



## Articles of Interest

### Résumés

In today's job market, the résumé is an important tool for anyone looking for work. Everyone, from the new entrant into the workforce to the experienced professional, will benefit from a well-written résumé. Many employers require a résumé be sent as the first method of contact. It can be used to capture an employer's attention, even when no job is advertised. Just as a job search is a sales campaign, your résumé is your sales brochure. More than a summary of your skills, experience, and education, it is an advertisement of your best. Your résumé should make you stand out from the competition.

The use of electronic technology to manage the overwhelming number of résumés employers receive is increasing rapidly. Today many companies and employment agencies are using scanners to enter résumés into a computer. These résumé scanning systems use varying degrees of artificial intelligence to screen the résumé for desired skills and rely heavily on keywords.

Take the time to organize your job search information, including education, employment, and references. Focus on your skills and accomplishments and look for ways to sell your qualifications. A prospective employer does not just want to know where you worked, but also wants to know what you can do.

#### Résumé Formats

##### *Chronological* ([View sample](#))

The emphasis is on a chronological listing of employment and employment-related experiences. The chronological résumé is a good format for those with a consistent employment history, no gaps in employment, and whose past employment experiences are related to their current employment goals. It effectively showcases a steady work record with increasing upward responsibilities. This may not be the best for new graduates, individuals with job gaps, or persons changing careers.

##### *Functional* ([View sample](#))

The functional résumé highlights skills, experience and accomplishments without identifying specific dates, names and places. This format is organized by functions or skills, advertising the specific qualifications needed for the occupation. This résumé works well for people changing careers. It is also effective for those re-entering the workforce, first-time job seekers and when highlighting experiences that occurred in the distant past. There is no chronological listing of employment. Consequently, many employers do not like this format; it creates suspicion that the person may be trying to hide something.

##### *Combination*

The combination résumé brings together the best of both the chronological and functional resumes. It features a functional section that highlights skills, accomplishments and experiences. It also includes a chronological listing of employment, education and employment-related experiences. This is a very effective format for many job seekers. The best chronological résumé is enhanced with a section highlighting skills, accomplishments and experience. The best functional résumé is strengthened with a chronological listing of employment experiences.

#### Points to Consider

- Consider the scannability of your résumé ([View sample](#))
- Keep your résumé brief (1 to 2 pages)
- Use only 8.5" x 11" paper
- Use white or off-white quality paper
- Emphasize your skills and accomplishments
- Do not use abbreviations
- Arrange the résumé so it is pleasing to the eye
- Avoid fancy fonts, exotic colored paper, photographs and graphics

#### Résumé Variations

*Keyword*

The keyword résumé is a variation that adds a listing of skills to the beginning of any standard résumé format. Placing critical occupational skills as keywords at the beginning adds impact to the résumé and helps to capture the reader's attention. This variation is effective for all career fields and levels of skills. It is a very effective strategy for creating scannable résumés.

*Targeted*

More of a strategy than a style, the targeted résumé directs skills and experience to the specific needs of an employer. All résumés at least need to target a specific occupation. This approach targets it further to the employer and the job. It is a very powerful résumé method that can set you apart from the competition and capture an employer's interest. For executive positions and specialized technical jobs, this strategy is almost a necessity. However, this requires writing a separate résumé for each employment opportunity.

**Résumé Layout**

The résumé created by the job seeker needs to be unique. There is no one layout that fits everyone. However, there are some standard résumé categories.

*Personal Data*

Your name, complete mailing address, and telephone number(s) with area code are all the personal data required. List this information in a "block" format instead of placing the information on one line.

*Employment or Career Objective*

Include an objective if you have a specific career goal in mind, or you know the title of the job for which you are applying. If you omit the objective on the résumé, be sure to communicate it elsewhere, such as in the cover letter.

*Summary or Highlights of Qualification*

Generally employers will spend less than 10 seconds screening your résumé the first time. Their goal is to eliminate as many candidates as possible and concentrate on the best. Therefore, highlighting your qualifications early in the résumé is an effective way to improve your chances for consideration.

*Body of Résumé*

The résumé format you choose will determine the sequence of information. For a chronological résumé, employment history comes next. In a functional résumé, the summary sections would follow. The combination format would include both summary sections and chronological listings.

*Education*

Unless you are a recent graduate, your education should be placed toward the end of the résumé. If you are a recent graduate, then it may be listed earlier in the body. List only education that is significant to your job search. There is no need to list high school education if you have a college degree. If you have a GED, list yourself as a high school graduate.

*Other Activities*

List only those activities that relate to your occupational goal and show skill or experience. It is best not to mention specific religious or political organizations unless they directly relate to your goal. Military experience may be listed as a separate section or as a part of the work history.

*References*

References do not belong on the résumé. They should be listed on a separate sheet. Send the references with the résumé only when specifically requested by the employer. There is no need to state "References available upon request." It is assumed that you will provide them.



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### Ten Things to Avoid on Your Resume

The average employer gives a résumé a 30 second review before examining it more carefully. To give your résumé the edge, avoid these mistakes:

1. Don't use a résumé with spelling, typing, or grammatical errors. First impressions are critical. An employer will assume mistakes on a résumé indicate a careless employee. Proofread your résumé before it is printed and before it is mailed!
2. Don't write corrections or notes on your résumé. Résumés should always be completely typed. A laser printed copy is preferred.
3. Don't omit the cover letter. Too many résumés are mailed without cover letters and wind up on the wrong desk with no indication of what position is being applied for.
4. Don't provide salary history and salary requirements. If salary history is requested, it should be included in the cover letter or on the job application.
5. Don't lie about your background or stretch the truth. Hiring authorities will call your previous employers to verify your work experience.
6. Don't include personal descriptions such as ethnicity, age, weight, gender, or marital status. Photos should also be excluded.
7. Don't use the phrase "References available upon request," or the word "Résumé" for a title.
8. Don't fold, staple, or tape your résumé. For mailing, use large envelopes in order to keep your résumé and cover letter flat.
9. Don't use your present employer's fax, e-mail, envelopes, or mail department to send your résumé. DOL offices offer these services free of charge, and local libraries have computers with Internet access. Office supply stores and some pharmacies offer faxing services for a fee.
10. Don't use a résumé that looks cluttered or lacks white space. Remember, an employer will first glance at your résumé. If it is not neatly organized with information quickly available, it will probably not be read. Since a résumé is a quick reference for employers, it should not be more than two pages in length.