

Résumé Checklist

A résumé is a self-marketing tool designed to get a job interview. Like any marketing tool, it should target the needs of the market or employer and highlight how you can meet those needs.

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Preparation

- In order to target your résumé effectively to employers, you need to spend time researching them to determine their needs. It must speak to the employer's needs-not your needs.
- Time should also be set aside to choose the right words to best represent your skills and experience. Indicate knowledge of the field for which you are applying and expect to make many revisions to your résumé.
- Have a separate party proofread your résumé to check for errors as well as checking to see that the résumé is clear and concise.
- Like any marketing piece, your résumé should be clear, concise, and condensed. A one-page résumé is recommended for most entry-level positions unless you have considerable related experience.
- Your résumé should also be visually appealing; free from errors (spelling, typos, grammatical); and written concisely in an organized format presenting the most important information first.
- A résumé should demonstrate your ability to do the job-it should support your objective statement and cover letter.
- Omit any political, religious, or racial affiliations unless it is an occupational qualification.
- Omit any personal information such as age, sex, marital status, or health unless it is an occupational qualification.

Résumé Checklist

Appearance

- Inviting and easy to read; not too much information
- Use appropriate font styles and sizes (10-14pt)
- Incorporate white space to facilitate skimming
- Center text, adequate margins
- Create visual impact using bullets, boldface, underlining, italics, and font sizes to emphasize key words. Remember to stay consistent throughout the resum. (scannable résumés use only boldface).
- Print on high quality paper (16-15 LB), Laser quality print
- Begin sentences or phrases with action verbs
- Short paragraphs-under five lines; use short sentences or preferable phrases
- Brief, succinct language; no unnecessary words such as pronouns (I, my, etc)
- Free of grammatical, spelling, typographical, punctuation or usage errors

Contact

- Include name, current address, and phone number where you can be reached during the day. Include Email address
- Objective - optional but highly recommended
- Briefly, indicate the type of position or title that you are seeking
- Try to match to the employer's needs to your skills. Should be employer-centered not self-centered

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Summary of Qualifications

- Useful for experienced individuals or for individuals seeking a career change and wanting to highlight transferable skills
- Should support objective and can sometimes include an objective statement

Education

- List before work experience if it is recent
- Most recent degree or training should be listed first
- Degree in process - list Expected Graduation Date
- Omit high school and any outdated or irrelevant training
- List relevant courses and projects

Special Skills

- List related skills before experience if you do not have any related work experience, otherwise list skills after experience
- List skills such as computer skills (language, hardware, applications), laboratory skills, required concepts, or fluency in foreign languages

Experience

- List jobs in reverse chronological order with most recent positions first
- Do not list every job ever held unless you are recent graduate with little work experience. List only most recent and/or most relevant positions keeping the résumé brief and concise
- Indicate the dates that you have held the position, Month Year
- List relevant skills, accomplishments, contributions to past employers using quantitative/qualitative indicators of success if possible. For example: "Wrote 25 news releases in a three-week period under daily deadlines." This statement quantifies the accomplishment, giving it a context that helps the interviewer understand the degree of difficulty involved in the task
- Think MONEY! - Organizations are always concerned about money and often you can use your work and extracurricular activities to present ways you have saved or managed money in your internships. For example: "Identified, researched, and recommended a new Internet service provider, cutting the company's online costs by 15 percent." or "Managed a student organization budget of more than \$7000."
- Keep descriptions brief and concise using industry jargon when possible but avoiding company specific jargon
- Use bulleted lists to make experiences and accomplishments more readable for recruiters

Extracurricular Activities/Community Service

- List leadership roles or significant positions or responsibility
- Focus on academic, professional, or service organizations rather than social organizations
- List hobbies or interests only if relevant avoiding risky activities such as sky-diving

Other

- Honors, awards, or scholarships received during most recent course of study
- Publications, technical papers, or presentations if relevant
- One line statement references available upon request is not necessary but can be included