



RÉSUMÉS

What you need to know

Résumés have usually been put in three categories:

1. **Chronological:** With this format, the experiences are listed in reverse order, most current first. This is the most 'traditional' style and it works well if you have a logical progression of preferably related jobs. The chronological is very straight forward and offers less room for creativity.
2. **Functional:** the résumé centres on a list of skills or qualifications, offering very little particular job detail. This résumé works well for people who enjoy writing and manipulating words to suit their purposes. Still, some more conventional employers prefer seeing the job duties directly connected to the particular jobs because the reading is clearer.
3. **Combination:** This is the best of both worlds. It provides the opportunity for a skills section as well as the detailed job description. The conventions are there for more traditional résumé readers but there is still some creativity to expand on special features and selling points.

Basic characteristics:

- **Use One to two** pages: use a clean font with white space between sections.
- **Write consistent formatting** for headings.
- **Tailor** the résumé with key words to fit the job, company and industry.
- **Bullets or sentences?** It depends on the type of job/industry. Applying to a job where you write reports, express ideas, or rely heavily on written work means showing writing style on the résumé and cover letter. Technical résumés with many details will be more readable in point form.
- **Avoid templates.** They may not translate well when sent electronically and are not as easily changed when you need to do so.
- Consider adding some **individual flavor** in your résumé. Just like you are advised to wear conservative clothes to an interview, but add a touch of colour or interest, do the same to your résumé. There are many potential places, but always use individual touches to emphasize how you match the job.
- If you want the é, as in résumé, press **alt and type 130**.

Identification Section

Name: Format this bolder, larger so that it stand out.

Address: Try to balance saving space and clearly presenting information. Putting the address all one one line is beneficial, rather than taking up 3 lines to put all the details.

Phone: Ensure that the caller is left with a good impression and the information will be recorded accurately. Keep in mind that in some cases the call will be coming months later and the phone number should be as stable and long term as possible.

Email: Sexy123@hotmail.com is not acceptable. Professional email addresses should be used and try to avoid the _ line between words as it is not always seen when email addresses are

underlined. Similar to the phone number, email addresses should be stable and long term to be valid when the employer calls you.

Profile

Profiles are the hardest sections for most people to complete. Consider the résumé like an essay, and the profile is the thesis statement. It introduces:

1. your education,
2. your work experience,
3. your work habits, and
4. your objective for this particular résumé.

Do this after the résumé is finished so that you can look over what you have prepared and make the profile statement matches what follows. An example of this would be:

Energetic and organized Commerce graduate with administration and support services experience seeking Marketing Coordinator position with Xerox.

This profile statement could be much more descriptive with more practice but it is a good start.

See our sheet on **developing a profile**, from the basic statement to the more descriptive forms. We also have a helpful adjective and active verb sheet to help you provide effective descriptions throughout the résumé.

Skills

This skills list posts the relevant pieces of your education, training and employment or volunteer history that directly respond to the qualifications and assets posted on the job site. Start with the specific, not so commonly found skills and move down to the more transferable ones. The more important they are to the job, the higher on the list they will be.

However, in more technical résumés requiring the listing of many specific features, separating the skills into two categories would be useful. Predict the top two aspects to this job and give the name to the two categories. Trying to put all the skills into one long list makes it hard for the reader to remember your qualifications. For example, you might have Computer Skills and Interpersonal Skills as the two headings.

Avoid clichés like “excellent communication skills” or “ability to” statements. Stress what you have done: “Communicates well with people of many ages and cultures” makes a point and does not limit the information.

What comes next: Work Experience or Education?

It depends on the job and the industry and also on which one represents a better selling point for you. If your degree is not exactly in line with the job, your work experience may be the stronger feature. If you have little experience but have relevant education, then put education first. Additionally, some industries really emphasize the work ethic. In that case, put the work experience first.

Education

Your program should be mentioned first and should be bold. The years spent studying should be put on the right hand side. List the school name and the city/province after. Consider adding a “related courses” section to highlight the specific work you have done in your university career that matches the needs of the job.

GPA's are not voluntarily mentioned unless you have a 3.5/4.3 or above and GPA's have a value to that employer. High school does not have to be mentioned at this point in your career.

Work Experience

This is typically listed chronologically, although in some cases the jobs can be grouped according to the field or type of task if it helps you sell your experience to the employer. The descriptions for these jobs should use active statements that start with verbs and specify the exceptional things done. When possible include numbers to prove your effectiveness: for example, "handled \$10,000 in cash daily." Put job title first, then company city, province and dates (which go on the right or below.)

Note: Brainstorm first before sitting down to write this part of the résumé. It helps to think creatively about all parts of the job and all the experiences you had doing it. Then sift through all these details and pick out the important ones.

Volunteer Experience

For some people the volunteer work they did is more valuable for a future professional role than the paid work. Don't underestimate the value of being seen as community-oriented and being well rounded. Like work experience, name your duties, emphasize the context in which you worked and make them match the demands of the future job. Several industries/companies actually demand that their employees volunteer yearly so it is good to show you are willing to do this.

One minor warning about your volunteer work: consider the politics of where you are applying and where you are volunteering. Working for a cause that is part of a non-conservative culture and applying for a conservative-leaning workplace (or vice versa) may not be the best combination.

A related section that usually follows volunteering is **Interests**. They show your teamwork experience, your interest in the field (last book read...) and people interviewing you may relate to you because of it. This is a great spot to include a bit of your individual personality.

Additional Training

This should include related training that is marked by certifications, official qualifications, industry standards and related learning. If the certifications needed for the job have expired, make it clear that you are planning to recertify.

Awards and Accomplishments

List awards or accomplishments that were formally recognized by an external agency and give the dates. Otherwise, include in this section quantifiable achievements, such as your ranking of success within a job. For example, did you rank within the top 3 sellers in your office? Did you consistently get recognition from clients for your work as opposed to the work others may have done?

References don't need to be mentioned. It is assumed you will be giving them, or have given them if they were requested right away. Be prepared to give three references (usually professional) and list them on a separate sheet. Use the same format as the first page of your résumé for a consistent look.

Useful tools for your résumé arsenal:

1. Have a 'master' résumé that has all your work and volunteer experience listed. Include dates, duties, significant achievements, and names of supervisors. This can be more than 2 pages as it is not intended to be sent out anyway. It is a bank of information for your use.
2. Write a list of skills you will be using for your résumés, which can be based on the different roles you have played in your working and volunteer life.
3. Create a list of action words and adjectives to also be able to reference when looking for words and verbs to use.
4. Have a file of copies of your profile statements used in the past.

All of these are going to help you create effective résumés faster because you don't have to have go looking for information or wording on short notice. You may also be able to compare and contrast with résumés and cover letters that worked well as opposed to those that did not.

Résumé Tools available on the site and in our centre:

- Profile Statement Guide
- Cover Letter Guide
- CV Guide
- Adjectives
- Action Words