

Résumé Writing Guide & Checklist

Step-By-Step Resume Building - While there is not necessarily one right way to write a resume, the following checklist reflects some of the basic guidelines for resume writing. An employer will use your resume to see whether you are a good “fit” for the position, and how well you compare with other candidates. It is critical that your resume has the right look/design and content to get you noticed. A well-written resume can improve your chances of being considered for an interview.

CHECKLIST: (check-off as you build & review your resume)

Getting Started: Some Guidelines

- Keep a list of all your work, education, organizations, athletics, volunteer activities, honors, awards, hobbies, military experience, etc. Identify the responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills developed as appropriate for each of these activities.
- Determine the position(s) you will target. Identify the skills, knowledge, and qualities needed for the position(s). From your work, education, and extracurricular history, identify the skills, knowledge, and qualities that are transferable to the position(s) you are targeting and begin building a specific resume for each position of interest. Your resume should be tailored to each specific position, therefore it is easier for resume writing when you already have a position identified and the job description is in front of you.
- Make your resume easy to read. It should be symmetrical, balanced and uncrowded. Use as much white space between sections as possible. Keep writing to short bulleted statements.
- For your Microsoft Word document (.doc): Use italics, capital letters, bullets, boldface, and underlining for visual appeal. Use **boldface** for the most important information. When submitting your resume electronically, it should be converted to a PDF file format to assure formatting does not get altered during submission.
- One page only – unless you have *significant* related employment/experience.
 - If you absolutely *must* have a 2 page resume, it should be 2 separate sheets of paper. Do NOT staple, paper clip, or print back-to-back.
- Use consistent indentation, capitalization, font style, spacing, and margins (1 inch).
- Use a standard font like Helvetica or Times in 10 pt or larger; 11-12 pt is best.
- No personal pronouns (I, me, you, etc.).
- Absolutely NO errors.** No typographical errors. No spelling errors. No grammar, syntax, or punctuation errors (pay attention to your use of tenses to make sure you use the correct past and present tense, as appropriate).
- Reproduce your resume on quality paper with a high-quality copier, laser printer, or printing service.
- Prepare a cover letter to accompany your resume.



Resume Sections:

Contact Information

- Should be at the top of your resume.
- Name is bolded and 14-20 point font.
- Address information same font size as main body text (12 pt) and include all information in sample.
- Email should be professional (i.e., NOT joehotrod@gmail.com) and good for at least six months.

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Objective (optional) (and/or may include a “Highlights of Qualifications” section)

- Can be beneficial if it matches position listed by employer. **Focus on the employer’s needs, not yours.**
- Do not include if:
 - A) you are unsure of position employer has available;
 - B) the employer has more than one position you would like to be considered for;
 - C) you have limited space.

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as a Store Manager where there is a need for excellent customer service skills and strong employee leadership.

Education

- Include degree, current/intended major, college name with city and state, and expected graduation date.
- List degree first. Can include major on same line to save space.
- Optional components: GPA if above a 3.0, academic honors (such as Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society or semesters on the President’s List), previous colleges attended, related coursework (for those with little working experience, this can be valuable so long as it is highly related to the field you are pursuing), working 20 or more hours while attending college, national accreditations, etc.
- Omit high school information unless it’s something exceptional

EDUCATION

Associate of Applied Science in Business Management *May 2016*

Minnesota State College Southeast

Winona, MN

GPA: 3.52 *Worked 30 hours per week while attending college full time

☐ Experience

- Employers want a reverse chronological (most recent first) list of jobs held with dates of employment.
- List position title first, followed by name of employer/organization, location (city and state) and dates.
- Use “bullets” to list key skills, responsibilities and results. The more relevant the position or key skills used/demonstrated, the more bullet statements.
- Action Verbs: Descriptive or action words should be used to describe the skills, accomplishments or responsibilities you list.
- Use the same skill words as those used in job listing.
- Give details. Employers want to know exactly what you did and what you accomplished.
- Check to make sure statements are in correct tense. Present tense if currently performing task, past tense if no longer performing task or in position.

