RESUME WRITING- Tip Sheet

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RESUME WRITING TIPS

The resume is often the first impression an employer receives about you as a candidate and serves as your marketing tool. You are encouraged to carefully write resumes that clearly and concisely describe pertinent information about skills, experiences, and career goals. This process may include creating a few versions of your resume that are tailored to specific career areas, jobs, or application methods. Since a resume is made up of sections that help employers learn about the candidate, be aware that some sections are essential, while others are considered optional. Even though you can obtain ideas from many people and many samples, you must decide what best communicates your most important qualifications to an employer. Getting feedback from your career coach, faculty, and potential employers prior to the job search is highly recommended.

Content:

- Keep it to one page in length if you can, unless you are applying for a government job or preparing an ATS-friendly resume; advanced degree students and candidates who have worked for several years may require more than one page. Include items that are most relevant to and supportive of your career goal and the job description.
- Your resume should be neat, well organized, and error free. The format of your resume may vary, depending upon its purpose. When in doubt, an ATS-friendly resume is recommended.
- Consider including a headline, professional summary or career objective after your contact information.
- Order items so that the most relevant items appear first.
- A resume need not contain your entire work history or all job responsibilities. Include main responsibilities, transferable skills (related to the job you are seeking) and accomplishments/results. If applicable, use words that are in the job description/qualifications section for the job you are applying for.
- Use action verbs and highlight achievements, quantifying results when possible.
- Avoid abbreviating names of organizations, titles, and descriptors.
- Determine whether to include your full address, city and state only, or omitting this information altogether. Advice on this subject varies. Seek advice from your career coach.
- Include your email address and phone number. Be sure that your email address conveys a professional image of yourself and that your voicemail message is short and professional. You may also include your website home page address if showing sample work, but be certain all aspects of your website are suitable for viewing by an employer. In addition, if you have a well-developed LinkedIn profile, include your customized LinkedIn URL. See your career coach for advice on how to customize.

You will likely need to have several versions of your resume, depending on its purpose and how it is sent when applying for a position. Following are the recommended versions and advice to prepare them:

USE OF PAPER RESUMES:

➢ **Print Version:**

This format would be used for the following purposes:
- Mailing your resume to an organization: a cover letter should also be sent when mailing a resume.
- Going on an interview: several copies should be taken because you may meet with more than one person.
- Attending job fairs and networking events: multiple copies of the resume should be taken because you will meet with many employers/networking contacts.

Format:
- Be sure it is easy to read, with clean, simple lines and reasonable use of white space on the page.
- Use standard 8 1/2 x 11, light-colored (white, ivory, light gray), 24 or 28-pound bond paper.
- Print only on one side of paper if a two-page resume. If more than one page, make sure your name and page number are at the top of the second page. Also, do not staple your resume; use a paper clip if more than one page.
- Use a font size that is readable, 10 point minimum to 12 point font. Use 11 point minimum for ATS-friendly resumes. Your name and headings can be slightly larger.
- Use formatting, such as boldface, underline, and italics, sparingly. Do not use two formats in one phrase.

SENDING RESUMES ELECTRONICALLY:

Most employers now request that resumes be sent initially via the internet. They may request your resume in an email, as an attachment, or as a posting on a website. This task is seemingly quick and easy, but you must consider some formatting techniques to avoid common mistakes.
- Keep your resume simple. Choose a basic font such as Arial. This sans serif font will be readable by most systems.
- Always follow formatting and file type (.doc, pdf) guidelines recommended by the employer. If a preference isn't stated, try to find out. Some recruiters may prefer a resume in the body of an email message instead of sent as an attachment. If you are unable to determine their preference, consider sending the resume as an email attachment.
- Always include a cover letter with the resume, unless the employer specifies otherwise.
- When emailing the resume, use a specific subject line that will identify the position for which you are applying, for example: Subject Line: Amy Smith Resume for Programmer Analyst 2. If a code number is assigned to the job, you may use the number, but be aware that some systems may filter out a series of numbers as a spam email.

➢ **Resume Sent as an Attachment:**
- Create your resume using a common word processing program, preferably Microsoft Word. (Be aware that the employer may not have the most recent version of the software and would, therefore, be unable to open a document saved to a recently updated version.) You may want to save your resume as a PDF file to ensure its readability and formatting remain intact. Also, a PDF format rather than a Word document is easier to read on a SmartPhone, which many employers now use to view resumes. However, if the employer uses an applicant tracking system (ATS), a Word document may be preferred. Follow instructions if provided on the employer's website.
- Don't give your document a generic name such as "myresume.doc." Make sure the recruiter will associate the file with you: for example, "AmySmithResume.doc."

- Before sending to the employer, send an identical email to a friend to make sure it will open correctly on a different computer.

➢ **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS):**

Many employers today use an applicant tracking system. This type of system has two purposes: to manage high volumes of applications for positions and to screen out candidates who lack the required skills for the job. It also allows them to select candidates in compliance with the law and to maintain applications in a database for government review purposes.

