

# Comprehensive Guide for Resume Writing



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*This guide is designed to assist you with the process of preparing for an interview, impressing potential employers, and overcoming common yet challenging interview questions!*



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# Introduction

**This guide to resume writing will teach you to write a resume equal to one done by a top-notch professional writer. It offers examples, format choices, help writing the objective, the summary and other sections, as well as samples of excellent resume writing. It is the most trusted resume-writing guide on the planet, used by more than a million people each year.**

Writing a great resume does not necessarily mean you should follow the rules you hear through the grapevine. It does not have to be one page or follow a specific resume format. Every resume is a one-of-a-kind marketing communication. It should be appropriate to your situation and do exactly what you want it to do. Instead of a bunch of rules and tips, we are going to cut to the chase in this brief guide and offer you the most basic principles of writing a highly effective resume.

To start your resume, begin by determining your objectives (do this prior to writing the resume). Clearly state what sort of a job you want and know what skill-set and experience is needed to do well in that job. After your objectives are determined, prioritize the content of your resume to suit those objectives. You have a small window of time to get the interest of a hiring manager so brevity and focus is essential. A lengthy resume does not translate to higher qualification.

# Resume Writing Tips

Now let's begin the resume writing process. While your resume is essentially a marketing tool, it shouldn't read like marketing. Avoid over-use of industry jargon. Be factual, concise and state compelling results. You don't need to go into detail about every accomplishment in your resume but companies are looking for more than just training and education today... they are looking for a proven track record.

Remember: the interview is the place to elaborate on your accomplishments and evaluate work-style cultural cues. Not the resume.

## 1.) Use Bulleted Sentences

Use bullets with short sentences to structure the body of your resume. The main selling points of your resume should be clear and quick to scan. Again, don't worry about the specifics; you will go into the details during the interview. Should you begin your resume with a resume objective statement? Check out our example of a resume objective statement for more information.

## 2.) Use Action Words

Use action words like prepared, managed, developed, championed, monitored, and presented will cause your resume to stand out. Avoid using the same verb over and over. We've compiled a list of action words, take a look at them: resume verb and keyword examples. If your resume is scanned electronically, the computer will pick up on the words. Some companies now scan in your resume and have computers pull those that meet certain criteria. The computers are looking for one thing – the keywords that have been picked by the hiring manager. These are action keywords that relate to the position so not including them or using shortened acronyms could mean your resume is disregarded as a “non-match”. Want to read more? Review our blog post on how to beat resume scanners.

## 3.) Use %'s, \$'s and #'s

You should always use %'s, \$'s and #'s. Dollar totals, numbers, and



percentages stand out in the body of a resume. Below are two examples of a job duty described with them (good) and without (bad). As you can see by the examples, being specific does not mean being lengthy.

**Example 1**

Bad: Account manager for advertising agency

Good: Managed 15 strategic accounts billing in excess of \$15MM annually

**Example 2**

Bad: Sold widgets to clients located in the Midwest

Good: Increased sales by 17% in a 5-state territory

**4.) Highlight your strengths**

Highlight your strengths, and what is most relevant to the potential employer. In-coming resumes are typically reviewed in 10-30 seconds, so put forth the effort and determine which bullets most strongly support your job search objective. Put the strongest and most relevant points first where they are more apt to be read. This is your hook for the reader and the rest of your resume reels them in.

**5.) Match the need they have**

Match the need they have – Review job postings online and in the newspapers for positions that interest you. Each position will usually have a brief blurb about the company and the position available. Use the keywords listed in these ads, and match them to the bullet points in your resume. Chances are that you have some of these as key points already, however if you have missed any, add them to your resume. Using a custom resume instead of a generic one will greatly increase your chances of an interview, as you will be a better match in the eyes of the reader.

**6.) Be positive**

Above all in your resume and interview – you must be positive. Leave out negatives and irrelevant points. If you feel your graduation date will subject you to age discrimination, leave it out of your resume. If you do some duties in your current job that don't support your job search objective, don't include them. Focus on the duties that do support your objective, and leave off irrelevant personal information

like your race, weight, and height.

### 7.) White space is important

Ad Design 101 – White space is important. Open up the newspaper, and take note of which ads first catch your attention. Are they the ads that are jammed full of text or are they ads that have a large amount of unused space (“white space”). This is done to grab your attention, as readers are always attracted to open areas. So don’t worry if you are having a hard time filling the page with text; consider increasing leading or kerning to align text to fit the page layout.

### 8.) Formatting Guidelines

How long should my resume be? What size font should I use? – The font size should be no smaller than 10 point, standard serif or sans serif fonts. Don’t use intricate fonts that are hard to read. Keeping your fonts standard will help combat conversion issues from PC to MAC and from one program version to another. The length of your resume should be 1-2 pages. Yes, you read correctly; you can use more than one page. But remember, keep it concise. It’s ok to use two pages for your resume, however it is not necessary. If you’re not sure which resume format to use, view our tips on Chronological Resume Formatting, Functional Resume Formatting and Combination Resume Formatting (AKA: Hybrid resume formatting or Chrono-Functional resume formatting).

### 9.) Get 3rd Party Advice

Ask a friend, and get an outside opinion on your resume before sending it off. – Have a friend or resume review service review your resume. Since you are so close to your situation, it can be difficult for you to note all your high points and clearly convey all your accomplishments. Having someone subjectively review your resume can give you insight into how others will view your personal marketing materials – would your resume impress them? If not, why? Don’t settle for – “it’s good”, and encourage them to ask questions. The questions of the reader can help you to discover items you inadvertently left off your resume. Take their comments into consideration, and revise your resume accordingly. In addition to adding in missed items, their questions can also point to items on your resume that are confusing to the reader.

### 10.) Start Applying

OK, you're ready! Apply for jobs that appear to be above your qualifications, apply to positions that are a match, and apply to positions which may be below your level.

There are two samples given below which you can go over to see the way the resume can be written.

For more information, contact Career Center.



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