved populations.

EXPERTISE & ACHIEVEMENTS

Fundraising & Grant Writing

- Exceeded annual fundraising goals by at least 20% during 3-year tenure as PTA president
- Wrote and edited grant proposals, bringing in more than 60K in grants

Organizational & Administration

- Reorganized and updated volunteer, donor, and contact management databases, producing streamlined procedures at substantially lower costs
- Managed volunteer staff of more than 80 parents for multiple annual events
- Administered monthly print and e-newsletter campaigns to 3,000 recipients
- Established and maintained databases for outside vendors and service providers and merged past years' donor registrations
- Managed content updates on organizations' web sites

Event Planning

- Seamlessly coordinated catering, accommodations, sales presentations, and entertainment for up to 600 attendees at 6 off-site corporate events per year
- Built consensus among school administration, education, and parents regarding planning, scheduling, safety, catering, and staff needs for all PTA events

EXPERIENCE

PTA President, East Urban School System, Glen Burnie, MD

August 2006 – June 2008

Executive Assistant, United Support Group, Alexandria, VA

February 2002 – March 2006

Administrative Assistant, Accounting Services, Boston, MA

October 1999 – March 2001

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology

May 1999

University of Baltimore

SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Project, SharePoint

Typing Speed: 80 WPM

Resume Language

The language of a resume is action oriented. Sentences should begin with action verbs. Current jobs are present tense (e.g. Delegate, Administer) and completed jobs utilize past tense verbs (e.g. Estimated, Devised).

Utilize short phrases and clauses with no subject rather than full sentences in your descriptions. Eliminate extraneous words and irrelevant information.

Check and re-check spelling, grammar, and spacing very carefully. Errors and mistakes can indicate that you have not taken the time or effort in creating your resume and may do less than one hundred percent with work responsibilities if hired. This, of course, deters a potential employer.

You Led a Project

If you were in charge of a project or initiative from start to finish, skip “led” and instead try:

Chaired	Executed	Orchestrated	Planned
Controlled	Headed	Organized	Produced
Coordinated	Operated	Oversaw	Programmed

You Envisioned and Brought to Life a Project

If you actually developed, created, or introduced a project into your company, try:

Administered	Devised	Formed	Instituted
Built	Founded	Formulated	Introduced
Charted	Engineered	Implemented	Launched
Created	Established	Incorporated	Pioneered
Designed	Formalized	Initiated	Spearheaded
Developed			

You Saved the Company Time or Money

Have you helped a team operate more efficiently or cost-effectively?

Conserved	Deducted	Reconciled
Consolidated	Diagnosed	Reduced
Decreased	Lessened	Yielded

You Increased Efficiency, Sales, Revenue, or Customer Satisfaction

Can show that your work boosted the company’s numbers in some way?

Accelerated	Capitalized	Furthered	Maximized
Achieved	Delivered	Gained	Outpaced
Advanced	Enhanced	Generated	Stimulated
Amplified	Expanded	Improved	Sustained
Boosted	Expedited	Lifted	

You Changed or Improved Something

Talk about the amazing changes you made at your office with:

Centralized	Modified	Reorganized	Streamlined
Clarified	Overhauled	Replaced	Strengthened
Converted	Redesigned	Restructured	Updated
Customized	Refined	Revamped	Upgraded
Influenced	Refocused	Revitalized	Transformed
Integrated	Rehabilitated	Simplified	
Merged	Remodeled	Standardized	

You Managed a Team

Instead of reciting your management duties, like “Led a team...” or “Managed employees...” show what an inspirational leader you were, with terms like:

Aligned	Fostered	Mobilized	Supervised
Cultivated	Guided	Motivated	Taught
Directed	Hired	Recruited	Trained
Enabled	Inspired	Regulated	Unified
Facilitated	Mentored	Shaped	United

You Brought in Partners, Funding, or Resources

Were you “responsible for” a great new partner, sponsor, or source of funding? Try:

Acquired	Negotiated
Forged	Partnered
Navigated	Secured

You Supported Customers

Because manning the phones or answering questions really means you’re advising customers and meeting their needs, use:

Advised	Coached	Fielded
Advocated	Consulted	Informed
Arbitrated	Educated	Resolved

You Were a Research Machine

Did your job include research, analysis, or fact-finding? Mix up your verbiage with these words:

