



The strength of a good résumé rests on its selection and presentation of basic content. As you organize your résumé, keep in mind the needs of the employer who will be reading it. Consider what he or she is looking for in a candidate and make it easy for the reader to pick out those skills by selecting appropriate categories, using underlining, boldfacing or capitalizing, and presenting relevant experience and skill areas higher on the page. The categories described within this reference can be used as guidelines to assist you in organizing a résumé. In constructing a rough draft, do not be concerned with length. Remember, categories may be omitted or added in later revisions. There is no absolute correct way to organize your résumé. Professional creativity is encouraged.

Contact Information

Present yourself with the name you use in your personal and business life (nicknames such as Grouch-O or Guzzler should be avoided). If you have a campus address that does not apply during vacations or after graduation, you should present both a college and permanent address. For your permanent address, use your permanent home address, a post office box or someone who will know where to contact you at all times. Also, always include phone numbers with area codes and an e-mail address if you have one and if you use it. Your e-mail address is a direct representation of you and should present you in a professional manner (partyanimal@hotmail.com is not acceptable).

Objective

Opinions vary on the importance of including a career objective on a résumé. Human resource professionals prefer résumés with career objectives to assist them with routing and filing application materials. However, hiring managers are usually indifferent because they have a better understanding of specific positions and can evaluate your résumé more effectively for the qualifications necessary to fulfill the responsibilities.

Why might you want to include an objective? An objective informs potential employers that you are moving in a certain direction, relates your work preference(s) and serves as a focal point from which to review and analyze your résumé. When including an objective, it should be brief, clearly stated, and

consistent with the accomplishments and demonstrated skills as documented on your résumé. If you are considering more than one professional goal, you should consider developing more than one résumé, each presenting a different objective. For more information on how to write a career objective, consult the Writing Career Objectives Ready Reference (E5).

Profile

The profile is an alternative to an objective statement. A profile provides you the opportunity to present your strengths in a listed format at the very beginning of the résumé.

Example:

- ♦ *Eager to contribute to the growth of a progressive company with quality products or services.*
- ♦ *Qualified by business education, customer service and administrative experience.*
- ♦ *Professional appearance and advanced interpersonal communication skills.*
- ♦ *Highly motivated, strong work ethic; available as needed for training, travel, and overtime.*
- ♦ *Financed 80 percent of college tuition and expenses; additional 20 percent earned through scholarships.*

The profile category allows you to emphasize your abilities and accomplishments more than past duties and serves as a guide when developing the major areas of your résumé. The profile is an excellent

place to indicate how well you performed in other experiences. These highlights will help infuse personal qualities such as character and personality into your résumé.

Education

This category is particularly important if you have not had a great deal of work experience. Remember, your most recent educational experience should be listed first.

Include your degree (A.S., B.S., B.A., etc.), major(s), institution(s) attended, dates of graduation, minors or concentrations, and any special workshops, seminars, related coursework or senior projects. A G.P.A. higher than a 3.0 (either overall G.P.A. or major G.P.A.) may also be noted here.

Work Experience

Many students have limited paid work experience, but have been involved in volunteer, internship, practicum or student teaching experiences. Important to the employer are your skills and what you can do on the job. Be sure to include all significant or relevant work experience, most commonly in reverse chronological order. Note to teacher candidates: be sure to include student teaching experience on your résumé.

- Include: (1) the title of your position, (2) name of organization, (3) location of work (town, state), and (4) dates (ex. Summer 1994; 1994-95 academic year; May 1997-August 1998)
- Describe your work responsibilities with an emphasis on achievements using action words to communicate your skills. List the most important and most closely related responsibilities first.
- Identify the most relevant work experiences and describe them fully but briefly. Be brief with the irrelevant experiences or omit them. Dividing your work experience into two categories, such as Relevant Experience and Other Experience, can emphasize the significance of related skills.
- If you worked to defray college expenses, indicate the percentage of college expenses you earned. *Example: Earned 75 percent of college expenses through the following part-time jobs...*

Make Your Résumé Unique

You may choose to carefully develop your own categories to highlight your unique relevant experiences and skills. Frequently, job seekers separate their related or professional experiences from other work experience by creating separate categories for those content areas. By doing this, you can call more attention to your relevant skills, putting them in categories closer to the top of the résumé to be read first. In place of Related Experience you might use your field of experience in the category heading. *Examples: Marketing Experience, Agricultural Production Experience, Consulting Experience, Sales Experience, etc.*

Others

Activities, Honors and Leadership are also important categories to include. If the activities in which you were involved required work or leadership responsibilities, be descriptive. The employer is interested in the skills you have developed, whether through volunteer or paid experiences. If you were elected to offices or committees, mention it. Recognition and demonstration of leadership roles are valuable.

An "Additional Information" category may be useful for displaying information that doesn't fit into any other category. Although computer knowledge, languages spoken, activities, etc. can be separate categories, especially if you have strong skills in these areas, you could list them under "Additional Information" as well.

References

Be sure to ask individuals if they would be willing to be a reference for you before mentioning their names to prospective employers. Names of individuals are not usually listed on the résumé. Employers will request references if needed. You should prepare a typed list of three references to provide at the interview. This list should include name, title, employer, address, preferred telephone number and e-mail (if used). Some will also choose to indicate the nature of their relationship with the reference listed.