

www.bucks.edu/Careerservices

Resume Writing Workbook

215-968-8195

Career Services
Rollins Center, 1st Floor



What is a resume?

A resume is a one or two page summary; a concise, organized **outline** that summarizes your education, work experience, professional skills and qualifications. It is a **marketing tool** designed to introduce you to a prospective employer with the intention of getting a job interview.

Why write a resume?

Resumes are the most efficient and popular way to introduce yourself to possible employers. They are a necessary part of the job search process. Employers often use the resume to screen a pool of applicants for people who meet the requirements of available jobs.

A good resume will help you clarify your objectives, skills, experiences, and document accomplishments in a short format.

Types of resumes

Chronological

The reverse chronological format is the most **standard** and straight forward style. It states your employment history, **beginning with the most recent**, in a sequence dating backward. Employers often like this type of resume because it's easy to read.

Functional

The functional resume **focuses on skills and accomplishments** so that the reader can see what you can do. The emphasis is on the skills that you have and not necessarily where you learned them. It is less formal and conservative in terms of listing exact dates. This resume might be best for those with gaps or frequent changes in employment.

Combination

The combination resume **uses the best of both the functional and chronological formats**. A good combination resume will tell the employer what you can do while providing them with a clear understanding of where you learned it.

Who and Why?

A few questions to answer as you begin...

Why am I writing this resume? _____

Who is going to read this? _____

Do I have a specific job or field in mind? _____

What are the skills required for this job? *The best way to find this information is to read job advertisements on the web and in newspapers.*

Writing your Resume

The following section provides step by step instructions on how to write a resume. Take time to read the material and complete the exercises. Each numbered section is a section that appears on a resume.

1. Contact Information:

This information will include:

Name/Address/City/State/Zip/Phone Numbers/Email Address/Website

This is pretty self-explanatory. Be careful about your voicemail greeting... Is it professional? Same with email address names....

Write your contact information here:

2. Objective

Some say you need an objective, others say it is optional. If you are applying for a specific job it is best to include an objective. This will help you to focus your resume and let the employer know that you know what you want. Be as specific as possible. Here are a few examples of good objectives:

“Seeking an administrative position in a medium sized non-profit organization.”

“A position in communications that requires skills in writing, training, and public relations.”

Note: the best way to write an objective is to list the exact title in the exact company that you want. For example:

“Seeking the Marketing Director position with Peabody Associates.”

Write your objective here:

3. Profile

A profile is a summary of qualifications, highlighting your abilities, personal traits, and special skills that you want the employer to know. It can be your first opportunity to sell yourself. It facilitates the “high-speed resume screening” that human resources personnel have to do. Make sure it indicates what you can do for the company, rather than what the company can do for you.

Examples:

“Computer Programming graduate with outstanding technical capabilities who consistently achieves in a team atmosphere. Responsible, ambitious, and determined to succeed. Consistently acknowledged for demonstrating extraordinary analytic, communications, and interpersonal skills.”

“Highly reliable, hardworking and flexible marketing professional with nine years of experience working in a direct mail marketing environment. Outstanding ability to anticipate client needs and address them.”

Write the adjectives and traits that describe you as a worker, employee, graduate, professional, etc. here:

4. Skills Summary

Create a bulleted list of your skills.

Example:

- Customer Service
- Inventory Control
- Word for Windows
- Fluent Spanish
- Team Player
- Project Management
- Purchasing
- Microsoft Outlook
- Proofreading
- Organization

Write your list of skills here:

5. Education

This section addresses your formal training & educational background. List the name, city and state of the school or institution, the degree or certification you earned or are earning, and the date you graduated or anticipate graduating.

Example:

Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA
Associate of Arts - Business Administration, May 2003

Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
Bachelor of Science in Accounting, anticipated May 2005

FAQ:

Should I include my GPA? We suggest that you include your GPA only if it is a 3.0 or better, and if your education is your strongest area of experience.

