



WRITING YOUR RESUME

“The purpose of a resume is to get you the job interview;
the interview gets you the job.”

Anonymous

Introduction

- Before you finish college, you will need to develop your own customized resume
- Designing your resume is a necessity for most all jobs whether it is for an internship, part-time job, a teacher, CEO, health or sports professional

Resume Writing

- Developing an effective resume is an important aspect between employment and unemployment
- Not all resumes need to look the same
- Different people need to emphasize things in different ways
- The three R's, which must be considered in resume writing, are research, research, and research
 - Research the school/organization
 - Research the position
 - Research Yourself

Research the school/ organization

- Read literature the school/organization has in career libraries, use the information highway, internet or call the school district/organization
- Find out the name of the supervisor and give him/her a call
- Ask if there are openings in your field, explain that you are trying to decide whether to apply to their school/organization, ask for recommendations for the next steps, thank the person for the information, and ask whom your resume should be directed

Research the position

- The more you know about the position, the better you will be in selling yourself and to write your resume to that position
- Seek to interview someone who does the same job
- Ask questions such as: what kind of turnover the department experiences, what they like about the position and the company, what they dislike about it, and whether they value education over experience (or vice versa)

Research yourself

- Certain information is needed to evaluate your qualifications and determine if you meet the requirements necessary in obtaining a job
- If your resume or application does not provide all the information requested in the job vacancy announcement, you may lose consideration for the job
- Remember, your goal is to get the job that you will enjoy because even two or three years are an eternity in spending in a job you do not like

Key Components of a Resume

- The key components include format, appearance, length and content
- The format chosen will depend on the job you wish to obtain
- Appearance often determines if the resume is reviewed so it should be concise and organized
- Your resume should be completed on a word-processor and professionally copied with high quality white or off-white paper

Key Components of a Resume

- There must be no typographical errors
- The length of the resume will vary; usually a one-page resume works well for recent graduates and an individual with extensive work experience will require two pages
- Limit information to what is pertinent to the current job objective

Key Components of a Resume

- The content of the resume should have a clear objective with the information presented relative to the objective
- Information should be included in descending order of importance
- Remember, the purpose of a resume is to get the interview; the interview gets you the job

Cover Letter

- Your cover letter is a personalized letter that is your first opportunity to introduce yourself, present your qualifications and show the search committee that you are a potential candidate for the position
- It presents your intentions, availability and indicates that you are serious about your job search
- A cover letter must entice the reader to consider you amidst hundreds or even thousands of candidates for any job opening

Suggestions for Writing Your Cover Letter

- Personalize it to the organization, Find out whom to write to as it differs with various careers. Never write “To whom it may concern.”
- State the reason for your interest in the organization. Show that you have done your homework by mentioning organization specifics and address the cover letter to a specific individual whenever possible
- State your intentions and qualifications up front. Make sure they understand why you are sending your resume
- Tell what makes you different? Highlight your strengths. Emphasize your talents, experiences and your skills to show that you would be a valuable addition to the team. Also, briefly include volunteer or professional experience

Suggestions for Writing Your Cover Letter

- Do not include negative information. Never include conflicts with previous employers, pending litigation suits or sarcastic remarks
- Be direct! Clean, error-free presentation, combined with strong phrasing and solid facts will encourage the reader to review the attached resume and call you for an interview
- Do not include salary or relocation information unless a prospective employer requests it
- Take action steps. Use a proactive approach in your cover letter. State the fact that you are available for a personal interview; give your home, work, email and/or cell phone numbers where you can be reached; note that you will follow up by phone to provide any additional information required

Types of Resumes

- There are three types of resumes
 - Chronological
 - Functional
 - Chronological/Functional (combination)

Use the type of resume that best suits your career objectives

Chronological Resume

- Presents your education and work experience in a straightforward, reverse chronological order
- If the majority of your work experience is related to your stated job objective, the chronological style can be effective

Functional or Skills Resume

- Concentrates on the skills that you have used that relate to your stated objective rather than on the job(s) you have had
- A functional/skills resume is effective if your work experience has not been closely related to your job objective, if you are changing careers, or if you are seeking a promotion
- In this format you elaborate on the skills necessary to perform the desired job and how you have demonstrated those same skills in a different type of job(s).

