

RESUME/LETTER WRITING

Resume Basics



Career Services

A resume is designed to be a summary of your work and educational experiences. Just like with a cover letter, a resume should be tailored to every position for which you apply. A carefully constructed resume will show:

- That you possess the knowledge and skills the employer needs.
- How you can contribute to the organization.
- How you fit the position's description.

Setting up your resume:

- Your resume should be in an easy to read font (such as Arial, Times New Roman, Garamond, or Century Schoolbook for example) in 10-12 point, black font.
- Be sure to use headings as well as **bolding** or *italicizing* any important information.
- Margins should be set anywhere from 0.5-1.0 inch on all four sides.
- Current information should be listed first under the headings.
- It should be no longer than one page length.
- Your resume should be printed on good quality paper. Keep the color conservative with colors such as white or off-white. You can find resume paper at any office supply store.

A well-constructed resume should include:

- Personal Information
 - In other words how can the organization contact you? Your name should be listed in **bold** at the very top in 14-16 point fonts. Be sure to include your current address, the best phone number to reach you, and a professional email address. **Tip:** Use your school email address if you do not have a professional email or you can set one up specifically used for this purpose. Examples of a professional email: Florence.Nightingale@email.com *or* FNightingale@email.com.
- Objective
 - This is a brief (1-2 sentences) statement that features characteristics that are related to the position description and needs to be supported by the rest of your resume.
- Education
 - Where did you go to school (also include the city and state)? What are your degrees? When did you graduate or when is your expected graduation date? Is your GPA above a 3.0? If so, include this too! Include this for every higher education school you attend (high school is not necessary).
- Scholarly Awards
 - Be sure to include any awards you've earned (Dean's/President's List), any scholarships, or any special recognitions (Golden Owl). Be sure to include the years as well.

- Work or Related Experience
 - What's your position title? Who do you work for? Where do you work? When (begin month/year-end month/year)? What experiences and accomplishments do you have from your current/past positions that can relate to the position you are applying for? A general rule of thumb is use the past ten years of work experience. **Tip:** Be sure to utilize the action verb and adjective/adverb list when constructing your resume, and avoid overusing "I".
- Community or Volunteer Service
 - What was your role? What was the name of the organization? Where was it located? When? What achievements did you accomplish? If you included this in the Related Experience do not list it again.
- Technical skills
 - List computer programs, software, hardware, laboratory skills, research skills you are familiar with or any other areas of technical expertise.
- Licensures and Certifications
 - List all current licensure and/or certifications you have with the expiration dates.
- Languages
 - Be sure to list any languages you can speak, read, write, and understand; indicate if you are fluent, conversational or novice in each one.

Common Resume Errors:

- Grammatical errors
 - This includes spelling as well as improper capitalization of words. Proof read your resume. **Tip:** Have someone else proof read and review your resume.
- Including everything
 - You want your resume to stand out from the rest of the applicants. Include only pertinent information and accomplishments that tie into the position you are applying for, or to the organization. Remember that the reader may be reviewing hundreds of resumes.
- Factual Errors
 - If you are not sure about a specific date, ask someone who might know. **NEVER** lie on a resume and **NEVER** fabricate anything.
- Abbreviations
 - Write out Bachelors of Science in Nursing instead of BSN.
- Using complete sentences
 - Your achievements and accomplishments should be statements. Keep it short, sweet, and relevant to the position for which you are applying.
- Showing a pattern of leaving jobs
 - If you are trying to project an image as someone who is dependable and reliable but have had ten different jobs within six months, then you've deflated the message. The reader *will* pick up on this.
- Repeating the same information
 - Pick the best category for your accomplishments and achievements and place them there.
- Tense usage
 - For current information write in present tense, for past information use past tense. **NEVER** use one tense or mix them up.