

The résumé is an essential tool for your job search. It provides a brief description of you, your experience, your education and any relevant experience that can promote your candidacy. A résumé is like an advertisement: it must attract attention, be brief, to the point and generate interest from employers to learn more about you.

The average employer will take less than one minute to scan a résumé, that's why it needs to be brief and to the point. The employer needs to find out quickly if you have the qualifications for the position. Therefore, your résumé shouldn't exceed 2 pages and the most important information should be found on the first page.

As well, it is important to mention that there is not one perfect résumé. In fact the effectiveness of a résumé will be influenced by:

- ✓ The type of résumé used according to the experience and skills of the individual
- ✓ The information included and how it is organised
- ✓ The words used, including action verbs, keywords and qualifiers
- ✓ The position or field of work it is tailored for (i.e. accounting versus graphic design)

TYPE OF RÉSUMÉS

THE CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

The chronological résumé is the type of résumé most often used. It's also the résumé employers are most comfortable with. Therefore, you should choose this format unless it does not allow you to market your skills effectively.

The chronological résumé highlights work experiences acquired (paid or volunteered), in a reverse chronological order (i.e. beginning with the most recent experience). It also highlights key duties you've performed for each experience you've had.

"A chronological résumé may not market your skills as well as a combination résumé if you have gaps in employment, no directly related experience or not enough experience."

(Advanced Techniques for Work Search. Alberta Employment and Immigration, p.40)

THE FUNCTIONAL OR SKILLS-BASED RÉSUMÉ

The functional or skills-based résumé highlights the skills you acquired during your work, school or volunteer experiences.

Considering that some employers do not respond favourably to this type of résumé, it should only be used in situations where a chronological or a combination résumé does not efficiently demonstrate your skills or ability to do the job. For example, you have no related experience yet you have acquired relevant qualifications for the job.

Writing a functional résumé is tricky, since you have to use skills to talk about your work experience or qualifications, as well as provide examples (that are not job descriptions) to illustrate these skills. For example, tasks for an assistant professor could be translated to critical thinking skills and descriptions to illustrate this skill could be: *Identified scientific articles relevant to topics presented by the professor or analysed scientific articles to gather relevant information.*

The functional résumé also needs to have a work history section where you will list, in reverse chronological order, your different work experiences (paid or volunteer) without providing a job description. Ideally, you should also include in this type of résumé experiences that have helped you gain these skills (i.e. extracurricular activities, relevant courses or projects, etc.) so the employer can have an idea of where you developed those skills.

THE COMBINATION RÉSUMÉ

A combination résumé offers the advantage of combining a description of your accomplishments and the skills you have developed, while providing details about your work experience. It differs from a chronological résumé in that it includes a skills and achievement section that will precede the employment history.

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Ideally, your résumé should be designed to match the requirements of a specific position or sector of activity. It should demonstrate your relevant skills, knowledge and experience in regards to the position. As well, it can include accomplishments that illustrate your interests, skills, knowledge or personality traits, to ensure your compatibility with the work environment.

The information provided should be grouped under several headings to make it easier for the employer to find the information.

ESSENTIAL HEADINGS

- **PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION:** name, address, telephone number, email, etc.
- **EDUCATION** (or training):

List the degrees, certificates or trainings you have completed or are presently taking. As well, you need to indicate the schools you have attended along with the exact dates when you began and finished these degrees or trainings. You can include in this section the scholarships, bursaries, awards or distinctions you've received, as well as courses that are particularly relevant to the position.

If you have a degree or collegial diploma (CEGEP) you don't have to list your high-school diploma (unless stated in the job description), since this is usually a prerequisite for any post-secondary program.

This section shouldn't take more than a third of a page. If so, you may want to have two headings: one for the degrees relevant to the position, and one that will include relevant trainings or workshops you've taken (i.e. additional training) or awards and scholarships you received.

- **WORK EXPERIENCE** (or relevant experience if you want to include volunteer experiences or internships)

List the jobs you've held, in reverse chronological order. Include on the same line as the job title (before or beside it) the time you worked in this position (start and end date). As well, you need to include, under each job title, the name of the company and its location. You need to provide this information even if you are doing a functional résumé. For the chronological or combination résumé you should include, under each work experience, the main duties you performed.

The description of your duties should start with the ones that are most relevant to the job or require the most responsibilities. Some employers will only read the first 2 to 3 descriptions for each work experience. So you do not want them to remember you as the candidate that cleaned the kitchen or stocked shelves.

