

RESUMES

The resume is one of the major marketing tools you will use as a job hunter - it provides the reader with a brief summary of your abilities, education, experience and skills. It is NOT a personal history. It is a personal advertisement, and as such it is important that it be carefully constructed.

There are three basic steps to making a strong resume:

1. Assess your skills and abilities
2. Research the position you are applying for and/or potential career fields and employers
3. Present the results in a comprehensive and attractive resume which demonstrates the contributions you will make to your future employer

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

First, look at yourself.

- What are your career goals? What is your immediate job objective?
- Why are you looking at the career or industry you have chosen? What special skills do you have that will help you succeed?
- What have you done in school and for work?
- What skills did you learn from these activities
- What are your special strengths? How do you apply these to a work environment?

INDUSTRY RESEARCH

- Find out what skills and qualifications potential employers look for
- Locate job postings or available job descriptions

PRESENTATION

Decide how to present your information. The most common resume formats are chronological, functional and combined. Determining which format is right for you is as easy as deciding where you have been and where you wish to go next.

Chronological:

- Presents your work history in reverse chronological order, starting with your current position
- Emphasises the positions you have held and the companies where you have worked
- Most appropriate for people who have a long labour history with no large gaps between jobs; also when you are not drastically changing your career direction

Functional

- Emphasizes your abilities and accomplishments without providing detailed background information on where and when you acquired these skills
- Most appropriate for recent grads or mid-career changers
- Be aware that some employers dislike this style as it can be used to hide spotty employment records

Combined

- Emphasizes both skills and abilities and work history
- Most appropriate for those with strong editing skills, as this type of resume tends to be overly repetitious

Resumes have the following sections, some are required, others are optional. As your resume is a personal document and will be tailor-made, include only those categories that relate to your specific background and current job target.

Sample Headings:

Career Goal	Highlights of Qualifications	Academic Background
Career Objective	Professional Qualifications	Academic Training
Employment Objective	Qualifications	Additional Training
Goals	Skills	Education
Objective	Summary of Qualifications	Professional Development
Teaching Objective	Career Highlights	Professional Education
Additional Experience	Coaching Experience	Achievements
Employment	Community Involvement	Additional Skills
Employment History	Community Service	Computer Skills
Experience	Professional Activities	Language Skills
Professional Background	Related Activities	Personal Achievements
Related Experience	Volunteer Activities	Professional Skills
Relevant Experience	Volunteer Experience	Relevant Skills
Teaching Experience	Volunteer Work	Special Skills
Affiliations	Activities	Scholarships & Awards
Associations	Activities & Interests	Honours & Awards
Memberships	Extracurricular Activities	Presentations
Conferences Attended	Hobbies & Interests	Publications

RESUME CHECKLIST

Does your resume:

- Have typos or other errors?
- Have a consistent layout?
- Have an appropriate length (two to three pages for most professionals)?
- Include your full contact information (name, address, phone number, email address)?
- Have a specific job objective and career summary section, based on the job applying for?
- Describe your experiences?
- Use action words and industry buzzwords?
- Provide dates of your employment and or volunteer experience?
- Include references?
- Look professional?

You don't get a second chance to make a first impression