EXPERIENCE

Night Manager, HyVee Grocery Store, Winona, MN *May 2013 – Present*

- Provided excellent store leadership in managing store functions and supervising employees
- Recorded inventory, ordered and stocked merchandise to maintain a clean and well-stocked department
- Greeted and assisted customers with excellent communication skills and attentive service
- Managed cash flow operations; operated cash register and balanced cash at close-of-business

Server, Bub’s Brewing Company, Winona, MN *May 2012 – May 2013*

- Trained approximately 10 new staff in company standards and procedures
- Developed strong interpersonal communication skills providing quality service to thousands of customers
- Executed accurate and efficient cash transactions in a fast paced work environment.

☐ Activities and Achievements

- Employers want examples of initiative, leadership, teamwork and other job related skills. Demonstrate this by including involvement in extra-curricular activities and other achievements.

HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

Vice President, Student Senate, Minnesota State College Southeast, *2015-2016*

- Chaired Events Committee – led a team to coordinate 15 campus events for 100+ students
- Volunteered 50 hours of Community Service throughout the year to various organizations

Member, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, *2015-2016*

Volunteer, Winter Concert Committee, Winona High School, *Winter 2014*

- Designed concert program handout and provided supervision to 35 high school students.

President’s List, three consecutive semesters

- Maintained a GPA of 3.5 or above

□ **Additional Skills** (optional)

- Skill sections should include relevant skills sought by employers such as proficiency in certain computer programs or languages, job specific certifications, foreign language skills, international travel, etc.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Fluent in English and Spanish

COMPUTER SKILLS

InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, HTML, Dreamweaver and Microsoft Office Suite

□ **References**

- You may put “References Available upon Request” at the end of your resume, if you wish. This is a standard close that signals the end of your resume, but it is not necessary. Another variation would be to close with “Able & Willing to Travel” as appropriate to the job description; again, this is not required.
- Never list references on your resume, they should always be on a separate page.
- Have 3-5 reference names, with titles/relationship to you, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. Be sure to request the permission of these individuals and keep them informed of the progress of your job search.
- Use the same “Letter Head” as you did for your resume.

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REFERENCES

Dr. Jim Teacher

Student Senate Advisor and Instructor for 1 year

Minnesota State College Southeast

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Winona, MN 55987

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507-453-xxxx

Power Verbs

You may use the following descriptive or action words for resumes, cover letter preparation, and interviewing.

Accelerated	Created	Fulfilled	Obtained	Researched
Accommodated	Critiqued	Fundraised	Officiated	Reserved
Accomplished	Cultivated	Generated	Operated	Resolved
Achieved	Customized	Governed	Orchestrated	Responded
Acquired	Debugged	Graduated	Ordered	Restored
Acted	Deciphered	Guaranteed	Organized	Retrieved
Activated	Dedicated	Guided	Originated	Revamped
Adapted	Delegated	Headed	Outlined	Reviewed
Addressed	Deliberated	Hired	Overhauled	Revised
Administered	Delivered	Identified	Participated	Revitalized
Advanced	Demonstrated	Illustrated	Perfected	Revived
Advertised	Designed	Implemented	Performed	Satisfied
Advised	Determined	Improved	Persuaded	Scheduled
Advocated	Developed	Improvised	Piloted	Screened
Allocated	Devised	Incorporated	Pioneered	Secured
Analyzed	Directed	Increased	Placed	Selected
Applied	Discovered	Indexed	Planned	Served
Arranged	Displayed	Indicated	Polished	Simplified
Assembled	Documented	Influenced	Prepared	Solved
Assessed	Doubled	Informed	Presided	Spearheaded
Assigned	Drafted	Initiated	Prevented	Specialized
Assisted	Earned	Innovated	Prioritized	Staffed
Audited	Edited	Inspected	Processed	Standardized
Authorized	Educated	Installed	Procured	Streamlined
Balanced	Eliminated	Instructed	Produced	Strengthened
Budgeted	Enacted	Insured	Programmed	Structured
Built	Encouraged	Integrated	Projected	Succeeded
Calculated	Enforced	Interpreted	Promoted	Summarized
Catalogued	Engineered	Interviewed	Proposed	Supervised
Chaired	Enhanced	Invented	Proved	Supported
Changed	Employed	Investigated	Provided	Surveyed
Classified	Established	Justified	Publicized	Synthesized
Collaborated	Evaluated	Launched	Published	Systematized
Collected	Exceeded	Led	Purchased	Targeted
Commanded	Executed	Logged	Qualified	Taught
Communicated	Exhibited	Maintained	Quantified	Tested
Completed	Expanded	Managed	Queried	Trained
Composed	Expedited	Manufactured	Raised	Transferred
Conceived	Explained	Marketed	Rated	Transmitted
Conducted	Explored	Mastered	Realized	Translated
Constructed	Facilitated	Mediated	Recommended	Tutored
Contracted	Finalized	Mentored	Reconciled	Updated
Contributed	Financed	Minimized	Recruited	Upgraded
Controlled	Focused	Mobilized	Reduced	Used
Cooperated	Formed	Modified	Reinforced	Utilized
Coordinated	Fostered	Motivated	Reorganized	Verified
Corresponded	Founded	Negotiated	Reported	Volunteered

