

Résumé Writing

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YOU. . . Are The Product

- ❖ You are selling your services
- ❖ You must appeal to the NEEDS of the employer
- ❖ You must convince them that YOU can fill those needs better than your competitors

The Résumé: Your Marketing Tool

- ❖ *Must move employer to interview you:*
 - ◆ Identifies clearly what services you are selling
 - ◆ Offers specific benefits meeting employer needs
 - ◆ Presents evidence to support those benefits
- ❖ *Employers use to screen you out of interview*
- ❖ *Therefore, your résumé must create enough interest in what YOU can do for THEM so they want to find out more in person*

Chronological Format

Traditional format (most common type)

- ◆ Contact Information
- ◆ Career Objective
- ◆ Experience -- Job titles and employers listed in reverse chronological order, along with accomplishments
- ◆ Education

Most useful for job seekers with an established work history (minimum 5 years full-time experience in relation to objective) who wish to change jobs or be promoted in a field

Combination Format

Chronological format + added Skills section

- ◆ Contact Information
- ◆ Career Objective
- ◆ Skills (job-specific, relevant hard/soft skills)
- ◆ Experience
- ◆ Education

Most useful for job seekers with some experience who wish to emphasize their

skills, in order to better compete against people who have more experience

Functional Format

(also called “Skills-based” format)

❖ ***Organizes work experience by job skills***

- ◆ Contact Information
- ◆ Career Objective
- ◆ Highlights of Qualifications
- ◆ Skills and Experience
- ◆ Work History
- ◆ Education

❖ ***Most useful for job seekers entering the job market for the first time, re-entering after time at home, or changing careers***

Add “James Madison” resume, in place of this

slide (from Resume’ Writing document).

Career Objective

- ❖ ***A brief, specific statement of the position you are seeking (applying to)***
- ❖ ***Focuses employer on what you want to do for them***
- ❖ ***Focuses you on presenting info related to objective***
- ❖ ***With multiple objectives = make multiple résumés***

Career Objective

- ❖ An entry-level position in massage therapy
- ❖ Accountant in a public accounting firm
- ❖ A challenging position with potential for advancement in marketing, public relations, or personnel

Highlights of Qualifications

- ❖ ***Highlights your most unique (proudest) accomplishments***
- ❖ ***Quickly captures the employer’s interest***
- ❖ ***List 3 - 4 things your best friend would say about you, in order to interest a prospective employer***

Highlights of Qualifications

- ❖ Two years experience as student receptionist
- ❖ Type 55 words per minute – error free
- ❖ Thorough knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software
- ❖ Work well under pressure with difficult customers

Skills and Experience

- ❖ ***Skills*** – not past duties – are what employers NEED and will BENEFIT from; refer to ONet

Web site to identify relevant skills: www.online.onetcenter.org

- ❖ Identify 3 - 5 soft & hard skills you have that will be needed in your job objective
- ❖ Include both relevant occupational soft/hard skill categories (functional headings)
- ❖ These skills will be the categories by which you organize your experience

Skills and Experience

- ❖ *All skills categories must be backed up by evidence (examples)*
- ❖ *Under each skill, list 3 - 5 accomplishments (results) that prove you have high confidence in that skill*
- ❖ *An accomplishment is something you actually did -- that you're most proud of*
- ❖ *A result is a benefit the employer realized because of your efforts*

Your accomplishment statements should address at least 1 of the following, as they relate to how you performed or what you actually produced (is it measurable?):

- ❖ *Responsibility*
- ❖ *Variety*
- ❖ *Complexity*
- ❖ *Creativity/Innovation*
- ❖ *Frequency*
- ❖ *Results: Increased/Decreased*
- ❖ *Quality*
- ❖ *Quantity*

Skills and Experience

- ❖ ***Word Processing***
 - ◆ Produced research reports of up to 25 pages
 - ◆ Developed templates that reduce volunteer work time
- ❖ ***Scheduling and Coordination***
 - ◆ Scheduled appointments for 10 counselors
 - ◆ Coordinated agenda for weekly staff meeting
- ❖ ***Customer Service***
 - ◆ Handled up to 50 phone and walk-in inquiries per day
 - ◆ Reduced the number of students referred to the director

Work History

- ❖ *Supports your skills and experience*
- ❖ *Simply lists years, job titles, employers, and cities*
- ❖ *List most recent job first*
- ❖ *Account for all time since milestone: graduation, entry to field, re-entry to workforce*

Work History

Sept. 2006 – May 2008

Student Receptionist, Lansing Community College, Lansing, MI

June 2004 – Aug. 2006

Volunteer Office Staff, March of Dimes, Lansing, MI

Education

- ❖ Supports skills and accomplishments
- ❖ List degree, major, dates, schools, and cities in reverse chronological order
- ❖ If recent, list honors and GPA if over 3.5
- ❖ Less important for mid-career job searches--put at bottom
- ❖ More important for first-time searches--put at top and list pertinent course work

Education

- ❖ ***A.B. degree in Administrative Office Management***, Lansing Community College, Lansing MI (2009)
 - ❖ ***High School Diploma***
Holt High School, Holt, MI (2005)
- *Note:*
- high school education may be deleted from resume, once a college-level degree is earned.*

Editing Content

- ❖ ***Relate ALL entries to your objective***
 - ❖ ***Use action verbs to describe your experience*** (refer to “Hinda’s List of Action Verbs” document for examples of verbs listed by various skill categories)
 - ❖ ***Minimize jargon and abbreviations***
 - ❖ ***Emphasize both soft and hard skills***
 - ❖ ***Be concise***
 - ❖ ***Spell check AND proofread!***
 - ❖ ***Keep length to one page***
Two maximum if more than full-time experience
- 5 years

Résumé Layout

- ❖ ***Put name and address at the top using larger font***
- ❖ ***Place section titles in a column on the left and text in a column on the right***
- ❖ ***Use boldface on key information to aid scanning***
- ❖ ***Use bullets to list entries***
- ❖ ***Leave lots of white space***

for a clean look

Printing the Résumé

- ❖ *Produce a crisp original using laser printer or ink jet printer*
- ❖ *Print copies using high quality copier or commercial printer*
- ❖ *Use white or off-white
20 lb. cotton paper*
- ❖ *Use black ink*

Cover Letters

- ❖ *Purpose is to generate interest in your résumé and motivate employer to invite you for an interview*
- ❖ *Allows you to tailor the message to each employer without altering résumé each time*

First – catch the reader's attention

- ❖ *Mention their job posting and where you saw it*
- ❖ *Refer to a previous personal contact (if applicable)*
- ❖ *Mention the name of an employee who referred you*
- ❖ *Cite a key qualification they are seeking*

Second – build interest in your résumé

- ❖ *Describe 1 or 2 outstanding skills or experiences you will bring to the job*
- ❖ *Refer reader to your résumé for further information*

Third – move the employer to action

- ❖ *Emphasize your interest in the job*
- ❖ *Request an interview and state how you may be reached*
- ❖ *Unless responding to an ad or posting, state when you will follow-up with a telephone call*

For More Information

- ❖ *The Damn Good Résumé Guide*
by Yana Parker
- ❖ *Résumés That Knock 'Em Dead*
by Martin Yate
- ❖ *High Impact Résumés & Letters*
by Ronald Krannich and William Banis
- ❖ *Professional Résumés Series*
by VGM Career Horizons