

Resume Guide

For the person with little or no resume writing experience.

Resumes and application forms are two ways to provide employers with written evidence of your qualifications and skills. Generally, the same information appears on both a resume and an application form. The way it is presented differs.

There are many ways of organizing a good resume. Depending on the job, you should choose the format that best highlights your skills, training, and experience.

A resume must be very easy to read so that an employer can see at a glance who you are, where you can be reached, what kind of work you can do, and why you're qualified for that kind of work.

A resume should be short, preferable one page typewritten. It must be error free. It includes honest, positive information that is related to your job goal.

A good resume will open the door for an interview. Do you need a resume? Some employers prefer a resume and others require an application form. That depends on the kind of job you're applying for.

RESUME REQUIRED

- Professional, technical, administrative and managerial jobs.
- Sales positions.
- Secretarial, clerical, and other office jobs.

RESUME SOMETIMES REQUIRED

Professional positions: Baker, Hotel Clerk, Electrician, Drafter, Welder

RESUME NOT REQUIRED

Unskilled, quick turnover jobs: Fast Food Server, Laborers, Machine Loader, Cannery Worker

When do you use a resume?

- To respond to a want ad
- To give an employer more information about you than the job application gives
- To send to a company you'd like to work for
- To give to an interviewer so they will ask you about the positive things on your resume
- To leave with an employer after an interview as a reminder of your skills and abilities

Tips for good resumes

You need two types of information to prepare your resume

1. Self information.

Completing a background and experience list will give you the self information required to prepare your resume. If you've worked before, list your jobs. Next, write down the work duties for the jobs you've listed. Now, think about the skills or talents it took to do each work duty. Write them down. List your hobbies, clubs you belong to, sports you've been involved in, church and school activities, and things that interest you. Look at the first item on your list. Think about the skills or talents it takes to do that item. Write them all down. Look at the abilities (talents) identified on your background and experience list. You have talents that you use everyday. Now, find out what JOBS can use your talents. Don't limit yourself. The important thing is not the job title, but the skills and abilities of the job.

2. Job information.

Gather specific information on the job you're applying for. Here's what you need:

Job duties (to match your skills to the skills needed to do the job). Get your job duties from the job announcement. If the job announcement or ad is vague, call the employer and ask for a description of job duties. Education and experience required (again, so you can match your education and experience with that required for the job).

Hours and shifts usually worked. Pay range (don't sell yourself short, but be realistic...)

Selecting information for your resume

The best way to select information that belongs on your resume is to think like an employer. Ask yourself, "If I were hiring a person for this position, what training and experience would be related?" Give brief, specific, positive information that would be of interest to your next employer. Do not give unrelated or negative information.

A standard resume should include the following:

Contact information

Tell the employer your full name, street address, apartment number, city, state, zip code and telephone number (including area code).

Employment goal or job objective

Tell the employer the specific job you are interested in. Good examples are, "An entry-level clerical position", "A customer-service position in the retail industry", or, "A manufacturing position utilizing my five years of quality control experience." Avoid vague statements like, "A position with growth potential", or, "A challenging position with a stable company." Remember, keep it simple and to the point.

Summary of Qualifications

Tell the employer your major selling points in 3-5 lines. Be brief, summarize, give facts — not opinions. (*This section is optional*)

Work Experience or Work History

Tell the employer about your work experience in one of two ways — either by job titles and dates, or by functions and skills. Later in the publication you will see outlines and sample resumes which will help you decide which way would work best for you.

Education

Tell the employer about any job-related training or education. List your most recent training first.

If you are a recent graduate with little work experience, you might want to list the following information before your work history: the name of the school, the degree or certificate received, dates, course titles related to your job goal, scholarships, honors, grades, and extracurricular activities.

If you have been working for over five years, you don't need to give as much information about your education. Name the school, city, state, degree or certificate, or course work and dates (dates are optional).

Include your high school unless you have a higher degree. Never include your grade school or middle school.

Military Experience

Tell the employer the branch of service, your highest rank, type of discharge, and date of separation. List any special assignments, duties, clearances, collateral duties, and decorations that relate to the job that you are seeking. Technical military training can be listed under the Education heading on your resume. (A Military heading is only listed if you have military experience.)

Special Skills and Abilities

Tell the employer any other information you feel might help you. (This section is optional.) You might want to include information about knowledge of foreign languages, volunteer or leisure activities, memberships in professional organizations, special skills such as typing, computers, machines you can operate, licenses or certificates you possess. Do not provide personal information such as your age, sex, marital status, or handicaps.

References

Tell the employer simply that, "References are available upon request," or, "References gladly furnished upon request." Do not list references on your resume. Instead, have them typed on a separate sheet of paper and have them available if the employer asks for them. You should have three to five references listed. They should be people who know you and your work — not your relatives. Be sure to get each person's permission to use him or her as a reference.

10 Tips for the Effective Resume

1. If possible, use a computer to prepare your resume. There are computer programs that make it easy to produce a professional looking resume. Your Wisconsin Job Center, school, library, or quick print shop can help.
2. Do not include irrelevant personal information (age, weight, height, marital status, etc.).
3. Do not include salary and wages.
4. Center or justify all headings. Don't use abbreviations.
5. Be positive. Identify accomplishments.
6. Use action verbs. For more information, read the publication, "*The Right Words to Use in Your Job Search*" (DETJ-9463-P) <http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/publications/9463/default.htm>.
7. Be specific. Use concise sentences, Keep it short (one page is best).
8. Make sure your resume "looks good" (neat and readable).
9. Proofread the master copy carefully. Have someone else proofread the master copy carefully.
10. Inspect photocopies for clarity, smudges and marks. Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper, 1-2 pages

Resume Checklist

- Choose ivory, white, cream, buff or light gray paper
- Use personal computer, word processor, typewriter or typesetting
- Keep margins 1" wide at sides and bottom
- Check for and correct any spelling, punctuation, typing or grammatical errors
- Write short and to-the-point statements
- Keep it brief; write a summary, not a life history!
- Use short phrases beginning with action words to demonstrate accomplishments and results
- Provide positive and honest information
- Use a simple, professional, easy-to-read style
- Have others look it over to make sure it's perfect
- Leave off personal information such as height, weight, age, sex, marital status
- Emphasize important information by underlining or using capital letters when appropriate, but don't overdo it
- Don't list wages, company street addresses, references, salary requirements, personal problems
- Provide examples of your qualifications
- Look at your resume through the eyes of an employer and ask yourself, "If I were an employer, would I want to interview this person?"

Resume Worksheet

Name, Address, City/State, Zip Code, Telephone (with Area Code)

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE (optional)

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

WORK HISTORY List at least 3 jobs, most recent jobs first.

Job Title:

Job Duties/Accomplishments: Company Name:

City, State:

Dates of Employment (year to year):

SPECIAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES EDUCATION:

Technical School and/or College:

City, State:

Dates Attended:

Degree/Certificate or courses taken:

High School:

City, State: Dates Attended:

Diploma or courses taken:

MILITARY EXPERIENCE: (optional and if not used elsewhere on this resume)

Branch of Service:

Highest Rank:

Type of Discharge:

Year of Separation:

Duties:

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE / SPECIAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

List job titles/positions you want to show but do not want to go into detail about, i.e. short-term jobs, part-time jobs, volunteer work, etc.