

RESUME TIPS

Make sure your resume reflects skills a specific employer is looking for. Knowing this, you may need to have several versions, in order to suit different needs.

Your Resume should be brief and to the point.

TWO FORMATS : CHRONOLOGICAL VERSUS FUNCTIONAL

Resumes generally come in two flavors, Chronological and Functional.

If you have been working consistently, use the Chronological resume format, which lists your jobs in chronological order.

Use the Functional style if you have gaps in work history and want to highlight skills more than timelines. This resume is organized by areas of expertise instead of by job history.

The “Combination” resume, which includes elements of both the Chronological and Functional styles, is growing in popularity.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you begin, here are some tips you should know about writing your resume. Keep notes throughout the year as you accomplish different things at work or in your personal life, be crisp, do not be repetitive, keep personal information out of resume, proofread, stick to one page, and create a PDF so your formatting will not be lost when someone opens it. Microsoft “Word” documents and text files can look different on different computers, but PDFs are always displayed the same way. You can Install PDF995 for free from <http://www.pdf995.com/> . This creates a PDF printer and you can print to this new printer to create a PDF file.

CONTACT INFORMATION

On your resume, list your Contact information first, including your Permanent address, and Phone number. Make sure that the phone number you give will always be answered professionally, so give out your cell phone number instead of your home number if your children like to answer the phone. Your email address should also be included. If you do not have a professional email address, like partyanimal@gmail, create a new free email address at Yahoo! (mail.yahoo.com) or Google (gmail.com) that sounds more professional.

OBJECTIVE

Some people leave out the objective so that they do not have to modify their objective every time they submit a resume to a new company. If you include an Objective, ensure that it is clear, concise, and expresses your goal in no more than 3 lines. Figure out what the employer wants and tell them that you want it.

If you include Career summaries and Qualification summaries, include brief overviews of your experience and work history. If you have employment gaps, think of activities you were involved in when you were not working, like special education and training, or volunteering. Eliminate months when giving dates and highlight special skills that were gained during that time.

If you have a history of job hopping or have had too many jobs, use the Functional resume, rather than the Chronological resume.

Whether you are taking the leap into a new job or returning to the workforce after many years as a stay-at-home professional, consider the following questions before moving forward with your career change. Sometimes this period of change and flux can be positive because it affords the opportunity to be thoughtful about what you truly want. A job is more than just a paycheck. It's about self-respect and emotional growth. Establish job goals before you begin.

- What makes you happy?
- When do you need to work?
- What kind of atmosphere do you like?
- What do you want for your future?

- How much do you need to earn to support yourself and family?
- What is your minimum requirement?
- Do you need a job that offers health insurance?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Are there any jobs that you morally oppose?
- Are you willing to start at lower place to get your dream job?
- Do you want to break into an industry?

Skills Assessment Tests and Quizzes are often helpful in determining the answers to those questions. Websites like www.ProjectCareer.com , www.MyPlan.com , www.MyCareerWhiz.com , www.questcareer.com, www.CareerKey.org, and www.Free-Career-Test.com can prove useful. Not all skills assessment tests are free, so beware of sites that charge for these services. Some are worth paying for, especially if you are trying to help your teen determine their strengths and skills. However, if you are unemployed and cannot afford to make such as investment, the free website quizzes will prove extremely valuable. Aptitude testing firms like Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation www.jocrf.org, with 11 offices nationwide, charge as much as \$600 per person! The book "Do What You Are," by Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger, may also help enlighten you during your quest.

RESUME ADDITIONS TO CONSIDER

Don't play down your achievements. People are taught to be modest, but don't forget that even the following achievement can help sell yourself as a "best buy" to an employer:

- Earning promotions
- Increasing sales figures
- Running a project to change something
- Winning an award or prize
- Achieving good results in exams/ assessments
- Being part of a team, no matter how trivial
- Gaining qualifications like a chauffeur's license
- Winning a league race

- Being a captain on sports team
- Running a marathon
- Implementing or designing a system
- Improving efficiencies
- Going long periods without absence from work or school
- Winning customer service awards

Focus on communicating accomplishments rather than listing duties and responsibilities associated with past jobs.

Remember that Employers generally respond best to applicants that already have the skills they are looking for. These skills include flexibility, ability to manager team dynamics, confidence, enthusiasm, innovation, and creativity.

Communication skills, like speaking your mind, being open and honest with information, showing that you can communicate well in multiple languages, and having the ability to bond with different types of people & temperaments, should be highlighted in your resume. Hiring managers also love specifics – like “I achieved a 30% gain in sales efficiency.” However, be mindful not to overstate the facts.

Here are some additional Resume additions to consider:

- Public speaking
- Awards
- Published work
- Affiliations
- Willingness to travel

CREDIT REPORT ISSUES

Credit Report issues may affect more than just your ability to get a loan – sometimes Employers look at that to check your fiscal responsibility. By law, they need your permission. If you do not get the job, the employer must show you the report and show you how to get a free copy. You are entitled to a free copy every year, anyway. You can obtain that copy at www.annualcreditreport.com

If you would like to learn how to fix your credit, consult resources published on <http://Credit.about.com> .

