

Getting Ready to Write

Your resume is a sales tool that you will use to market and display your capabilities to potential employers. You are representing yourself and what you can do for the employer. The resume is an essential tool in your job search, and needs to be focused and effective to get the job done.

The Outstanding Resume

So how do you create a well-constructed, error-free, effective resume that will represent yourself well and grab employers' attention? The keys to success are found within this unit! Whether or not you have previous experience with resume writing, this unit will help you create a "Stand Out Resume" that will grab people's attention.

A "Stand Out Resume" is:

- * Carefully constructed to compete, compel and capture attention
- * Targeted to the job, showing that you can and will do the work
- * Too skills-rich to overlook



With so many resumes being received by employers, yours needs to attract their attention and be readable in 15 seconds or less! The focus is on what you can contribute.

-Creative Methods for Finding Work in the Hidden Job Market



Resume Components

The Sections of a Resume

Resumes typically contain a defined set of sections that provide employers with an idea of who is applying for the position. It is important to tailor these sections to meet your personality. Below are lists of different sections that are commonly found on a resume.

Header/Contact Information

- * Remember that your name should be the largest heading on page one and at the top of the second page of your resume.
- * If your address will be changing, document that by adding a note (e.g., 'address valid until May 30, 2017').
- * Only include a personal webpage/blog if it is relevant, current and professional.
- * Ensure your contact information is large enough to be easily read by the employer.

There are numerous possibilities for the section titles on a resume. Refer to the following chart to help you decide on the section titles you want to use for the next components of your resume. Highlight or circle the ones you plan to include.

Possible Resume Headings

OBJECTIVE	PROFILE	EDUCATION
Career Goal Career Objective Employment Objective Goals Professional Objective Career Focus	Key Competencies/Skills Highlights of Qualifications Career Profile Professional Qualifications Qualifications Professional Profile	Academic/Educational Background Academic/Educational Training Professional Education Additional Training Professional Development Professional Certification
EXPERIENCE	OTHER SKILLS	PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS
Related Experience Employment History Work Experience Additional Experience Professional Background Professional Experience Relevant Experience	Career-Related Skills Computer Skills Technical Skills Computer-Related Skills Additional Skills Certification Specialized Skills	Associations Club Memberships Professional Memberships Professional Associations Memberships Affiliations
ACTIVITIES	INTERESTS	ACHIEVEMENTS
Community Involvement Community Service Community Activities Volunteer Activities Related Activities University Activities Community Memberships	Special Interests Hobbies and Interests	Accomplishments Awards Recognitions

Job/Career Objective

- * An objective is your reason for applying to the position.
- * Remember to state it clearly and briefly, and to use sentence form.
- * Note that if you apply to an advertised position, you can target your resume by including the job title; otherwise, you may just state a field of interest.

Profile

- * Concisely highlight your qualifications, focusing on what you have to offer the employer; you will have to be prepared to offer tangible proof if asked about these!
- * Include 4-6 points most relevant to your objective from any area of experience (work, volunteering, education, or other activities).
- * You may choose to order the bullets with the first one focused on relevant work experience, followed by knowledge/skills, and then complementary educational experience.
- * Try to substantiate your claims in this section with numbers, certifications and years of experience whenever possible.
- * Include personal characteristics (e.g., attention to detail), specialized training (e.g., certificates) or language fluency only if there are relevant to and support your objective.

Education

- * List items chronologically starting with the most recent or most relevant.
- * Include reference to your secondary schooling and other certifications only if it is relevant or supports your objective.

Other Skills

- * Incorporate 3-4 of your top skills most relevant to your future occupation.
- * For each skill, add 2-3 bullet points to describe your accomplishments and qualifications in that area.
- * Since you are describe your skills, you can list your relevant experiences and qualities, whether you developed them at work, school, volunteering, coaching, or in some other way.

Examples of Suitable/Unsuitable Skills and Qualifications

Suitable	Unsuitable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Microsoft Office Certification* WHMIS, First Aid or CPR Certification* Supervisor of 10 staff* Reassigned workplace duties resulting in cost saving of \$5,000 in one year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Honest* Loyal* Any other personal descriptions of one's self that are not measureable by the employer

Experience

- * Use your discretion when deciding how many jobs or how much history to include on your resume. Five to ten years of experience is usually enough, but if the job history is very relevant, you may choose to include more. Ask your teacher for input as needed.
- * For each job, add bullet points to describe accomplishments and skills demonstrated.
- * Begin each point with a different action verb; uses the past tense (unless you are still working at the job, in which case use the present tense).
- * Stress and highlight transferable skills if the work experience is not directly connected to the work you are seeking (your objective).
- * Avoid personal pronouns like "I," "my," "their," and articles like "a," and "the."



Instead of a weak description of your responsibilities at your job, try thinking in terms of how you made a difference in the workplace.

-The Resume – Making it Work for You.



Additional Information

- * You may want to include other sections in your resume, such as Interests, Awards & Honours, or Volunteer Work. Make sure any content you include is relevant to your objective outlines previously!

