**Resumes**

In this tip sheet, you will learn important tips, tricks, and conventions to help you create an effective resume and we’ll show you some important writing strategies to help you get started.

**What is a resume?**

A resume is a brief document written to demonstrate a match between you and the position you want. Your resume should be written to help potential employers quickly and clearly see what skills you can contribute to the organization or company. An effective resume greatly increases the likelihood of an interview.

**Top resume writing tips**

• **Use the job description** or job posting as a reference to emphasize the most important experiences, skills and characteristics required for the position.

• **Identify keywords** from the job description to create a positive impact and highlight your relevant traits. Be concise and make every word count.

• **Provide hard evidence** (examples) of achievements so that the employer can picture you doing the work. Minimize space needed by using creative and precise wording.

• **Choose action words** (verbs) to pinpoint your accomplishments. Don’t just list your responsibilities: say what you did and how you did it.

• **Look at resume templates** for ideas but create your own to be distinctive and to avoid formatting headaches.

• **Proofread your resume**: first impressions are lasting impressions. Have others proofread your resume for spelling and grammar and provide feedback.

• **Talk to a career advisor** at Career Services to make sure you are on the right track.

**Formatting your resume**

Resumes are reviewed differently by different employers, though there are some general considerations when thinking about your resume:

• There is no perfect resume or “right” way of writing a resume.

• Employers might spend around 10-15 seconds in the first round of resume reviews.

• Format your resume consistently in a simple way so it is easy to skim or scan.

• Font size no smaller than 11. Margins no smaller than 0.5”.

• Up to 2 pages in length. Some fields (Investment Banking, for example) and organizations (Google) prefer 1-page resumes, but the majority will accept 1 or 2-page resumes. If you are looking for entry level positions, 1 page would be a better choice.

• Avoid creative flair unless it’s a relevant skill for the job (e.g. graphic design).

In the following pages, you’ll find a suggested resume framework to describe common resume sections and some examples and considerations for writing some of these key sections.

For each section, list entries in **reverse chronological order** in point form, **consistent** with other parts of your resume. Ensure you only include relevant information. The first 20 seconds of your resume must catch the reader’s attention. Mention your most relevant skills and experience. What aspects you include next will depend on what you feel to be most relevant and helpful to highlight for the reader.

**A RESUME FRAMEWORK**

**Your Name**

Full address

Telephone & Email

There is choice as to whether you include an Objective and/or Summary of Strengths, depending on what you would like to emphasize.

**Objective:** Optional. If included it should be brief, logical, and clearly stated. Match it to the job/program for which you are applying.

**Summary of Strengths/Qualifications:** A billboard, or personal profile that highlights your strengths. Targets essential skills of the job to which you are applying (see job description and company information). Gives reader a brief overview of your qualifications so they want to find out more.

**Education:** This section captures your educational history and accomplishments. Phase out the mention of high school education as you progress further in your postsecondary studies, unless there is something of particular interest to note. Include clinical placements, thesis and/or relevant course work that is particularly suited to the employer’s needs. Mention academic achievements if noteworthy (80%+, distinctions).

**Awards:** Include honours, citations, scholarships and other recognition you have received. Briefly describe criteria to receive award and include the $ value if significant. If you are only including one or two awards consider putting them in the section with the education or experience to which they are related.

**Experience:** Consider organizing your experiences into separate sections indicated by headings. Relevancy of the experience and chronology are your two considerations in each section. Possible headings for these sections include: Employment, Related Experience, Community Service, Project Experience, Extra-Curricular Activities, etc. Also, consider a section to highlight experience using a skill (e.g. Leadership Experience) or in a field (e.g. Consulting Experience). Choose based on what will catch the employer’s attention. Use verbs to describe the work you did, highlighting the skills that you demonstrated or learned. Be consistent when formatting experience sections.

**References:** one line at the end of the resume: “Available on request” or “References attached” (if already requested)

Include additional sections such as publications, presentations, research, professional affiliations, certifications, and additional initiatives if they are relevant.

