

# ELEMENTS OF A WINNING RESUME

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Your resume should be viewed as your personal marketing tool, the sole purpose of which is to secure the interview. A well-written resume gives you the opportunity to state your career goals and describe your skills and experience which support these goals. It should be a concise, purposeful and organized summary of the experience you have as it relates to a particular position. Remember, none of the following concepts are written in stone. The whole idea is to promote you as the best person for the job!

## HEADING

Place your name at the top of the page highlighted by slightly larger typeface, bolding with address, phone #, and email to follow. Be sure to include your email address, it demonstrates computer skills to the reader. Try to use the same heading for your resume, cover letter and references to present a uniform package.

## EDUCATION

Your education should be clearly stated in reverse chronological order with most recent first. Always spell out the name and type of degree, followed by your major title and concentration. If you haven't finished your degree yet, put "Anticipated," or "Expected May 2012".

## EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

All entries in this section should highlight a capability or accomplishment. Begin with and utilize action verbs in your job descriptions and make sure that verb tense is consistent throughout the resume. Capitalization, punctuation, and date formats should all be consistent for every description. See the "Resume Formats" for more details on this section.

## RESUME FORMATS

**Chronological:** The Chronological resume is organized by job titles with the most recent position listed first. For job seekers with solid experience and a logical job history, the chronological resume is the most effective. Career changers and those who lack formal on-the-job experience (like new graduates) find this resume the most difficult to write. The experience section in a chronological resume must concisely emphasize your most important duties with a company, skills used that apply to your career goals, awards or achievements, and specific benefits you brought to the company. Dates should be placed in the right-hand margin, so that they are easy to follow. If you have gaps in your employment you should try switching to a different format and using only years.

**Functional:** The Functional resume rearranges employment history into sections that highlight areas of skill and accomplishment. This type of resume might be thought of as a "problem solving" format. It gives you the opportunity to "make sense" of your work history and match up skills and accomplishments that might not be obvious to the employer. It is especially useful if you are a new college graduate, have large gaps in your work history, or especially if you are making a career change -- either changing fields (from substance abuse to children and families) or changing occupation (from social worker to teacher.).

**Combination:** The Combination resume is really a cross of the best from the Functional and Chronological resume styles. It offers the writer an opportunity to improvise in the development of the resume. The Combination resume is best used when:

- You have some relevant work experience that is of short duration.
- Your education is an important part of your overall skills presentation.
- Your overall background reflects a range of unrelated skills.
- Your work history reflects more time in other occupational areas.

Because the combination resume allows you to use the best of the Functional and Chronological style resumes, it can reflect solid career development very easily. For many people, this format generally works best. It allows you to market all of your best points of your experience and abilities in the experience section, and then back it up with your work history in chronological order.

## CAPABILITIES

Depending what type of resume format you use, this section is not required. If you have special or transferable skills that you think should be highlighted and don't fit into any other category, this is the place to put them. Some of these skills include: computer proficiency, bilingual, communication skills, teambuilding skills, and many others.

## **VOLUNTEER / COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Present these activities in the same format as jobs; give a heading which includes your title, name of organizations, dates and location. If your position involved leadership, or significant responsibilities, they can be included in the Experience section of your resume.

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, LICENSES, AND CERTIFICATIONS**

Always include your licenses and certifications in your resume. It is also recommended that you join NASW now, as it will be a valuable networking resource for you as a professional, and you are eligible for the student rate.

## **REFERENCES**

Have a separate sheet of references available for employers when they ask for them. Your reference page should be neat, with the same heading as your resume. It is not really necessary to include references available upon request on the bottom of your resume since it just goes unspoken that you can provide references if asked.

## **FORMAT**

Your resume should maintain an eye-pleasing balance: in other words, the entire sheet should not be filled with words. The utilization of white space is important in creating an attractive resume. Here are some things you should look for:

- Hold your resume at arm's length and see how it looks.
- Is the page too busy with different type styles, sizes, lines, or boxes?
- Is the information spaced well, not crowded on the page?
- Is there too much "white space"?

### **DO**

- Write your resume for your future, not your past
- Emphasize your skills and accomplishments
- Be direct, well-organized, and professional
- Communicate your strongest points first
- Leave a comfortable margin on all sides (usually .5 to 1 inch)
- Always try to fit your resume onto one page, no more than two. If you do go past one page, make it at least a page and a half or two full pages.
- Print on one side of the sheet only, on high-quality bond – white or off-white (i.e. beige or ivory)
- Have several different people check your resume

### **DON'T**

- Use personal data (birth date, marital status, health etc.)
- Use lengthy sentences and descriptions
- Use first person
- List salary requirements / history
- Write "Resume of Qualifications" at the top or "References Available Upon Request" at the bottom
- Write reasons for leaving a job
- Use weak adjectives; ie: "some knowledge of Spanish"
- Don't highlight skills that you don't want to use again