Writing Your Resume

The Writing Process

As you begin to craft your resume, remember that resume writing, like any writing is a process. The writing process is ongoing with several stages:

1. **Pre-writing:** This is the brainstorming and planning stage where you will pull together the content (ideas) for your resume, as well as decide upon the format and sections to use.
2. **Drafting:** It is time to transfer your resume to the computer. You may use an online template, however keep in mind that using an online template makes your work less original). For here you will simply fill in your information. Ensure you keep your formatting consistent (e.g., underline headings, bold subtitles, keep text in line).
3. **Revising/Editing:** At this stage, you will review your rough work and begin to edit; you should spend a great deal of time on this. You will want to discuss what you have with your teacher. As you type your resume up on the computer, continue to revise and edit as you make it look professional.
4. **Publishing:** When you hear “publishing,” think “public.” This stage of the writing process involves producing your final copy, the version that is ready for public eyes! To start the Publishing stage, continue to revise by printing off what you’ve created on the computer. Compare this to the resume checklist at the end of this unit. It is also a great idea to get someone to peer-edit your resume if you haven’t already. When you are satisfied, give a copy of your resume to your teacher to assess. Based on your teacher’s feedback, there may be additional fine-tuning to be done before publishing the final copy and sending it off to potential employers.

Drafting Your Resume

Exercise

Using a template provided by your teacher or one you found online, begin to draft your resume on the computer. Be sure to follow the writing process and use your 10-minute resume as a reference. Also, read the section on resume components very carefully to gain an understanding of exactly what belongs in each section. Refer to the below chart for formatting tips and the resume checklist.

Formatting Tips

- * Bold and enlarge your name at the top.
- * Keep the sections lined up and consistent by using bulleted lists and tabs.
- * Use an Arial, Times New Roman, Bookman, Georgia, Tahoma, or Verdana font (or similar to ensure it is easily readable).
- * Use up to 2 fonts (one for headings and one for the body).
- * Font size should not be smaller than 11pt or larger than 12pt, except for your name and headings. Be consistent with your font size.
- * Do not include pronouns such as 'I,' company street addresses, salary, or reasons for leaving.
- * If your resume is two pages, be sure to fill the second page at least halfway down the page.
- * Place "Continued" at the bottom of page one, and your name and "Page 2" at the top of page two (e.g. Continued, Dan Smith Page 2).
- * Use graphics sparingly unless you are in a creative field. It is safe to use a border and shading.
- * If you spell out the province or state in your address, such as Ontario, spell out the province/state for your jobs.

Resume Checklist

Ensure documents are accurate and effective at communicating their messages to the intended recipient. As part of this quality assurance, check and amend your job search documents – we call this “2nd Eye-ing.” This is simply intended to ensure nothing was overlooked by the person who first created the document. Essentially, when a document is given to your teacher for submission, it is all but “ready to go,” according to the person who created it.

Documents sent for a 2nd Eye should NOT be draft copies that need re-writing or editing

OVERALL APPEARANCE

FORMAT

Pleasing to the eye	<i>White space, balanced margins, etc.</i>	✓
Consistent	<i>Consistent font style, bullet style, spacing throughout, etc.</i>	
Distinctive	<i>Name (in header) is slightly larger, bolded on first page, included on second page (if applicable)</i>	

CONTENT

Substantive	<i>There is some ‘meat’ to what is being said; no fluff</i>	
Demonstrative	<i>Displays ability to do the job</i>	
Bulleted Information	<i>Is organized in order of importance; uses action verbs whenever possible</i>	
Perspective	<i>Information is framed in the terms of potential employer</i>	
Benefit	<i>Information is framed in terms of the benefit the employer will gain</i>	
Concise	<i>Use only as many words as required, no fluff</i>	
Clear	<i>Clear wording; limit use of acronyms; words like WHMIS are acceptable as they are widely used</i>	
Spell Checked	<i>No red squiggly lines (MS Word) unless under names of people or places</i>	
Grammar Checked	<i>No green squiggly lines (MS Word)</i>	
Consistent Tense	<i>Same past/present tense used throughout</i>	

RESUME SPECIFICS

FORMAT

Career Objective	<i>Objective is clearly stated, brief, in sentence form and modified for the job</i>	
Sections	<i>5-6 parts are included: Contact Info, Skills/Qualifications, Education, Experience, Personal/Other</i>	
Style	<i>Use ‘Combination’ format (or ‘Functional’ vs. Chronological)</i>	
Chronology	<i>Most recent & relevant employment/education info placed first; only 5-10 years included</i>	
Length	<i>1-2 pages; more than 2 is too long for most applications</i>	

CONTENT

Tangible	<i>Specific and clear information</i>	
Relevant	<i>Information is relevant to employer</i>	
Pronouns	<i>No “I” or other first person pronouns used</i>	
Verbs	<i>Action verbs are varied and in the past tense</i>	
Keyword Dense	<i>Utilize keywords and skill descriptions as many resumes are filtered</i>	
Application-Specific	<i>Does it have to do with the position being applied to?</i>	
References	<i>An accompanying list of reference has been supplied</i>	