When describing your responsibilities, it's important to use action verbs and key words (common to the industry or that are listed in the job advertisement). This will add punch to the description of your responsibilities and reflect your experience and knowledge of the job. As well, try to include qualifiers, and quantifiers to add depth and focus to your descriptions.

Example: "Trained summer staff" **versus** "Effectively trained 20 summer employees to use the in house inventory system"
"Redesigned the filing system to significantly improve time spent retrieving client files".

If your work experience is not directly related to the position, emphasize transferable skills. For example, instead of writing: *set up tables for a waitressing position*, you may want to write: *provided customer service in a very busy environment or identified solutions that met customers' requests while respecting in house policies*.

- **SKILLS** (for the functional résumé)

For the functional résumé, you need to identify 3 to 5 skills that can group all your qualifications and that are relevant to the position you are applying for. These skills should not overlap in meaning such as supervision and management skills. As well, you will need to describe this skill in 3 to 7 points.

Again, when describing your skills, it's important to use action verbs, key words as well as qualifiers, and quantifiers to add depth and focus to your descriptions. You may also need to add generic information (setting, population, etc.) to help the employer know the context in which you acquired this skill (i.e. planned meetings versus planned meetings for a team that included different professionals in the health care field).

You can also draw upon your academic, extracurricular or volunteer experiences to describe your skills as long as the reader knows the setting, and does not think you have done this work in one of your paid positions.

OPTIONAL HEADINGS

▪ CAREER OBJECTIVE

This section is a one to three lines description of the kind of position you're seeking and why.

Ideally, it would be preferable to include this information on your cover letter. However, it may be difficult to write a personalised cover letter in situations such as job fairs. This is when it's ideal to have this information on your résumé.

“Creating an effective objective statement is tricky. If your objective is too specific, you may limit your opportunities. However, vague statements such as : “ To obtain a challenging position with a progressive company that will allow me to grow and develop my analytical and problem solving skill” are not likely to grab an employer’s attention”
(Advanced Techniques for Work Search. Alberta Employment and Immigration, p.51)

▪ SKILLS OR SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATION :

This section provides a concise overview (point form or in a paragraph) of your qualifications. It demonstrates, in 3 to 5 phrases or points, how your qualifications match the job's requirements. It can include:

The number of years in the relevant position
Relevant education, skills or accomplishments
Personal characteristics that make you an ideal candidate for the position

Ideally, you need to tailor this section to each position you apply on. Do not copy word for word information found on the job advertisement. Instead, use synonyms or key words specific to this field of work. As well, avoid repeating information that can be found elsewhere in your résumé (i.e. tasks you did in a specific position). Finally, the information found in your work experience section should back up any statements made in this section.

This is where you can highlight your level of verbal and/or written competency in another language than English or mention your knowledge of specific computer softwares relevant to the position.

▪ VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE OR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITES :

In this section, it is important not to overload your résumé with information that is not related to the job description. Only provide information about your skills or personality traits that are relevant to the position. Being a member of the softball association of your hometown may not be relevant to the position you are applying for, unless you happen to be the one in charge of recruitment.

If relevant, you may want to describe some of the tasks that you assumed as a volunteer.

For each experience, you need to list the organization as well as the start and end date of this experience. Although it is illegal to discriminate based on religious or political affiliation, it is best not to include information that can provide such information.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

List the courses, workshops, seminar that you have completed or attended that may be relevant to the position. Include the proper and complete name of the course, name of the institution who offered this (with its location), as well as when you took this additional training.

▪ **AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

List each award, along with the name of the institution that awarded it and the date you received it. Explain the significance of the award if it is not clear from the award's title (i.e.: The Smits Family Award versus Canadian Outstanding Business Student Award). List your awards in a reverse chronological order.

▪ **PUBLICATIONS**

List in bibliographic format only those publications that would interest the reader.

TAILORING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Tailoring your résumé means highlighting relevant qualifications to show an employer that you have the skills, experience and training they are looking for. If your résumé is tailored to the positions that interest you, this should only involve changing one or two job descriptions so they demonstrate more effectively your ability to do the job.

To tailor your résumé, you need:

- To understand the job requirements
- To have a good idea of the employer and what are the skills or personality traits he values (some of this information can be found on the company's Website)
- Describe your qualifications in keywords and phrases that are the same or similar to those that appear on the job posting

Tailoring your résumé may also mean changing the order of your résumé. For example, if an employer specifies on the job posting that the candidate must have an undergraduate degree, than you need to make sure that that information regarding your education is on the first page.