Do I include my High School? The rule of thumb is that you include your high school if you have not yet completed an Associate Degree.

Should I list my courses? List relevant coursework when it applies to the position you are seeking and if your education is your strongest experience.

Write your educational background here:

6. *Work Experience*

List places that you have worked, your position title, and the dates you worked there. Then briefly describe your responsibilities with emphasis on **specific skills and achievements**. (see Example below for format)

Go back to the Who and Why section to determine who might read this and what skills and accomplishments they might want to see. Use action words to describe your experience and accomplishments. There is list of action words in the back of this workbook.

Example:

Bookmakers Books, Philadelphia, PA

February 2003 – September 2003

Office Manager

- Managed all aspects of an online bookstore
- Developed and maintained system for tracking inventory
- Trained new employees in the use of relevant software programs
- Acted as customer service and sales representative

Use the following section to write about your job experiences. We have included

space for four jobs.

1. Company Name with City and State_____

Job Title

Dates Employed _____

**List in bulleted format - special skills the job required, things you did well, problems you solved, things you accomplished
(Refer to the action words list)**

2. Company Name with City and State_____

Job Title

Dates Employed _____

**List in bulleted format - special skills the job required, things you did well, problems you solved, things you accomplished
(Refer to the action words list)**

3. Company Name with City and State_____

Job Title

Dates Employed _____

**List in bulleted format - special skills the job required, things you did well, problems you solved, things you accomplished
(Refer to the action words list)**

4. **Company Name with City and State**_____

Job Title

Dates Employed _____

**List in bulleted format - special skills the job required, things you did well, problems you solved, things you accomplished
(Refer to the action words list)**

7. Volunteer Experience (optional)

Type of volunteer work_____

Name of organization with location_____

Dates of experience_____

Brief Description_____

8. Awards and Honors (optional)

List any special awards or honors earned

9. Interests, Extracurricular activities, committees etc.

List names of organizations or activities in the same format as above

10. References

At the bottom of your resume you should simply state;

References are available upon request

Be prepared to offer the names and contact information of three people who are willing to give you a good reference if an employer is to ask for one. Ask these people BEFORE you list them as references.

Action Words

Be sure to use the proper tense of the words for current or past activities

achieved	created	implemented	publicized
acquired	cultivated	improved	published
adapted	demonstrated	informed	purchased
addressed	designed	initiated	recruited
administered	developed	insured	reorganized
advanced	devised	interacted	reported
anticipated	directed	interpreted	researched
assembled	discovered	interviewed	resolved
assisted	documented	launched	reviewed
audited	doubled	made	selected
balanced	drafted	maintained	separated
budgeted	edited	managed	set up
calculated	eliminated	marketed	simplified
changed	enforced	minimized	sold
collaborated	enhanced	motivated	solved
collected	established	negotiated	staffed
communicated	evaluated	obtained	supervised
compiled	expanded	operated	supported
composed	explained	organized	surveyed
condensed	forecasted	originated	taught
conducted	formed	oversaw	tested
constructed	founded	participated	trained
contracted	gathered	planned	updated
converted	generated	prevented	upgraded
coordinated	guided	produced	utilized
corrected	hired	proofread	wrote

The cover letter should:

Explain why you are sending a resume- Always send a cover letter with your resume, even if you are sending it electronically or applying on-line. Be specific about what you want- Do you want a summer internship opportunity, a permanent position at graduation, or are you inquiring about future employment possibilities?

Tell how you learned about the position or the organization- a flyer posted in your department, a website, a family friend who works at the organization. It is appropriate to mention the name of someone who suggested that you write.

Convince the reader to look at your resume- the cover letter will be seen first. Therefore, it must be very well written and targeted to that employer.

Call attention to elements of your background- education, leadership, experience which are relevant to a position you are seeking. Be as specific as possible, using examples.

Reflect your attitude- personality, motivation, enthusiasm and communication skills.

