

# WRITING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

The purpose of your resume is to tell the employer what skills, knowledge, and experience you have that will add value to their company. Most employers or hiring managers spend less than 10 seconds on each resume that hits their desk! So you want to make sure yours is one that gets more than a 10 second look!

Here are some tips to help you prepare an effective resume that will keep the employers attention and make him/her want to interview you.

## Two styles of Resumes:

- ✎ Chronological – focus is on your work history; may include an objective or career summary; also includes education and certifications
- ✎ Functional – focus is on your skill and abilities; includes an objective or career summary, education and certification, and work history

See the Chronological vs. Functional information sheet included in this packet for a brief description, and the advantages and disadvantages of each style. Examples of each are also included in this packet.

## General Rules:

- ✎ One size does not fit all – prepare a resume and then “tweak” it for each job for which you are applying. In other words, highlight your skills, experience and accomplishments that fit each individual job. Your objective or career summary should also be tailored to the individual job or company.
- ✎ Resumes should be no more than two pages long. Employment that was more than 10 years ago is probably not relevant.
- ✎ Make sure your resume is neat and easy to read, with consistent timesteps and formatting (lines, spacing, bullets, etc.)
- ✎ There should be NO typos, spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors! Make sure you’ve proofed your resume several times and ask someone else to proof it, before submitting it to a potential employer.
- ✎ Include a letterhead at the top of the page. Letterhead information includes your name (usually in a larger/darker font), mailing address, phone number and email address. Do not add pictures or artwork to your letterhead. Also make sure your email address is appropriate and professional – nothing “cutesy” (i.e. cupcake@youreemail.com, harleyguyyoureemail.com), or suggestive (i.e. tabledancer@youreemail.com, imtoosexy@youreemail.com). If your current email address is questionable, consider opening a new account to use for employment purposes.
- ✎ Include “keywords” in your resume. To determine what keywords are important, read the job posting or ad. Pick out the words that seem most important in describing the skills that the employer is looking for. Also think about the industry. Are there words or phrases that are commonly used in the industry? Use keywords in your objective/career summary, and/or skills and work history. Keywords should also be used in cover letters.
- ✎ Print your resume on good quality paper in a white or neutral tone. Never use a bright color or paper with a strong design or pattern.

## Sections:

### Objectives or Career Summaries

- ✎ Objective statements can be used at anytime, but are the best choice if you are changing careers, just entering the workforce, or it has been awhile since you were in the workforce.
  - An objective is a short, concise statement that tells the employer the position you are seeking, the service you are prepared to provide to the company, and how you will provide that service. Remember, the employer is not interested in what they will do for you; they are more interested in WHAT YOU WILL DO FOR THEM!
  - So instead of this: “Seeking a stable position in a healthcare facility that utilizes my skills and allows for professional growth and advancement.” (Focus – what they can do for you)
  - Try something like this: “Seeking a full-time CNA position in a healthcare facility using current education and exceptional people skills to provide compassionate person-centered care that enhances the health and well-being of each patient.” (Focus – what YOU can do for THEM)
- ✎ Career Summaries are best if you have experience in the industry, and a solid work history.
  - A career summary is typically longer than an objective statement, and is a brief overview of the skills and experience you bring to the position. The focus is the same – telling the employer what skills and experience you will be bringing to the position to add value to the company.
  - Example: “Healthcare professional with five years nursing experience in large regional hospital provides excellent background for Nurse Manager. Proven team leader with outstanding relationship building skills, problem solver and creative thinker. Focus is on person-centered care with an emphasis on patient safety, dignity, and respect, maintaining confidentiality, and adherence to regulations, policies and procedures.
- ✎ Avoid using “I” statements in your objective or career summary. This includes the words “I”, “me”, or “my”.

### Skills and Abilities

(typically found in a functional resume, can be added to a chronological resume)

- ✎ A bulleted list of specific skills, knowledge and abilities that apply to the position you are seeking.
- ✎ Prepare for this section by evaluating all of the skills, abilities and knowledge you’ve gained from your education and work experience. These skills can include “hard” and “soft” skills.
  - Hard skills are those necessary to do a job such as the ability to use a specific piece of equipment or work with a specific computer program.
  - Soft skills are more subjective and include things that are related to your work ethic and style such as flexibility, time management, teamwork, reliability, etc.
- ✎ Make a list of all the skills you’ve identified. Next, look at the job posting or ad and compare it to your list of skills and abilities. Select several items (three to six) from your list that match what the employer is looking for in an employee.
- ✎ Don’t forget skills gained from volunteer work.
- ✎ Use “action verbs” or “power words” (see lists).
- ✎ Avoid using “I” statements.
- ✎ Caution: Don’t put anything on your list that is not true, or that you can’t back up with an example. Also don’t exaggerate your skills!
- ✎ Example of a skills/abilities list:
  - Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
  - Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal
  - Skilled in providing above average customer service
  - Efficient management of daily reports and recordkeeping
  - Flexible and adaptable to change
  - Good time management skills

- ✎ Even if your only experience has been such things as babysitting or lawn mowing, you have gained valuable skills – time management, customer service, multi-tasking, etc. All of these can be included on your resume.

## Education

- ✎ List your education in reverse chronological order (most current first)
  - Include the name of the institution, graduation date, degree earned, honors and awards
  - You may also include “Relevant Course Work” and list classes that apply to the job you are seeking.
  - Your high school information is probably not relevant if you graduated from high school some time ago and have post-secondary education.

## Certification/Licenses

- ✎ List any relevant certifications and dates received. Examples include:
  - CPR/First Aid
  - CNA/LPN/RN
  - Computer software certifications
  - Industry safety training certificates

## Work History

- ✎ List your work history in reverse chronological order (most current first).
  - Name of company
  - Location of company (city and state)
  - Dates of employment (month and year employment started and ended)
  - Title of position you held
  - A bulleted list of major responsibilities and/or accomplishments
  - Work history that is more than 10 years old is probably not relevant and may not need to be included. You may choose to list employment that is older than 10 years in a separate section titled “Previous Experience”. Include the name of the company, dates of employment and your title, and omit a list of responsibilities or accomplishments.

## References

The current trend is to leave references or a mention of references off of your resume, unless the application process specifically states the requirement of references at the time of application. However, this does not mean that you can skip references all together. You will eventually be required to supply a potential employer with references. You may also be required to submit letters of reference, in addition to a list of references. If possible, try not to use the same people for both.

Here are basic rules for providing references.

- ✎ Have at least three references on your list – two of them must be professional (supervisors, instructors, co-workers, etc.) and one can be personal (minister, someone that you worked with on a committee or project, etc.)
- ✎ Keep in mind that some companies require all three references to be professional.
- ✎ NEVER include family members. This includes parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, or in-laws.
- ✎ ALWAYS ask the person you are using as reference for their permission, BEFORE including them in your list. Asking first is a matter of being considerate and respectful of someone you are expecting to say good things about you. It also gives your reference a “heads up” and allows them to prepare their reference.
- ✎ Once you’ve received permission to include someone on your reference list, make sure you have a current phone number and email address.
- ✎ Include their relationship to you, i.e. supervisor, instructor, etc.
- ✎ Print your reference list on a separate sheet of paper that matches your resume and includes your letterhead.