

Resume Checklist

Adapted from Jobtrak (now Monstertrak.com)

The following checklist has been designed to assist you in writing your resume. This checklist reflects the expertise of the Career Center staff developed through critiquing thousands of resumes, discussing selection criteria with numerous employers, and gathering input from a wide range of career professionals.

START WITH REVIEWING YOUR CONTENT

Contact Information

- address, current and permanent (if necessary)
- telephone number(s) where you can be reached 9-5

Objective

(Optional for chronological resume. Required for functional resume.)

- briefly indicates the sort of position, title, and area of specialization sought for management or supervisory positions, indicates level of responsibility sought
- language is specific, employer centered not self-centered; avoids vague statements

Education and Training

- Highest level of attainment is listed first; work from most current degree backward degree in progress or most recently completed degree; include type of degree, name of university, location of university, date of graduation or anticipated date,
- list other degrees, relevant higher education coursework, continuing professional education or training courses, and study abroad
- major, minor, or areas of concentration
- omit high school if you have completed more than two years of college unless referencing impressive honors or relevant extracurricular activities
- relevant courses, papers, projects; include paper or project titles
- GPA, honors, awards, scholarships

Skills

- computer skills: software applications, languages, hardware, operating systems
- language skills: specific level of fluency and ability to read and write as "basic," "intermediate," or "advanced"

Employment Experience

- Include all paid, volunteer, intern, or cooperative education experiences relevant to your objective. Start with most recent experience if using chronological format.
- title held, organization name, city, state, or country location (if not U.S.A.)
- dates position held; if several positions for one employer, list employer once responsibilities listed in order of each item's relative value to the future employer; ***indicate transferable skills and abilities used on the job***
- accomplishments on your job; what problems did you face? solutions found?
- contributions to the organization, i.e., ways your work helped increase profit, membership publicity, funding, motivation, efficiency, productivity, quality; saved time or money; improved programs, management, communication, information flow etc.
- quantitative or qualitative indicators that describe the results of your contributions or accomplishments, i.e., "increased sales by \$50,000"; "reduced staff turnover by 25%"; learning that took place on the job that is relevant to your job objective
- describe accomplishments in jargon of the field

Extracurricular Activities, Community Service, Professional Associations

- list positions of responsibility; include title, name of organization / team, and dates
- leadership roles, achievements, and transferable skills that are relevant
- include hobbies and personal interests only if they are relevant

Examine your background for these possible areas to highlight:

Research

- Give project title, focus, authors

Community Service

- List organizations where you devoted time and effort

Student Leadership

- Give title, organization, and significant points of responsibility

Go back over your document and check for the following:

DOES IT HAVE A MARKETING FOCUS?

- demonstrates ability or potential to do the job; supports your objective
- speaks to the employer's needs and requirements (employer-centered not self-centered)
- indicates knowledge of the field, typical issues or problems, solutions
- omits racial, religious, or political affiliations unless a bona fide occupational qualification
- contains only personal data relevant to your objective; omits age, sex, marital status, national origin, health, names of references

DOES THE APPEARANCE PROMOTE A POSITIVE FIRST IMPRESSION?

- is inviting and easy to read; not too much information
- uses appropriate font styles and font sizes (10-14 pts.)
- incorporates enough white space between sections to facilitate skimming
- centers text; adequate margins
- creates visual impact using bullets, boldface, underlining, italics, and font sizes to emphasize key words (for scannable resumes, use boldface only)
- printed on high quality (16-25 lb.) bond paper
- print is letter quality

DOES THE ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT MAKE IT AN "Easy Read"?

- appropriate format includes keyword phrases of profession
- presents strongest qualifications first
- appropriate length: 1 page for every 6-10 years of work experience

IS YOUR WRITING STYLE DIRECT, PRECISE AND "Action Oriented"?

- begins sentences or phrases with powerful action verbs; not with "I..."
- short bulleted paragraphs mostly under five lines; short sentences
- brief, succinct language; no unnecessary words
- absolutely free from grammatical, spelling, punctuation, usage, and typographical errors