However, with this system, if the jobseeker's resume is not formatted to match the ATS system, the resume can easily be overlooked for consideration for an interview.

While ATS programs are constantly evolving, following are some important tips for developing an ATS-compliant resume as adapted (with permission) from the online article 'Preparing Job-Seeker Resumes for Applicant Tracking Systems: Checklist and Critical Do's and Don'ts' by Dr. Randall S. Hansen (https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/applicant-tracking-system-resume-checklist).

Checklist for ATS resumes:
My job-search resume:
- Is saved in an approved format for the system the organization is using- resume is typically saved as a Word document. (PDF formats may not be ATS-friendly). Read the requirements the organization provides and, if possible, research the ATS they use to determine this information. Taleo, Bullhorn and Greenhouse are some examples of applicant tracking systems widely used.
- Does not use fancy templates, borders, or shading.
- Is in a single column format (no tables, multiple columns, or text boxes).
- Uses simply formatted text of a reasonable size (11 point size or above is recommended).
- Includes standard sans serif fonts. Arial is the most readable by most systems.
- Does not contain complex formatting. For example, don't use extra spaces between letters. Put spaces before and after backslashes as well as hyphens, and dashes used as separators. For example: "either / or" and "May 2017 – September 2017".
- Does not include any special characters or accented words: for example, use "and" instead of "&."
- Includes a few, clearly defined sections: Summary, Work Experience, and Education.
- Does not contain images or graphics — or, if they do appear, they do not affect the single-column formatting. (Be aware, however, including any graphics may be enough to stop your resume from being read by the ATS.)
- Does not include any information in the headers or footers of the document (if saved in Microsoft Word format).
- Has been thoroughly edited and spellchecked and contains no errors. (The ATS will not recognize misspelled words.)
- Contains proper capitalization and punctuation. Both of these can affect how information is parsed and assigned within the ATS database.
- Uses the full, spelled-out version of a term in addition to abbreviations and acronyms: for example, Certified Public Accountant (CPA).
- Incorporates relevant, targeted keywords and phrases for the specific position being sought. (Have you included specifics- i.e., "Photoshop" instead of "image-editing software?")
- Has been customized for the position being sought. Use terminology posted in the job description or qualifications, if applicable. Also, match singular or plural use of keywords used in the job description.

Critical Do's and Don'ts Related to Applicant Tracking Systems:

- When applying for a specific position, do use that job title on the resume.
- When listing dates for employment or education, do list dates to the right of the information.
- Do consider including section headers in ALL CAPS to make it easy for the applicant tracking system to categorize the information.
- If you are working toward a degree or certification that is a requirement for the position, do include it on the resume- but make sure you indicate "Expected graduation date" followed by the month and year. Note that Spring, Fall and Summer are not months. Be specific.
- Do check your email after applying for a position online. Some applicant tracking systems acknowledge submissions, but these automated responses may be diverted to your spam folder.
- Do be mindful of special characters and accents you use on your resume. Some words and phrases can be misinterpreted by an applicant tracking system- for example, accented words. The word "résumé" itself is not ATS-friendly. The ATS does not recognize the accented letters. Instead, it reads it as "r?sum?."
- Don't list your credentials (MBA, CPA, etc.) next to your name. Include that information on a separate line, writing out the words, following by the abbreviation in parentheses.
- Don't include keywords for skills you do not have on the resume as an attempt to "trick" the applicant tracking system into selecting you. (Remember, the resume will eventually be reviewed by a person.)
- Don't mix different fonts and sizes in your resume.
- Don't submit multiple resumes to the same company. Applicant tracking systems have a memory- all those previous submissions remain in the system. You can apply to multiple, related positions, but make sure the resume information is consistent and accurate, because the hiring manager will have access to the other versions, too.

Please keep in mind that the suggestions given are guidelines only. The type of system and software versions may impact the preparation of your resume. When the type of ATS system being used is mentioned, you may want to research the technology to specify appropriate guidelines.

INTERNET RESOURCES

CollegeGrad.com	https://collegegrad.com/resumes
Forbes	www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2016/02/09/8-critical-ways-to-improve-your-resume/#395c587878a2
Jobscan	www.jobscan.co
LiveCareer	www.livecareer.com/resume-builder
Monster.com	https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/resume-tips-for-college-students
ResumeGenius	https://resumegenius.com/blog/applicant-tracking-systems-resume-keyword-help
The Balance Careers	www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-get-your-resume-past-the-applicant-tracking-system-2063135
USA Today College	http://college.usatoday.com/2017/03/21/10-tips-for-writing-the-best-resume-for-your-post-graduation-job-search

WRITING A CAREER OBJECTIVE, HEADLINE OR PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Traditionally, an objective was written following the contact information on a resume. Today, some employers do not recommend or look at the objective. A growing trend is to use a headline and/or professional summary. Following are some things to consider when deciding what to do.