Provide or refer to any information specifically requested- in a job advertisement that may not be covered in your resume, such as availability date, or reference to an attached writing sample.

Indicate what you will do to follow-up- For example, you will call them within a week to set up an interview.

In a letter of application- applying for an advertised opening, applicants often say something like "I look forward to hearing from you." However, it is better to take the initiative to follow-up, saying something like, "I will contact you in the next two weeks to see if you require any additional information regarding my qualifications."

In a letter of inquiry- ask about the possibility of an opening; don't assume the employer will contact you. Say something like, "I will contact you in two weeks to learn more about upcoming employment opportunities with (name of organization)." Then mark your calendar to make the call.

For further guidance:

***Ready Made Resume (www.readymaderesume.com/bucks/)
username=bucks, password=resume- 11***

Resume builder on CareerCruising (<http://www.careercruising.com/>)

Call Career Services at 215- 968- 8195

Cover Letter Template

Your Name
Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Telephone Number
Email Address

Month Day, Year

Mr./Mrs./Dr. FirstName LastName
Title
Name of Organization
Street or P.O. Box Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. LastName:

Opening paragraph: State why you are writing; how you learned of the organization or position, and basic information about yourself.

2nd paragraph: Tell why you are interested in the employer or type of work the employer does (Simply stating that you are interested does not tell why, and can sound like a form letter). Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications which make you a good fit for the employer's needs. This is an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items in your resume. Refer to the fact that your resume is enclosed. Mention other enclosures if such are required to apply for a position.

3rd paragraph: Indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for a position or to talk with the employer to learn more about their opportunities or hiring plans. State what you will do to follow up, such as telephone the employer within two weeks. If you will be in the employer's location and could offer to schedule a visit, indicate when. State that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for her/his consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature)

Your name typed

Enclosure(s) (refers to resume, etc.)



Resume Writing Checklist:

Read a number of good resume samples to get some ideas about what you like and dislike. Read job advertisements online, in newspapers and in trade journals to find out what employers are looking for. Then, use this checklist to make sure your resume is complete and impressive.

Layout

- Keep your resume to one page only, unless you have significant previous experience
- Use a word processor with full spell check and proofing
- Use a simple, conservative font (no more than 2 styles)-Times New Roman or other serif font in 10 to 12 point size
- Highlight your name and each of your headings by: using larger point size, underline or bolded features
- Your margins should be no less than .5" and no more than 1.5"
- Use quality bond paper, 8x11 inches (preferably watermarked resume paper)

Content

- Make sure that all information is accurate and verifiable
- Include **Industry buzzwords**. Could an employer quickly scan your resume and find a number of key words and action verbs to easily grasp a picture of you as a worthy employee?
- Write in a professional resume style, not in first person narrative: for example "I enjoyed this job....."
- Make sure you have a simple, professional voicemail message and email address and that your contact information is clearly stated; permanent address, email and phone number
- If you have included an objective, is it clear and focused?
- Include a summary of your top skills listed as bullet points (use industry buzzwords)
- When listing your educational background, list the name of the college or university and location first, then the degree and major, and finally a graduation or anticipated graduation date. Example; **Bucks County Community College**, Newtown, PA, Associate of Arts - Business Administration, May 2003
- Include your GPA if it is 3.0 or better and if you have not had significant professional experience in your chosen field
- Narrow down to the most notable achievements and limit the number of past positions described to 3 that relate to your intended career. Eliminate very brief or non-related positions.
- If you have gaps in your work history, do your best to account for your time (it is not necessary to list your experiences in chronological order, but strongly suggested that you list specific dates of employment and volunteer work whenever possible)
- If a job title is not self explanatory, briefly describe the position
- Do not include personal data or potentially discriminatory data
- Update your resume regularly - each time you achieve a professional goal, be sure to add it to your resume.

Spell check and grammar check your resume at least twice and have at least two other people read it for you again.