Analyzed	Discovered	Identified	Qualified
Assembled	Evaluated	Interpreted	Quantified
Assessed	Examined	Investigated	Surveyed
Audited	Explored	Mapped	Tested
Calculated	Forecasted	Measured	Tracked

You Wrote or Communicated

Was writing, speaking, lobbying, or otherwise communicating part of your job? Try using:

Authored	Conveyed	Defined	Persuaded
Briefed	Convinced	Documented	Promoted
Campaigned	Corresponded	Edited	Publicized
Co-authored	Counseled	Illustrated	Reviewed
Composed	Critiqued	Lobbied	

You Oversaw or Regulated

Whether you enforced protocol or managed your department’s requests, describe what you really did:

Authorized	Enforced	Monitored
Blocked	Ensured	Screened
Delegated	Inspected	Scrutinized
Dispatched	Itemized	Verified

You Achieved Something

Don’t forget to include any goals you hit or awards you won on your resume, with words like:

Attained	Earned	Showcased
Awarded	Exceeded	Succeeded
Completed	Outperformed	Surpassed
Demonstrated	Reached	Targeted

More Resume Writing Advice

Writing Your Bullets

The bullet points under each job or position should be used to describe your achievement, duties, responsibilities and special projects. This is another opportunity to convince the employer that you are the ideal candidate for their organization. Try using the APR(Q) Method to formulate your bullets:

- **Action Verb** – Select a strong verb that describes the actions you took to complete “P.” Vary your action verbs so they aren’t constantly repeated.
- **Project** – describe the project, accomplishment, duty or how you solved the problem
- **Result** – Specify the results you achieved
- **Quantify** – If possible, be specific and quantify the result by answering who, what, where, when, why, or so what? You may not be able to quantify each project, but
Example: Coordinated three fundraising events with senior staff to increase awareness of our cause and raised over \$4,000

Prioritize bulleted entries by listing most important task, accomplishment, or responsibility first.

If you have no job or internship experience, then list relevant coursework and/or relevant extracurricular activities.

It’s good to have a “master resume” with all your experience, extracurricular, etc. When you apply for positions, tailor your resume to each job, selecting the experiences that are most relevant for that job. Pick out key words from the job description to help you do this. Don’t forget to update your resume after each semester or new job/internship.

The Objective Statement

Using an objective or brief profile statement helps to bring to focus all of your work experiences as an undergraduate or recent graduate since the types of your experiences are more likely very varied. It is not always necessary to use an objective statement. If you are making a career switch, like from business management to marketing, an objective statement is a good place to explain why and how your skill set aligns with the position.

Do not use an objective if it boxes you in a particular position or sounds insincere (Levit, 2014, p. 29).

Avoid saying that you are looking for a position in which you can learn or that is challenging. Though this may be true, the employer is looking for someone to work, not someone they have to spend extra time with to teach them

For more examples of effective objectives and when to use them, visit QuintCareers.com, TheLadders.com or TheInterviewGuys.com.

Checking Your Resume

Before you send in your resume, check for the following:

- Have you included your contact info?
- Are there any spelling or grammar mistakes?
- Have you included all relevant experiences?
- Is everything truthful? Do not lie on your resume. This is a sure way to not get an interview.

Tip: Try reading your resume out loud. It will help you catch spelling and grammar errors as well as help you find any areas that might not make sense.

Check for consistency in:

- Spacing between sections and lines
- Capitalization
- Verb tenses
- Years
- Locations
- Bullets

Ask another person to look over your resume:

- Ask someone to take a 60-second peek at your resume. Once the minute is over, ask her/him to answer some pointed questions made by you. From his/her answers, see how well information was gleaned from your resume.
- Get the opinion of your resume from someone in the industry which you plan to enter
- Ask them to also check for typos, spelling mistakes, and grammatical errors. These things can cause you to lose a chance at getting an interview or a job.

Sources:

Berger, L. (2012). Make over your tools. *All work, no pay: Finding an internship, building your resume, making connections, and gaining job experience*, p. 43-51. Ten Speed Press: New York, NY.

Levit, A. (2014). Irresistible resumes. *A twenty-something's guide to the business world: They don't teach corporate in college*, p. 27-30. The Career Press, Inc.: Pompton Plains, NJ.

Pollak, L. (2012). Market yourself on paper and online. *Getting from college to career: your essential guide to succeeding in the real world*, p. 209-221. HarperCollins: New York, NY.

The Daily Muse, "185 Powerful Verbs That Will Make Your Resume Awesome." <http://bit.ly/185resumeverbs>