**Things you never add on your resume:**

* Your marital status
* Sexual orientation
* Religious or political affiliations
* Social insurance number
* Your age
* Your Picture
* Hobbies or Interests

Always keep it in mind that you only have limited space for your resume. Use it smartly for the most relevant information.

**EXAMPLES**

Here are some resume section examples from students. What details you choose to include in your resume will vary based on your direction and focus. Use your own judgment to decide what works best for you based on your knowledge of the work you want.

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS

• Strong engineering background including heavy equipment operation and machine shop experience

• Recognized for dedication to the promotion of health and physical activity–CAPHERD Award

• Competitive drive earned stroke position on rowing team

• Ability to communicate well one-on-one and in small group settings demonstrated in telephone sales work and public speaking activities

• Goal oriented and patient; follow through with directives efficiently in teams

*Why it Works: Shows essential connection between the candidate and the work. Highlights the most notable themes contained in the rest of the resume.*

*Tips:*

*- Include a combination of the most relevant skills, qualities, knowledge, qualifications and accomplishments based on the job description and company profile*

*- Each skill, quality or accomplishment should be listed with examples or evidence of how you it was developed, demonstrated, or recognized*

*Consider your skills and strengths that are:*

*Work specific – skills, knowledge, proficiency with equipment/software, terminology, or naming the rules and regulations that are critical to understanding and doing your targeted work.*

*Transferable skills – skills and qualities that can be applied in a number of different settings on your resume such as leadership, communication, and teamwork.*

*Personal management – combination of attitudes and behaviours evident in the way you manage your daily living (e.g. attentive to details, motivated).*

EDUCATION

**Master of Administrative Science**  2021 - Present

Specialization: Human Resources Administration

*Fairleigh Dickinson University, Vancouver, BC*

• Relevant courses completed: HR Systems: Modern Approaches, Customer Service, Collective Bargaining & Contract Admin

• Dean’s Honor List with Distinction for overall average in top 3% of MAS Program (2021)

*Tip:*

*- Highlight your education and the experiences that are related to the position and include how you gained it through relevant projects, awards, courses, research, and seminars.*

*- Please be aware that additional educational information is optional. If it is less relevant to the positions that you are applying for, you might want to save the space for other sections.*

RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Youth Mentor (Volunteer)** Sept 2019 - Apr 2021

*False Creek Community Centre, Vancouver, BC*

• Coached and answered questions one-on-one with peers on organizing and managing time, study strategies and high school/university life

• Demonstrated effective listening skills to gather information and determine needs

• Commended regularly for cheerful attitude; peers reported increased confidence and academic performance after interactions

*Tips:*

*- Use keywords that create a positive impact and describe your strengths and values; describe what you did and how you did it. Every word counts.*

*- Start each statement with a verb (action word).*

*- Consider your Paid work, Unpaid work, Learning and Leisure (P-U-L-L).*

*- Consider Verb + Task + Result when writing accomplishment statements.*

*- Use numbers to showcase the importance of your achievements. You can measure it with figures if you've increased efficiency or productivity, met or exceeded your goals, increased sales, gained readership, or improved test scores. You may say something like, "Increased office productivity by 25%," "Exceeded my sales goal by 19%," or "Saved the organization one million dollars through increasing productivity."*

**Resume vs Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

A resume is a brief document; a CV is longer. A resume can target work in any sector; a CV generally aims at work in academic or research sectors. A resume may include a “Summary of Strengths” section; a CV often includes extensive information on research publications, conference presentations and fellowships.

**Submitting your resume**

Ensure that you completely understand the employer’s expectations about how application documents, such as your resume, should be submitted. If you need clarification, reach out to the contact e-mail or phone number often provided in the job description. Here are some considerations to keep in mind when submitting your resume:

• If there is the option to upload your resume or fill in text boxes for an online application – do both!

• The title of your resume should include your name, the position, and type of document (e.g. JaneSmith Resume-Engineering Consultant Position #2022-45).

• Send resume and cover letters as a PDF or Word document.

• Pay attention to employer preferences about receiving your resume as an attachment or in the text of an e-mail

• When prospecting in person, consider offering electronic and hard copies of your resume