# RESUME SAMPLE – CHRONOLOGICAL

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## MARY BAKER

1006 Candlewood  
Austin, Texas 78712

(512) 555-9845  
mbaker@mail.utexas.edu

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<b>EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS</b>	<b>The University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work</b> , Austin, Texas	9/09 – 1/11
	<i>Research Assistant</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assisted with the promotion, recruitment and development of Texas Addiction Training Center Student Support Program.</li><li>Assisted in monitoring budget and developed financial status reports.</li><li>Coordinated and organized program records and maintained ongoing communication with students.</li><li>Developed and co-authored course plan entitled "Women and Addiction: From Adolescence to Adulthood."</li></ul>	
	<b>Texas Migrant Council/CCMS (Child Care Management Services)</b> , Austin Texas	1/11 - 5/11
	<i>MSSW Internship</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assessed socio-economical needs and provided supportive counseling to children and families.</li><li>Consulted with schools, agencies and day care centers to facilitate services for families.</li><li>Connected families to community resources.</li><li>Co-facilitated various groups including social skills groups with children ages 3-12, teen parenting group, adult women's support group, and staff support group.</li></ul>	
	<b>Inner Resources Women's and Children's Recovery Center</b> , Las Cruces, New Mexico	9/07 - 12/10
	<i>Social Worker</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developed and implemented various programmatic components, including a relapse curriculum program for women and an agency wide food stamp exchange policy.</li><li>Coordinated all social services for up to 21 clients residing at the facility.</li><li>Conducted group sessions pertaining to life skills, job development and addiction recovery.</li><li>Documented client services in compliance with agency policy and contract requirements.</li><li>Chosen as "Counselor of the Year, 2002" by supervisors.</li></ul>	
<b>VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Austin Housing Authority</b> , Austin, Texas	1/07-5/08
	<b>U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman's Office</b> , Las Cruces, New Mexico	8/05-5/06
	<b>Families and Youth Inc.</b> , Las Cruces New Mexico	9/04-5/06
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Master of Science in Social Work</b> The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas	5/2011 Anticipated
	<b>Bachelor of Social Work</b> New Mexico State University, Las Cruces New Mexico Generalist Practice	5/2006
<b>HONORS &amp; AFFILIATIONS</b>	Member of Phi Alpha Honor Society Awarded Charles W. Laughton Memorial Endowed Presidential Scholarship Member, National Association of Social Workers	

# RESUME SAMPLE – FUNCTIONAL

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## *Janet C. Smith*

5009 Willow Park Drive, Austin, Texas, 78712, (512) 555-7315

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### *Social Work*

- Supported six female clients with HIV and their children with focus on medical and health issues
- Co-facilitated six-week support and educational group for parents with HIV/AIDS
- Counseled students with major/career concerns and promoted further resources
- Evaluated issues of students in order to provide appropriate student services
- Assessed needs and prepared support services for persons with developmental and physical disabilities

### *Planning and Organization*

- Designed comprehensive support and educational group, “Parenting with HIV/AIDS”
- Developed informational handbook for clients newly diagnosed with HIV
- Organized and publicized campus events for university campus and Austin community
- Constructed national newsletter discussing federal issues of mental retardation
- Coordinated major speaking event and distinguished panel to explore disability issues

### *Communication*

- Conversational speaking skills in Spanish language
- Taught activities to youth with and without mental retardation in Chile
- Facilitated discussions within small groups and formal settings
- Composed and presented ideas effectively for formal and spontaneous speeches
- Led and motivated organization members to achieve goals of community outreach

### *Education*

The University of Texas at Austin May 2011  
**Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Arts in Spanish**

Universidad Catolica De Valparaiso, Chile August 2009  
**Spanish Courses in Literature and Grammar**

### *Experience*

Career Center, Student Assistant, University of Texas at Austin August 2008 - May 2011  
HIV Services, BSW Intern, Austin/Travis Co. Health Department January 2010 - May 2011  
President’s Committee on Mental Retardation, Volunteer, Washington, D.C. June 2010 – August 2010  
Tukuyapaj-Chile, ESL Tutor, Valparaiso, Chile June 2008-September 2009  
YMCA, Youth Counselor, Valparaiso, Chile June 2007-September 2008

### *Community Service*

The University of Texas Leadership Board, Facilitator, Interviewer, Organizer December 2010-May 2011  
Mortar National Honor Society, Chair of Community Service January 2009 – May 2011  
Texas Spirits, Alumni Relations September 2009 -December 2010  
Best Buddies Director, Membership Coordinator September 2007 – May 2008

### *Honor and Affiliations*

National Association of Social Workers  
Mortar Board National Honor Society  
Dean’s List, The University of Texas at Austin  
Dean’s Ambassador for Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin

