



Alumni

Resume Guide: Tips on Writing an Effective Resume

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RESUME GUIDE

Writing a resume is like following a recipe-you must have all the right ingredients. A little too much of one ingredient or not enough of another can have a failed result. It is key that you tailor your menu, or in this case, your resume, to the intended audience. When you know what the critic is looking for, you can begin adjusting to their pallet.

Crafting a resume that showcases your qualifications and markets you as a top candidate for employers is essential in landing a job interview. In this guide, we provide the following ingredients to produce the resume that can get you past the worst critics. Follow these steps to help grab the employer's attention so that you present an informative and memorable resume.

Choosing the Right Format to Attract the Right Audience

In choosing your template, remember to focus on the information you are trying to share and the industry you are applying for. Different industries may expect a more creative resume template, so resumes with artistic design or color choice will be more accepted in fields like UX design and marketing. You can find fun yet professional template choices from websites like Canva and Resume Genius. In general, you want to keep your resume appealing and choose a template that will not take away from the information listed. Consider condensing your resume into 1-2 pages and keeping your font style legible using professional fonts like Georgia, Times New Roman, Calibri, or Helvetica. Size 10- 12 font is recommended but keep it simple with the font color theme. Black is best for text but feel free to use a secondary color (blue or green) to bring attention to details on your resume.

Personal details and contact information:

- Your name is the most important personal detail on your resume. With whatever template you choose, list your name at the top center, in big, bold letters to make sure it is the first thing a recruiter sees.
- Include the city, state, and zip code, so recruiters know where you are located. Applicants who are relocating or willing to relocate can expound in detail on a cover letter; however, if you use an incorrect address, you will need to be able to explain why.
- Be sure to include a phone number for verbal communication and an email address for electronic communication. Your email address should be professional or geared towards your industry. Remember, everything leaves an impression.
- Do not include a picture unless applying for industries that may be expecting one. It may be appropriate for a position as an actor, model, or television reporter. There are also some places in the world where resume pictures are customary. If you are not applying for similar roles, a picture could distract from your relevant skills and experience.
- Do not include dates/places of birth, marital status, nationality, gender, or religion.

Additional details can include a LinkedIn profile link or portfolio website. It is not required to add your LinkedIn profile, but more and more people are doing this since LinkedIn gives prospective employers and professional connections a synopsis of your credentials.

Add a Branding Statement or Professional Summary

The first page of a resume is so important because a recruiter typically only spends about six seconds reviewing it before deciding to move on to the next candidate! This means that the first half page of your resume needs to grab their attention and show that you have the skills and experience for the job. Objective statements are outdated and unpopular with hiring decision-makers. Consider adding a branding statement or professional summary, following your contact information.

- A branding statement is a short, catchy statement that highlights your most relevant skills and expertise in about 15 words or less. It is an ad-like statement that tells hiring managers immediately what you'll bring to the table. Look at others in your field and think about what knowledge, skills, or abilities you possess that differentiates you from them. Craft your statement to your target audience that you are trying to attract.

Example:

PROJECT MANAGER

Delivering excellence in operations management, design implementation, and strategic, collaborative problem-solving to the industrial construction industry.

- A professional summary includes three to four lines providing an overview of industry knowledge, accomplishments, and the breadth of experience you have to offer. Summarize what you do, how you do it, and what makes the way you do it uniquely. Hook the reader by creating a statement that will leave an impression and entices recruiters to continue reading.

Example:

PROJECT MANAGER

An accomplished, results-oriented Senior Project Manager with 20 years of experience directing large scale projects. Strong understanding of database technologies, software development, web-based application design, object-oriented programming, and advanced mobile development. Recognized for ability to identify, design, and deploy innovative technologies that result in improved systems, increased production, and decreased expenses.

Here is a formula to use when crafting a professional summary:

Sentence 1:

Highly + (strong, relevant adjective) + (strong, relevant adjective) + (functional title) + whose areas of expertise includes + (three core strengths).

Sentence 2:

Proven ability to + (personal value proposition).

Sentence 3:

Executed (or other power verb) + (power statement).

Skills and Qualifications

The skills section is essential to have featured on our resume. You want to include relevant soft skills (personality traits), hard skills (technical knowledge and training), and any certifications and licensure you hold. Incorporate keywords for resume-scanning software within applicant tracking systems. Many keywords are in the job posting and specific to the job or industry you are applying to. For an HR position, you would want to include job functions or skills related to Staffing, Recruitment, Onboarding, Compensation, Benefits, Training, etc.

Reread the job description and highlight the most important skills someone must have to succeed in the position. Add the skills that resonate with you to your resume. Embellishing your resume is likely to backfire, so be truthful when you are drafting this section.

Relevant Work Experience and Achievements

We always recommend that professionals maintain a master resume in which they have a list of relevant work history, skills, and achievements. One of the best places to gather that information is from the job description when first hired or the job posting that lists the required skills, tasks, and duties. If your work history is different from the one you are applying for, tailor your resume to showcase the transferable skills.

When applying for a job, make sure to place your relevant experience in reverse chronological order (starting with the most recent). For each employer, follow it with a few bullet points in which you take the opportunity to list out your achievements, career highlights, and the duties you performed. If you have metrics that you can quantify, it is best to use them instead of general terms. Be as specific as you can to show your individual contribution.

Here is a formula to go by when drafting bullets under the work experience section:

Action verb + description of work (quantified if possible) + outcome including any available metrics.

Education

Current students or recent college graduates will likely want to put the education section towards the top of their resume. This is because students typically have limited work experience and want to highlight academic success.

If you have been out of school for at least a couple of years, you might move this section towards the bottom of your resume. By this time, you have enough work experience to highlight that you do not need to rely on your education.

Proofread and Grammar Check

Do not let a typo cost you the job of your dreams. The more eyes you have to review your resume before sending it to a hiring manager, the better.

Keys to proofreading your resume:

- Always print out your resume to review. It is easier to view it with more detail when the words appear in print.
- Read your resume out loud. Reading it out loud forces you to hear the words, find missing ones, and catch repetitive phrases.
- Seek a lifeline and ask a friend or an industry expert to review your resume for spelling mistakes, missing punctuation, and inconsistencies. This is a great opportunity to put fresh eyes to paper.
- Use tools like Grammarly, PaperRater, and Slick Write to help you catch the subtler writing mistakes that spell check may overlook.

Update your resume regularly, adding new jobs, achievements, qualifications, skills, and certifications. You never know when that next great career opportunity might present itself, so be prepared!

UCF ALUMNI PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

We have implemented a fully integrated collection of lifelong professional development programming, services, events, and resources to meet alumni's needs at any stage of career management. So whether you're a new graduate about to be launched into the workforce or an experienced professional looking for a career transition, we're here to help. Visit our [website](#) for more information!

Stay Connected with UCF Knights Network!

[UCF Knights Network](#) is our alumni professional networking platform that promotes career and professional development, entrepreneurship, job opportunities, and mentorship. Join today to reconnect with fellow Knights and expand your professional network.

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