PRESENTATION OF YOUR RÉSUMÉ

- Ideally you should use standard word processing font such as Arial, Times or Courier, size 11 or 12. Unless you are in an artistic field and want to demonstrate your skills
- Leave space between headings as well as between job descriptions, so it is easier to read.
- Use bulleted lists that allow employers to read your resume quickly
- Avoid underling information or using italic or too many font sizes. This will distract the reader and make it harder for him or her to read your résumé
- Be sure your name and phone number are on each page of your résumé

LAST PIECE OF ADVICE

- Websites such as the National Occupational Classification, Career Cruising or O* NET are great websites to help you write your job descriptions, since they provide a detailed description for most jobs found throughout Canada's labour market.

🔗 <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC>

🔗 <http://public.careercruising.com/ca/en>

🔗 <http://www.onetonline.org/>

- Present and past job postings can also help you identify keywords, the tasks that are relevant to the position, and help you write your resume.
- Have someone, who is not in your field of work, read your résumé to see if he or she understands it. You need to include key words in your résumé, yet it needs to be understood by individuals who may not know the work (i.e. human resource consultants).
- As well, have someone proofread your résumé so you are sure that it's free of spelling or grammatical errors. Don't rely on your spellcheck tool since it may not catch omitted words or errors in usage.
- Save your résumé as a PDF document. This way, the layout of your résumé will remain the same, even if the employer is not using the same word processing program.

EXAMPLE OF A CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

Audrey Girard

123 King Street
Sherbrooke (Quebec) J0G 2F9

(819) 822-8900
Email: AGirard@hotmail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATION

Experience in assigning tasks and supervising employees. Solid experience and knowledge in providing customer service and resolving customers' complaints in French or English. Knowledge of the tasks involved in maintaining inventories. Dedicated team player who can remain calm and focused in stressful or time constraint situations. Ability to identify and respond appropriately to shifting priorities.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Acting Assistant Manager - Sales Associate 2012-
Great Store, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Supervise and co-ordinate the work of five sales associates and cashiers
- Authorize the return of merchandise according to the company's policies
- Resolve problems that arise, such as customer or employees complaints and supply shortages
- Participate in the recruitment and training process of sales associates
- Inform manager of all irregular situations as well as decisions taken during my shift to ensure appropriate follow up

President Super Student Association 2013 -
Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Prepare and conduct meetings
- Maintain regular contact with professors, academic advisors and student association representatives to remain informed on issues relevant to the members and advocate on their behalf
- Represent the Association at different official functions and events
- Act as a signing officer

Student Tutor 2010 - 2013
Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Assessed, with the students, their learning style and needs
- Identified, with the students, their learning goals for the session
- Research information and exercises that can facilitate student learning experience
- Met students on a weekly basis to help them with their homework

Sales Associate

2010 - 2012

Great Store, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Assessed clients' needs to recommend the appropriate goods or services
- Researched technical information on goods sold to provide accurate information to customers
- Prepared sales, warranty and delivery documents
- Operated a computerized inventory record keeping and re-ordering systems

EDUCATION

Bachelor Business Administration – concentration Accounting

2011 -

Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

Diploma of Collegial Studies

2009 - 2011

Champlain College, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Vice President of the Lennoxville Soccer Association

2011 - 2013

Lennoxville Soccer Association, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

Girl Guides Leader

2009 - 2011

Girl Guides Canada, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

EXAMPLE OF A FUNCTIONAL RESUME

SUZANNE TREMBLAY

123 King Street
Sherbrooke (Quebec) J0G 2F9

(819) 822-5767
Email: stremblay11@hotmail.com

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position where I can put into practice the knowledge I have acquired regarding teaching skills for special needs students. To work for a School Board that welcomes new projects and strives to provide great learning experiences to students.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Education Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)	2011 -
Diploma of Collegial Studies Dawson College, Montreal (Quebec)	2009 - 2011

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Teaching skills

- Planned and taught lessons to special needs and regular elementary classes
- Adapted learning material to the learning needs of the students
- Developed and implemented different classroom management strategies
- Took part in the learning evaluation of students

Counselling skills

- Provided confidential counseling services to youth regarding personal, family or relationship issues over the phone
- Assessed the individual's concerns and referred him /her to the appropriate services
- Researched information regarding specific health or personal issues to enhance services provided

Administrative Support

- Performed administrative and secretarial support functions for a small organization
- Provided confidential reception services and scheduled appointments
- Prepared relevant documents for new customers
- Purchased office equipment and verified orders

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Teacher – Internship Eastern Township School Board, Sherbrooke (Quebec)	2013
President Super Student Association Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)	2013 -
Receptionist (part-time and summers) The Family Community Center, Montreal (Quebec)	2010 – 2013
Crisis Worker –Volunteer Tel-jeunes, Montreal (Quebec)	2009 - 2011