Resume Headings:

The headings chosen for this guide are the “standard” headings, but others may be used as appropriate for the experiences you wish to highlight. Below are a number of other possible heading options:

- Career Objective
- Professional Objective
- Education
- Educational Background
- Teaching Preparation
- Professional Development
- Experience
- Relevant Experience
- Related Experience
- Work Experience
- Work History
- Employment Summary
- Summary of Qualifications
- Highlights of Qualifications
- Skills
- Technical Skills
- Teaching Skills
- Professional Skills
- Special Projects and Skills
- Academic Projects and Skills
- Computer Skills
- Related Skills
- Capabilities
- Honors and Awards
- Honors and Activities
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Professional Development
- Professional Affiliations
- Volunteer Activities
- Community Service
- Leadership Activities
- Additional Information
- Other Information

Formatting an Electronic Resume:

There will be times in your job or internship search where you will need to submit a resume via an employer’s website. If it is a small company, you can probably leave your resume as is. However, larger employers utilize searchable databases where they can do a computer search of all submitted resumes. For these types of jobs, it is going to be important to include key words from the job description and other jargon from the industry of interest, so that the software program pulls your resume for the employer to review.

Follow these steps to ensure that your qualifications will come across in an electronic search:

- Do your research!!! This is the best way to determine appropriate keywords for a position. Check out classified ads, job search websites, company websites and job descriptions.
- Use concrete nouns and phrases to describe your qualifications and experiences.
- Include industry jargon, acronyms, and buzzwords in your resume.
- Use common headings such as Objective, Education, Work History, Experience, Professional Affiliations, Publications, Honors and Activities, Certifications, and Licenses
- Be sure to describe job-related skills, transferable skills, and self-management skills.

If an employer requests a “scannable” resume, following these tips will help you create a resume that can easily be scanned by keyword scanning programs:

- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman, Arial, and Garamond. Use font size 10-14.
- Avoid using special formatting features such as lines, borders, shading, color, graphics and boxes.
- Use keyboard symbols such as – or * in place of bullets.
- Try using indents, columns and centering to add some visual appeal.
- Be sure to use a lot of keywords.
- Send an original copy printed on crisp, heavy-weight paper that has been printed using a laser printer. Remember not to fold or staple the resume.
- Keep personal information (i.e. name, address, telephone number and email address) on separate lines.
- Leave plenty of white space. This helps the computer to recognize beginning and endings. Using one inch margins on all sides of your resume is preferred.

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OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as a Store Manager where there is a need for excellent customer service skills and strong employee leadership.

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Able to lift up to 50 pounds; can meet the physical demands of the position
- Extremely flexible; Able and willing to work days, evenings, weekends, and holidays
- Effective leadership skills; can hire and delegate responsibility to employees
- Exceptional organizational skills and ability to accurately record information
- Responsible and reliable; can work independently

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EXPERIENCE

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May 2013 – Present

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Shift Manager, Bub's Brewing Company, Winona, MN

May 2012 – May 2013

- Trained approximately 10 new staff in company standards and procedures
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- Designed concert program handout and provided supervision to 35 high school students.

President's List, three consecutive semesters

- Maintained GPA of 3.5 or above

COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Office Suite, various social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter)

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REFERENCES

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