Considerations Regarding Career Objectives
- Especially consider an objective if you are seeking a part-time job or an internship. When applying for an internship, include the type of internship you are currently seeking and for which semester(s). Be as specific as possible.
- Focus on what you can offer to the employer, not on what you want to gain out of the position. Avoid phrases like "an opportunity to develop my skills..." or "to gain experience in the field of...".
- Leave out clichés such as "challenging work," "position of responsibility," and "opportunity to grow."

Sample Objectives
The following are sample objectives you can use as guidelines in preparing your unique statement:
- Full-time position in the management information systems field to utilize experience in applications programming and systems analysis and design.
- A part-time position as an assistant in product marketing, development or general research.
- Seeking a front-desk internship in the hotel industry for Summer 2019.

Headlines and Professional Summaries
Experienced candidates may opt for a headline or professional summary in lieu of an objective.
A headline is a brief phrase, after the contact information, that highlights the expertise or value you have to offer an employer related to the job you are seeking. A professional summary is an introductory statement that highlights your qualifications for a specific job.

SAMPLE RESUME FORMAT

Contact Information
Resumes traditionally include your name, address (home and campus/local if applicable), telephone number (including area code), and email address. However, for privacy purposes, full addresses may not be warranted on your resume. Consult your career coach to discuss what option may be best for you. In addition, you may want to include your website home page address (if applicable) and your LinkedIn URL.

Objective, Headline and/or Professional Summary
Describe briefly and clearly the type of work you are seeking and the skills you are offering.

Education
- Name and location of institution (include city and state)
- Month and year of graduation or expected graduation
- Degree awarded or to be awarded (written out, with the abbreviation in parentheses)
- Field of study (include major, concentration, minor, etc.)
- Relevant courses (can also be listed as a separate section)
- Any special training in addition to formal education
- Thesis topic and description, if applicable

Work Experience
Name and describe paid employment, internships, summer jobs, field study, and/or project work.
(Projects can also be listed under "Education" or under a separate section such as, "Academic Experience" or "Project Work.")

Traditional resume formats begin with the most recent position and proceed in reverse chronological order. However, your most important and relevant experiences should ideally appear first. If you have had non-relevant work experience after a more relevant experience, try creating more specific categories such as "Relevant Experience, Writing Experience, Computer Experience, Additional Work Experience" and list experiences accordingly. Usually, listing experiences in these types of categories will naturally result in a reverse chronological order within each category. Include the following:

- Employer Name, City, State/Location
- Job Title/Position, Dates (months and years)
- Responsibilities, Accomplishments, and Recognitions

Skills
Focus on distinct skills specific to your field. List computer skills and foreign language proficiencies. Omit soft skills such as hard-working, determined, etc.

Honors
Include special awards, Dean's List, and scholarships.

Achievements
List and describe any significant and relevant achievements such as shows, exhibits, and publications. (Publications can also be listed in a separate section.)

Activities
Include campus/community activities, leadership and volunteer positions. Only include activities in which you have been an active, contributing member.

References
It is optional to indicate that references are available upon request. If relevant, also mention that items such as a portfolio or writing samples will also be furnished upon request.

ACTION VERBS FOR RESUME DEVELOPMENT

Accelerated	Edited	Intensified	Prompted
Accompanied	Eliminated	Interpreted	Proposed
Achieved	Enacted	Invented	Proved
Acquired	Encouraged	Justified	Provided
Administered	Engineered	Keyed	Recommended
Affected	Enhanced	Launched	Reconciled
Analyzed	Established	Led	Reduced
Arranged	Evaluated	Located	Regulated
Aspired	Exceeded	Maintained	Reinforced
Assembled	Executed	Managed	Reorganized
Assisted	Exhibited	Manufactured	Researched
Budgeted	Expanded	Marketed	Revamped
Built	Expedited	Mastered	Reviewed
Clarified	Experienced	Mediated	Revised
Commanded	Facilitated	Monitored	Scheduled
Completed	Finalized	Motivated	Secured
Composed	Financed	Negotiated	Served
Conceived	Formalized	Nominated	Serviced
Conducted	Formed	Normalized	Simplified
Constructed	Formulated	Obtained	Solved
Controlled	Founded	Officiated	Sparked
Converted	Generated	Operated	Stimulated
Cooperated	Governed	Ordered	Streamlined
Coordinated	Handled	Organized	Structured
Created	Headed	Oriented	Succeeded
Decided	Helped	Participated	Supervised
Delegated	Hired	Perfected	Supported
Demonstrated	Implemented	Performed	Taught
Designed	Improved	Piloted	Trained
Detailed	Increased	Pinpointed	Transferred
Determined	Influenced	Pioneered	Transformed
Developed	Initiated	Placed	Troubleshot
Devised	Inspired	Planned	Unified
Directed	Installed	Prepared	Used
Discovered	Instituted	Presided	Utilized
Displayed	Instructed	Procured	Verified
Doubled	Insured	Produced	Won
Earned	Integrated	Promoted	Wrote