

Resume Writing Checklist

Contents & Style

Use short action phrases starting with past-tense action verbs. Use key words that communicate your skills in noun and verb forms. (Key words = experience + knowledge) Use synonyms to assure you capture various forms of key words (i.e. attorney-lawyer).
Be honest and do not exaggerate your skills and abilities.
Avoid the use of personal pronouns.
Use facts, not opinions.
Do not mention desired salary or benefits.
Omit any reference to personal information that could be regarded negatively or be used in a discriminatory way (i.e. age, height, weight, gender, ethnic origin).
Never include a photograph of yourself.
Write the resume with the needs of the potential employer in mind.
Be as concise as possible without selling yourself short.
Always keep the resume up to date.
Check for correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and consistent phrasing.
Proofread carefully and have someone else review it.
Include a well-written, grammatically correct cover letter when sending resume by mail, email, or fax.

Resume Type & Organization

Chronological Resume – The most traditional and commonly used resume type; gives a reverse-chronological listing of experience. Most effective when recent work or educational experience is directly related to current career goals and job target.
Functional Resume – Presents information in a format that emphasizes skills and qualifications most important for the current job search. Usually effective when most recent experience does not relate directly to the position.
Combination Resume – Combining elements of both the chronological and the functional resume styles is appropriate when it best highlights abilities. (i.e. A summary of skills could be followed by a description of one or two of the most relevant experiences.)

Formatting Tips

Do not use resume templates or wizards to prepare your resume. Documents created with templates and wizards may not scan properly.
Use readable, standard, non-decorative fonts. Font size should be 11 – 12 for the body of the resume, 14 or larger for name, and 9 – 10 for contact information.
Avoid the overuse of italics and underlined text; avoid graphics and colors other than black.
Use white or light-colored, standard sized (8 ½" x 11") paper.
Use capitals, bullets, and boldface for emphasis.
Be sure name stands out on the first page of the resume. Also place name on the second or subsequent pages when resume is multiple pages.
Make resume easy to read, crisp and consistent in format throughout.
Avoid folding or stapling the resume since this can affect the scanning process.

For more information and assistance in developing a winning resume, attend the Career Center's Resume Writing Seminar.