AWARDS AND BURSARIES

- Attained Dean's list and Honor Roll status for outstanding grade point average (2009 – 2011)
- Received the Thomson Scholarship for academic achievement and community involvement (2001)

EXAMPLE OF A COMBINATION RESUME

Laura Smitt

123 King Street
Sherbrooke (Quebec) J0G 2F9

(819) 822 -27846

Email: laurasmitt@gmail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATION

- Experience in providing counseling and tutoring services to youth and university students
- Great abilities in planning and implementing activities adapted to the developmental stage of participants
- Knowledge of the tasks involved in leading and supervising employees
- Experience in providing customer service
- Great leadership, conflict resolution and communication skills
- Bilingual

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts – Psychology 2011 -
Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

Diploma of Collegial Studies 2009 - 2011
Dawson College, Montreal (Quebec)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Student Tutor 2013 -
Bishops' University, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Assess, with the students, their learning style and needs
- Identify, with the students, their learning goals for the session
- Research information and exercises that can facilitate student learning experience
- Meet students on a weekly basis to help them with their homework

Acting Assistant Manager - Sales Associate 2012-
Great Store, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

- Supervise and co-ordinate the work of five sales associates and cashiers
- Authorize the return of merchandise according to the company's policies
- Resolve problems that arise, such as customer or employees complaints and supply shortages
- Participate in the recruitment and training process of sales associates
- Inform manager of all irregular situations and decisions taken during my

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

City Camp Co-coordinator 2011 - 2012
City of Montreal (Quebec)

- Actively participated in planning and delivering summer staff training
- Planned day camp special events
- Planned and distributed weekly program schedules for all activities to staff
- Remained visible and accessible to staff for any concerns or to provide extra support

Assistant Day Care Worker 2009 - 2011
ABC Day Care, Montreal (Quebec)

- Observed and monitored children's play activities
- Instructed children in health and personal habits such as eating, resting, and toilet habits
- Organized and participated in recreational activities
- Read, sang to children, and taught them simple songs
- Assisted in preparing and serving food to the children

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Crisis Worker –Volunteer 2009 - 2011
Tel-jeunes, Montreal (Quebec)

Girl Guides Leader 2008 - 2010
Girl Guides Canada, Sherbrooke (Quebec)

ACTION VERBS

Action verbs add punch to descriptions of your accomplishments, responsibilities and activities. Use them as the first words in bulleted lists of skills, accomplishments, and responsibilities.

• Accomplished	• Collected	• Distributed
• Achieved	• Communicated	• Distinguished
• Acted	• Compiled	• Drafted
• Adapted	• Completed	• Edited
• Addressed	• Composed	• Educated
• Administered	• Conceptualized	• Enabled
• Advised	• Conducted	• Encouraged
• Analyzed	• Consulted	• Enforced
• Anticipated	• Constructed	• Engineered
• Appraised	• Contributed	• Established
• Approved	• Controlled	• Estimated
• Arbitrated	• Co-ordinated	• Evaluated
• Assembled	• Counselling	• Examined
• Assessed	• Created	• Experimented
• Assigned	• Decided	• Explained
• Attained	• Decreased	• Facilitated
• Audited	• Defined	• Focused
• Budgeted	• Delegated	• Forecast
• Built	• Designed	• Gathered
• Calculated	• Detected	• Generated
• Chaired	• Developed	• Guided
• Classified	• Diagnosed	• Identified

• Implemented	• Monitored	• Referred
• Improved	• Motivated	• Repaired
• Increased	• Navigated	• Reported
• Influenced	• Negotiated	• Represented
• Informed	• Observed	• Researched
• Initiated	• Opened	• Restructured
• Inspected	• Operated	• Retrieved
• Installed	• Ordered	• Reviewed
• Instructed	• Organised	• Scheduled
• Integrated	• Oversaw	• Selected
• Interpreted	• Perceived	• Set up
• Interviewed	• Performed	• Simplified
• Introduced	• Persuaded	• Specified
• Invented	• Planned	• Solved
• Inventoried	• Presented	• Strengthened
• Investigated	• Prioritized	• Summarized
• Launched	• Processed	• Supervised
• Learned	• Programmed	• Supported
• Lectured	• Promoted	• Surveyed
• Led	• Proposed	• Taught
• Listened	• Publicized	• Trained
• Maintained	• Questioned	• Translated
• Managed	• Recommended	• Transferred
• Manipulated	• Reconciled	• Upgraded
• Mediated	• Recorded	• Validated