
RESUME FUNDAMENTALS

Resume Overview

Resume purpose

- To elicit enough interest in your background, accomplishments, and education to get an interview
- To help you help you prepare your strategy and approach for making a pitch for a new role or industry

Resume types

- **Chronological** – most recent job first, strongly preferred resume type
 - Enables reader to piece together the who, what, when, and where of your background
- **Functional** - frustrates the reader and often creates doubt about your background and experience
 - Individuals often use it to get jobs they don't have the required experience for or to hide major gaps in employment. Forces the reader to piece together what you did where and when
 - Many recruiters and hiring managers hit 'delete' when they see a functional resume

Resume formatting

- Focus on substance over style and go light on the formatting. The resume must be perfect with no spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors – this is critical
- Arial, Verdana, and Tahoma are safe and easy to read fonts. Times News Roman is difficult for the reader and looks dated – unique fonts may not be readable on all computers
- Use 10, 11, or 12 points fonts. Putting your name in a 48 point font may make you more memorable, but not for the right reason. Do not use multiple fonts, italics, color, and multiple spacing schemes
- Use bullets rather than paragraphs but avoid bullets that are over three lines long
- Avoid putting information in headers; some Applicant Tracking Systems (HR software database solution used by most companies and recruiters) cannot read information that is headers. Don't let that be your name and contact information

Infographic and graphical resumes

- These look cool but are not read by Applicant Tracking Systems. Some, even in PDF form, are too large of a file. If you have to have one – develop both the traditional format and the new format and take the new format with you to the interview – or upload it on your LinkedIn profile. Do not submit it when applying online

Resume length

- Resume length is determined on a case-by-case basis. Use one page if you have a limited amount of experience or if your experience does not support the role that you are interested in. Two pages is fine for people with over ten years of relevant experience

Resume customization

- Create a master resume and customize it for different opportunities. This allows for version control so you don't have to update multiple versions of your resume
- The Objective (if you need one) and Summary of Qualifications or Summary of Experience are the areas that you might want to customize for different opportunities
- One-size does not fit all in the case of resumes, but you shouldn't have ten versions

Keywords

- Recruiters and Applicant Tracking Systems use keyword searches to identify and rank candidates
- Position descriptions provide excellent clues to the keywords and skills that are important for you to be considered for a position. They are an important tool in fine-tuning your resume. Use CTRL-F and check your resume key word count.
- Do not fabricate keywords or skills if you do not have any experience or academic knowledge of the area, but be diligent about adding them if you do. They will make or break your chance at an interview

Resume Components

Objective

- Should be incorporated only if your experience does not directly support the position that you're interested in
- It may be used by students, recent graduates, people changing careers, or people moving to new cities

Summary of Experience or Summary of Qualifications

- Use 'Experience' if you have professional experience in the role that you are interested in; 'Qualifications' if your experience is only academic. Course and project work may be added if you do not have experience
- It provides a great way to help the reader quickly comprehend your background and experience
- Bullet format is preferred – a paragraph format is much less likely to be read
- Be specific and measurable wherever possible. "Java code development experience with an internal software team for the creation of a CMS system for 1,000 users" is a far better description than "Software development experience"
- It may be appropriate to add software and foreign language as a final bullet point in this section, rather than creating a separate section – it depends on your background and desired role
- Excel, Word, and PowerPoint are standard requirements for every business professional – just say Microsoft Office Suite; list other software skills that might include Access, Project, SAP, Photoshop, SharePoint, etc.
- If you have advanced Excel experience list some of the functions that you have experience with (Pivot Tables, Goal Seek, IF Statements, etc.), or specific types of models (DCF, Comparative Company Analysis, or LBO)
- Only add Social Media skills like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn if you have worked with them for a club, non-profit organization, or business application. Do not list them if you only have personal experience

Education

- Should be early-on in the resume if the degree is recent, or in-progress, and at the end if dated
- Use reverse chronological order with the most recent degree first
- Includes college name, location, date of graduation (or pending graduation), degree and area of emphasis
 - If you have not completed your degree, add 'Expected graduation Month 20XX' to the line with your degree type and area of emphasis. It should not go on the first line until you have graduated
 - The year of completion should not go on the first line until you have graduated; if you are sensitive to the year of completion, do not add it
 - GPA information is important for accounting, finance, and consulting positions

Professional Experience

- Should also be presented in reverse chronological order and include employer names, locations, dates, and titles
- Bullets should include a succinct description of responsibilities and accomplishments and should be interesting and measurable. Bullet points should start with verbs and you should be careful about using past and present tense
 - Non-sales – responsibilities, internal or external customers served, awards, and major accomplishments
 - Sales | Customer Service – quota and attainment, customers, products, awards, and accomplishments
 - Management – number of people on your team, title categories, P&L, organizational accomplishments

Computer or Technical Skills and Certifications

- For highly technical roles this is a must, but be concise. Should be positioned after 'Summary of Qualifications' or 'Summary of Experience'
- May be broken into bullets that cover programming, databases, network administration, data analytics, etc.

Other possible sections

- Professional, Leadership, or Community Service Activities – Military Service

Dangerous areas

- Personal information – that you won a triathlon, maybe; reference to your politics or religion, never
- Your references – don't give your references and their contact information to people who haven't expressed a sincere and informed interest in you – it's unnecessary. If asked to provide references, list them on a separate document