# RESUME SAMPLE – COMBINATION

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## KENDALL ANDREWS

12345 Brooksville Ave.  
Austin, TX 78704

(512) 555-3465  
kandrews@mail.utexas.edu

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### CAPABILITIES

- Knowledge of different treatment approaches, including play therapy, brief therapy and solution-focused therapy
- Experience working with diverse populations; proficient knowledge of conversational Spanish, both verbal and written
- Expertise in identifying group dynamics and resolving ethical issues
- Strong crisis management skills
- Proven experience conducting detailed assessments of clients for drug and alcohol related issues

### EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Workers Assistance Program, Austin, Texas

#### **MSSW Intern**

1/11 – 5/11

- Counseled individuals, couples, and adolescents using brief therapy in an Employee Assistance Program setting
- Case-managed procedural referrals and alcohol/drug cases
- Was responsible for counseling clients upon intake, screening and assessment

Salvation Army, Austin, Texas

#### **MSSW Intern**

9/08 – 5/10

- Performed intake casework, case-managed clients, assisted with employment program (homeless population)
- Collected baseline research data; published outcome effectiveness assessment report
- Facilitated a Life Skills group for clients facing homelessness, mental health issues and substance abuse

Motorola, Austin, Texas

#### **Principal Staff Member**

7/96 – 7/08

- Interfaced with customers to solve problems and support applications
- Collaborated within a team environment while supervising over 30 employees

### EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin

**Master of Science in Social Work**, Concentration: Clinical Social Work

Anticipated 5/2011

The University of Texas at Austin

**Bachelor of Arts in Psychology**

2004

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services – Runaway Hot Line**

9/06 – present

**Johnston High School**, Tutor

9/08 – 5/09

**Alternative Learning Center**, Tutor

9/06 – 9/08

**Christmas Bureau**, Volunteer

2000 – 2010

### AFFILIATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND HONORS

Certified Cognitive Behavioral Therapist (CCBT)

Member, National Association of Social Workers

Chosen “2007 Volunteer of the Year,” Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

THANK-YOU LETTER SAMPLE

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**MARY BAKER**

1006 Candlewood  
Austin, Texas 78712

(512) 555-9845  
mbaker@mail.utexas.edu

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Tammy Blake  
Personnel Director  
Texas Agency on Family Violence  
83062 N. Mopac Expressway  
Austin, TX 78759

Dear Ms. Blake:

I would like to thank you for taking time to meet with me this past Wednesday to discuss the MSSW internship opportunity you have available in your agency. I enjoyed speaking with you about the position and really appreciate you answering my questions. After speaking with you and learning more about Texas Agency on Family Violence, I feel strongly that my background in working with children and families, and my research on domestic violence issues would be a great fit for your position. I feel it would be a mutually beneficial relationship for your agency and me.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. Once again thank you for your consideration and I look forward to the possibility of working with you next spring.

Sincerely,

Mary Baker

# SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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In each and every interview situation, there are common questions that will be asked. Don't wait until the interview to decide your response! Be prepared and think through your answers before you arrive. It may even help to write down your answers and practice with someone. Try to keep your answers brief, usually less than 2 minutes. Remember, **listening**, **confidence** and **quality of presentation** are the keys to successful interviewing.

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in this agency?
3. What are your experiences with the (target population)?
4. What kind of supervision do you expect?
5. How has your education / work experience prepared you for this position?
6. What do you hope to accomplish at this agency?
7. What would you like to learn here?
8. Have you done this type of work in the past?
9. What schedule will work for you?
10. What are your career goals for the next 5 years? The next 10 years?
11. What are some of your strengths? Some of your weaknesses?
12. How do you define success for yourself?
13. What is your work style?
14. How do you work with others?
15. Are you a leader ... a follower?
16. Direct Practice Question: What is your practice framework? What is your clinical style?
17. Administration and Planning: What type of research skills / computer skills do you have? What specific policy issues are you interested in?
18. What is your ideal position and career path?
19. Is there anything you would like to say to close the interview?
20. Do you have any questions? YES! You should always have questions!

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK OF AN INTERVIEWER:

1. What do you like best about working at this agency?
2. How often, and by whom will I be supervised?
3. Are there opportunities for professional development within and beyond the agency itself?
4. What do you think would be the most challenging experiences for a social work intern in your agency?
5. What do you think would be the most rewarding experiences for a social work intern in your agency?
6. How are expectations for students different from those for agency staff?
7. What are the agency's service delivery strengths and weaknesses?
8. To what extent do students have opportunity to offer input into administration and planning?
9. What can I count on from the agency to assist me in my professional development?
10. What is the typical career path of social workers within this field/agency?
11. To what extent will I have the opportunity to network with other agencies, or other professionals in the field?
12. How would you describe the organizational culture of this agency?