



RESUME TIPS



The primary purpose of a resume is to get an interview: it's a sales tool, an advertisement for your unique skills and experience designed to get you in front of prospective employers. Whether your resume is sent via e-mail or presented on paper, it should be engaging and interesting, compelling people to read it. The key to writing a successful resume is to focus on the future: emphasize what you want to do as opposed to what you've been doing.

The first step to writing a successful resume is to do some soul searching and determine what you'd like your next career move to be. If you are working with a career coach you may already be considering this type of information. Based on your goals and future vision, craft your resume like a marketing document—you're selling yourself in your ideal future role. It's important to focus a resume on achievements and quantify them whenever possible.

Do:

1. **Use a personal e-mail address:** Don't use your work email address—if you switch companies prospective employers won't be able to contact you.
2. **Be focused:** A resume must have an initial focus so the reader can immediately understand what you're looking for and what you have to offer. An opening focus may be in the form of an objective or a summary statement.
3. **Customize information:** Tailor your personal profile to the position you are applying for. Make sure the synopsis of your experience and the value you can bring to the company is relative to the position you're interested in.
4. **Use the language of success:** Use positive, proactive words like lead, achieve, attain, procure, etc. Other power words you may want to include in your resume are: accomplish, acquire, create, cultivate, design, develop, establish, grow, implement, improve, increase, initiate, integrate, launch, manage, pioneer, restructure, share and streamline.
5. **Focus on achievements:** Explain how you made an impact on the company and show that you are results-oriented.
6. **Keep it simple:** Limit your resume to 2-3 pages and use concise descriptions for position, titles and roles.
7. **Explain your departure:** An interviewer will likely to ask you why your previous position was not satisfactory; have an answer prepared in advance.
8. **Feature continuing education:** Include advanced training in the education section but be selective with the information: summarize and include only what will impress the reader.
9. **Use relevant interests:** Keep the 'interests' section of your resume consistent with the job requirements. If you include a section on interests, make it a balanced selling point: emphasize outside interests that require teamwork like team sports, politics, fundraising, etc. Most people spend more time with co-workers with than with family; this information could help a potential employer decide whether or not they want to spend a significant amount of time with you.
10. **Use correct timelines:** Ensure that dates are correct and account for any gaps in time.
11. **Use a readable of font size:** Don't use a font size smaller than 11pt or larger than 12pt. However, headings and your name should be 14pt or 16pt. Use a clear, easy to read font like Times New Roman or Arial.
12. **Proof read:** Have two people check your resume for content and spelling errors. After reading your resume, they should have a clear understanding of the capacity and function of your position. Proofreaders may also be able to identify any omissions or help condense the content of your resume.



Don't:

1. **Use incorrect spelling and grammar:** Be sure to proofread your resume and use proper formatting. You want to demonstrate to the reader your attention to detail and highlight the time and energy spent on your resume.
2. **Be inconsistent:** Make sure there is uniformity and consistency in the use of italics, capital letters, boldface, bullets, underlining and punctuation.
3. **List your job functions:** Focus on the impact you had in your role, not on what your responsibilities were or a job description.
4. **Exclude the basics:** A resume must have the following mandatory information: your name, address, phone number and email address (at the top of the first page) as well as a listing of jobs held and educational information (both in reverse chronological order).
5. **Use excessive formatting:** Keep all of the text in the main body of the document: putting your address in a header or box in the document may prevent it from scanning properly into some software packages. However, it's a good idea to include a footer with your name and contact information in case the top of the page gets cut off.
6. **Lead with "Evidence":** Evidence is the mandatory information included on a resume—name, contact info, etc. Kick off your resume with your strongest content and include the mandatory information (evidence) in the second half of the document.
7. **Use run-on sentences:** Keep sentences concise and to the point. Eliminate any extraneous information and repetition. Express yourself in a direct way rather than trying to impress the reader with big words and complex sentences.
8. **Use the first person:** It is understood that you are referring to yourself in your resume, so avoid using pronouns such as "I", "He", "She", "His" or "Her".
9. **Mix up verb tenses:** If the accomplishment has been completed, it should be past tense. If the task is still underway, it should be present tense. If a skill has been used in the past and will continue to be used, use present tense. Whichever tense you choose, be consistent.
10. **Include salary information:** If an employer wants to discuss salary it can be covered in the interview. Also, do not write reasons for leaving a job, full addresses of former employers, names of supervisors or references on your resume.
11. **Put "Resume" at the top of the page:** Your name should be the first thing at the top of the page. Titling the document '[Your Name] CV' or '[Your Name] Resume' is sufficient.
12. **Leave too much white space:** It's a delicate balance: you don't want too much white space or a page jammed full of text. If you have a second page, make sure it's at least half-filled. If you don't have enough information, try condensing the document. Include your name on the second page in case page one is lost or misplaced.

Formatting:

A resume is a personal marketing tool that communicates your career objectives and value to a company. A strong resume is carefully designed and formatted to showcase your experience and accomplishments in relation to a specific position.

One of the first decisions you must make when preparing your resume is how to organize the content. There are three main styles of formatting a resume: it's important to choose the format that best showcases your strengths and qualifications.



Chronological Style

This is the most commonly used resume format. Experience and accomplishments are listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent job positioned first. Because it leaves little to the imagination, and makes it difficult to hide employment gaps, the chronological resume is the format preferred by most employers and recruiters. Job seekers with a strong, solid work history tend to use this type of formatting.

Functional Style

This is a skills-based, achievement-oriented format. Experience and accomplishments are listed in sections with specific headings that extract and showcase only what is directly applicable to the targeted position. Because it is somewhat vague and sometimes omits dates, it is often the least preferred resume format of employers and recruiters. It is most commonly used by people who are changing careers or have gaps in their employment history.

Combination Style

This format combines the chronological and functional formats into one. As with the functional format, it lists experience and accomplishments in sections with specific headings directly applicable to the targeted position. However, it lists employment information under a separate category with only position title, company, location and dates. Since it easily tells the reader how a candidate is qualified for a position, while also providing an employment history, it has become a favorite resume format amongst many employers and recruiters.

To view a sample resume that can help you build your own, [click here](#).