

Resume Writing Tips

Resumes are a marketing tool used to highlight your skills, abilities, accomplishments and interests. They are often your first formalized introduction to an employer. When developing a resume, it is important to keep in mind that it can be changed, targeted or customized to specific kinds of jobs or industries.

Types of Resumes

Chronological resumes typically are recommended when you have a consistent employment history. This resume places emphasis on your previous employment, accomplishments and skills. The chronological resume is easiest for most individuals to write and is most accepted by employers. Your information is actually placed in reverse chronological order with your most recent experiences being listed first.

Functional or combination resumes are only recommended if you are changing careers or if you have significant gaps in your employment history. This type of resume emphasizes the skills that you have gained that transfer to the new occupational area.

Sections of a Resume:

Personal Contact Information:

- Your Name
- Address - You may want to provide both a current and permanent address so that employers can easily reach you.
- Phone number - home, work or cell phone
- Email address - make sure it is professional

Objective or Summary of Strengths:

The objective is typically used when applying for entry-level positions. It contains:

- The specific position you are seeking with a specific employer or industry.

A summary of strengths is used when you have significant work experience. It contains:

- Approximately 4 - 6 statements that provide a summary of your resume and highlight key points of interest.
- It can easily be tailored to each position that you apply for and is an effective way to get an employer interested in you.

Education:

It is important to provide information about schools you attended *after* high school. It is not necessary to list all schools. Specifically list your current university or those where you earned a degree. This section can contain:

- School name (Maryville University)
- City and state of the school (St. Louis, MO)
- Degree you are completing or obtained (Bachelor of Science in Accounting)
- Month and year of anticipated or actual graduation (expected May 2010 or December 2009)
- GPA information should be included only if your GPA is 3.0 or above

Experience:

This section allows you to highlight your skills and abilities to an employer. It can include information about paid employment, significant volunteer positions, student teaching, field experiences, internships and/or cooperative education positions. Experience can include:

- Employer name (KV Pharmaceuticals)
- City and state of employer (St. Louis, MO)
- Job title (Payroll Supervisor)
- Dates of employment (October 2008 - present)
- Concise, bulleted job descriptions that start with action verbs and clearly state your duties

Other possible Resume Headings:

Computer/Technical/Language Skills:

This section helps you describe additional information about specialized skills that you can offer to them. You may want to include information about foreign languages you are fluent in, technical skill proficiencies, or any professional certifications.

Campus or Community Involvement:

This section includes information about organizations you belong(ed) to, dates of involvement, and any positions you held, responsibilities, and/or accomplishments.

Awards, Honors:

You can include relevant award information; include the name of the award, the organization or company that presented it, and when you received it.

References:

References are **not** included on your resumes; they are, however, included on a separate sheet and added to cover letter and resume information. In addition, it is **no longer necessary** to include the statement, "References available upon request", on your resume.

For additional heading choices, see handout titled: "Headings for Resumes" available in the Career Education Office or www.maryville.edu/careered.

General Resume Tips

Keep in mind that employers will spend less than thirty seconds reviewing your resume for the first time. Therefore, your resume should be easy to read, visually pleasing, and free from any spelling, grammar or typographical errors.

Follow these guidelines when writing your resume:

- Prepare your resume yourself; you know your background better than anyone else.
- Use a conservative font and use 10-12 point type.
- Try to keep your resume to one page, and use two pages only if you have the extensive skills and experience.
- Eliminate the use of unnecessary words and phrases.
- Avoid the use of personal information such as your social security number, religion, race, age, weight, health, height, marital status, etc.
- Continually update your resume to reflect new skills and experiences.
- Use action verbs when describing your work experience. For help with action words, see handout titled: "Action Words for Resume Writing" available in the Career Education Office or www.maryville.edu/careered.
- Make your resume format visually appealing by the use of white space and bullets.
- Review your resume thoroughly to ensure that there are no spelling or typing errors.
- Generally, print your resume on quality 24 lb. white or off-white paper.

*Career Education Office, located in the University Library, 314-529-9375
career@maryville.edu and www.maryville.edu/careered*