Chronological/Functional Resume

- The combination of the chronological and functional resume, which uses elements of both styles
- The skills section (also called qualifications) identifies your skills in relation to your job objective, but does not elaborate on your experiences or accomplishments for each skill mentioned
- This format can be effective if at least some of your work experience is related to your job objective and you want to outline some highlights of your work

Resume Content

- Your resume or application should contain the following categories. These are suggestions: adopt those categories that best fit your career objective
 - Job information. Announcement number, and title and grade(s) of the job for which you are applying
 - Personal data. Full name, mailing address (with zip code), day/evening phone numbers (with area code). Your name should be the most obvious piece of information. Provide an e-mail address if applicable
 - Key word skills, if appropriate. Usually just below the objective or below education. Key word skills are like a table of contents or an outline, which you are saying, “I am going to tell you more in the experience section.”

General Guidelines for Resumes

- Limit resume to one page or if you have an extensive employment history no more than two pages
- Limit your information to what is important to their job objective
- Place the most important information on the first page if you elect to submit a two-page resume
- Make sure the format is well organized and concise. An organized resume determines whether a resume is read

General Guidelines for Resumes

- Use white or off-white high quality paper
- Always type or word-process your resume and have it professionally copied
- Make sure the resume is free of misspelled words, typographical errors, and grammatical errors. Handwritten information is unacceptable
- Have a friend or professional edit your resume
- Design the resume with a specific objective. Present information important to the objective first

General Guidelines for Resumes

- List information in descending order of importance
- Be selective about the information you include in resume
- Never exaggerate or falsify information
- Sell yourself. Attract attention to your special qualities
- Concentrate on the positive and use action words to highlight your personal traits

Dangers in Resume Writing

- Appearances. Use good quality paper, check for typos, grammatical errors and stains. Use the spell-check and ask a friend to review the resume to find mistakes
- Too long. Resumes should be one page and if your career warrants a two-page, create a document that reflects the full range of your accomplishments and experiences. Don't reduce the type size that your resume becomes difficult to read. If you need assistance to complete the resume ask a career center professional

Dangers in Resume Writing

- Grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors. Errors suggest poor education, lack of intelligence and carelessness. Don't rely on spell-checkers or grammar-checkers on the computer. Solicit a minimum of two other proofreaders before submitting
- Too sparse. Provide more than the bare essentials, especially when describing related work experience, skills, activities, interests, etc. and include professional memberships

Dangers in Resume Writing

- Hard to read. A copied or poorly typed resume looks unprofessional. Use a computer, plain typeface, and 10-14 font. Asterisks, bullets, underlining, boldface type and italics should be used only to make the document easier to read. Ask for professional assistance
- Too verbose. Using too many words to say too little. Be careful using jargon and use only if specific to your career and avoid slang. Say as much as possible with a few words. A, an and the can almost always be left out

Dangers in Resume Writing

- Irrelevant information. Customize each resume to each position you seek. Always include education and relevant work experience such as skills, accomplishments, activities and hobbies. Do not include marital status, age, sex, children, height, weight, health, religious preference, etc....
- Too generic. Apply for the position advertised, not just any job or position

Dangers in Resume Writing

- Boring. Resume should be dynamic. Begin every statement with an action verb. Use action verbs, describing what you accomplished on the job. Avoid repeating words, especially the first word in a section.
- Use quality bond paper. Organizations are scanning resumes into a database, so use white paper, black ink, plain type and avoid symbols, underlining or italics
- Sell you. Put your best qualities forward without misrepresentation, arrogance or falsification

Dangers in Resume Writing

- No extra papers. Don't include copies of transcripts, awards, letters of recommendation, unless you are specifically asked to do so. If you are called in for an interview, bring these extra materials along in your briefcase to show-and-tell
- No personal information. Personal information does not belong on a resume. Do not include information on your age, ethnicity, family, or marital status

When to Update your Resume

- Time flies ... your resume does not include the past year of your accomplishments and work at your present job
- Address/telephone numbers ... information is still listed as your last home telephone number
- Technology update ... resume does not list computer software you have learned within the last two years
- Job accomplishments ... your last resume lists more fraternity, awards and college sports than your present job accomplishments

When to Update your Resume

- Career ... your old resume lists your previous jobs even though you have been in your present job for four years
- New job ... an opportunity for a new job but you must have your resume to the prospective employer by the next day
- Do you know where to find the current version of your resume on your hard drive?
- Organization layoffs ... rumors of layoffs are circulating. Is your current resume updated ready to seek another job opportunity?

Summary

- Resume writing is the first step to securing a job in your desired profession. Knowing the types of resumes and how to compose them will make the job search process easier. Having the general guidelines of appearance, objectives, certain dos and don'ts will tremendously improve your chances of getting the interview of a lifetime