



## **Resume Tips**

### **Things You Should Do:**

#### **Be concise**

Your resume should be an *outline* of your career and qualifications. It is a place for bulleted points— items easily read with a quick scan. You can expound upon things in your cover letter and go into detail in interviews.

#### **Show results**

Quantify your on-the-job accomplishments. Show the reader how you cut costs, increased revenue, developed products/procedures, etc. For example, “Designed the audio module for the company’s state-of-the-art virtual reality simulator” sounds more impressive than “Assisted in the production of”

Also, where you can use figures, do so. Cut costs *by how much?* Increased revenue *how much?* Managed department *of how many?*

#### **Create a resume that fits the job you’re after.**

Especially important for career changers, you should highlight your skills that are pertinent for the job you want.

For instance, a librarian with strong computer programming skills who set up a research database might want to explore work in information systems. On his resume, his computer expertise would get lost using a chronological format. Instead, a functional resume emphasizing his information systems skills would better present this information. Remember, there is nothing unusual about having two or three resumes on hand targeted for different types of jobs.

#### **Carefully proofread and edit your resume.**

Take the time to read your resume at least twice and read it aloud to help catch awkward phrasing. A tip: After you’ve read your resume, get away from it for a while before reading it again. Reading it over and over makes you more prone to skim over sections and overlook mistakes.

### **Make the effort and investment to produce a quality finished product.**

If you do not have access to a personal computer, don't rely on your typewriter; make a trip to a copy center. Most chains offer computer and printer rentals for minimal cost. With a draft of your resume prepared before you go in, you should be able to create your resume and get multiple copies on high-quality paper (ask at the counter for paper) for less than \$15. It's a small investment when you consider the long-term return.

### **Keep your resume up to date.**

You might be comfortable and happy in your current situation, but you never know

- when you might learn of a more ideal job;
- when your department might be reduced or restructured;
- when your personal situation might dictate the search for a new job (i.e., your spouse gets an attractive offer in another city).

It's rare that anyone has lifetime contentment and security in a job. Always be prepared. Especially as you get promotions and new responsibilities, you should note these in your resume, purging outdated material. Also, if you develop outside interests that might make you more marketable (new computer skills, published articles, learning a foreign language), be sure to add these.

## **Things You Should Not Do**

### **Don't be cute or fancy when it comes to layout and presentation.**

Desktop publishing programs can be dangerous things. Even the most basic word processing programs on the market today offer users great flexibility to create. A variety of fonts, point sizes, and special characters are at your fingertips as is the ability to bold, italicize and underline words. When it comes to your resume, however, use restraint. Save the flashy stuff for your party invitations and holiday newsletters.

Your resume is one of the first impressions you give an employer. You want to show that you are a viable candidate for the job. Your ability to use multiple fonts and graphics is irrelevant. For a clean, professional-looking resume, it's best to err on the conservative side (a good font: Times New Roman).

### **Don't use passive phrases.**

Outlining your work history by stating "Duties included" or "Was responsible for" takes away from what you actually accomplished. Show action in your statements with words such as developed, designed, generated, sold, wrote.

### **Don't exaggerate.**

Padding your resume is not acceptable. You should be able to tell from a job description whether or not you are qualified. And even if you're not a perfect fit, it's likely that few others are, either. Don't try to make up qualifications for a specific job. Employers' want ads are often wish lists, and they don't necessarily expect every applicant to have all the desired qualifications.

### **Don't overlook non-work experiences.**

Your time organizing a charity fund-raiser, presiding over a cultural organization or even participating in groups such as Toastmasters not only looks good on resumes, but also gives you legitimate professional experience.

### **Don't include frivolous information.**

Photographs, marital status, high school information, salary requirements and even references should not be included.

### **Don't label the document "Resume".**

It is readily apparent what you are presenting. Some make the mistake of using "Resume" at the top near his/her name. It is not needed.