DOS AND DON'TS

DO'S

- Research the company you are applying to, in order to show that you know them.
- Use active verbs and active sentences.
- Type up your envelope, if you can. Use real stamps not postage meters, so they don't have to wonder if you used your boss's meter.
- Proofread the resume.
- Re-write your resume if it is more than 3 years old.
- Use high quality paper, size 8.5" x 11," for both the Resume and cover letter.
- Use color paper that is easy on the eyes, meaning white or cream.
- Type your resume and cover letter and make it look professional.
- Leave some white space on your resume, like 1 inch margin on the sides. Also, the size of gaps between sections should be similar.
- Laser printing your resume is a great idea. At www.Kinkos.com, you can send printing requests directly from your computer to the FedEx-Kinkos of

your choice, and pick up the job later. Laser printing starts at just 2 cents per page.

- Ensure copies photocopies are legible.
- Do explain gaps, if they are glaring.
- Use technical jargon, if necessary, to show competency.

DON'TS

- Avoid Contractions.
- Avoid passive verbs.
- Do not create a resume that is longer than one page.
- Do not use an unusual layout or unusual font. Arial, Times New Roman Courier (10-12 pt) are acceptable fonts.
- Do not underline headings.
- Do not include salary information on your resume.
- Do not staple a multi-page resume. Your employer may need to scan it.
- Do not fold the resume. Instead, buy an 8.5"x11" envelope.
- Do not use color on your resume.
- Avoid listing dates in the beginning - list them after titles, employers, descriptions.

- Never fax or email your resume unless asked to do so. Send your resume to a specific person rather than to a title or department.
- Never enclose letters of recommendation, transcripts, or other information, unless asked.
- Avoid words with negative connotations like “avoided, tried, lost, failed, disciplined, succumbed, relied, abandoned, withdrew, attempted, conflicted, unsuccessfully, argued.” Try “resourcefully, competently, cooperatively, enthusiastically, overcame, applied, presented, analyzed, demonstrated, accomplished, repaired, organized.”
- Avoid clichés like “make my day, overboard, win-win, outside the box.”
- Avoid information in your resume that might lead to biases: Avoid topics like Ethnicity, physical disability, beauty, height, weight, sexual preference, gender, age, and health.

BECOMING A JOB DETECTIVE

Who is the prime suspect for the job? Become a job detective and write a tailored resume with a particular job in mind.

Get information about the company you are applying to from their annual report (available on the Internet at the company’s website), brochures, industry trade magazines, and online resources like www.Hoovers.com. Industry directories, job ads, the job posting description, website, media, gossip and rumor, and someone already doing the job can also provide helpful insight. The U.S. Government publishes an Occupational Outlook Handbook which provides information about what specific jobs are like. This is available at the Department of Labor’s website at: www.bls.gov/oco .

Try to understand the employer’s “WIIFT” or “what’s in it for them?”

Also, do not be easily put off if it sounds like they want a superhuman candidate. They usually list what they want in an ideal world.

ELECTRONIC RESUMES – HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR “E-SEARCHABILITY”

Large companies, particularly, are employing the use of computer scanning technology to scan your resume and search your resume for keywords.

To make your resume more “scanning-technology-friendly,” follow these tips:

- **Use these headings:**
 - Experience
 - Education
 - Qualifications
 - Work history
 - Affiliations
 - References
- **Use the following words, that search well:**
 - Personal qualities
 - Leader or leadership
 - Communicator
 - Dynamic
 - Energetic
 - Excellent
 - Outstanding
 - Skilled
 - Intelligent
 - Team player
 - Team-focused
 - Outgoing
 - Persuasive
 - Dependable
 - Reliable

Because electronic resumes are often scanned by a machine, not a human being, be sure to include lots of KEYWORDS. A good idea is to add a keyword section to the bottom of your resume. Of course, be sure that you actually have these skills, before you list them.

For an e-resume, simple is better. Avoid graphics, lines, and bullets. Scanning engines do not process those characters very well. A quick way to reformat your resume is to copy it and “Paste Special” as “unformatted text” to remove any formatting.

More importantly, be specific. List special languages, certifications, and licenses. Instead of stating that you have Microsoft Office experience, state that you have Microsoft “Word,” and “Excel,” experience.

DO YOU HAVE A VIRUS?

When emailing your resume, make sure you virus-scan your resume file before sending it. AVG software provides free virus protection software at: <http://free.grisoft.com> . Some companies get upset when your file has a virus that could potentially harm their systems and breach their security. The last thing you want is to be excluded from consideration before they have an opportunity to evaluate your qualifications. Scan your resume for viruses!

MORE ELECTRONIC CONSIDERATIONS

Consider producing an e-portfolio and allowing potential employers to access that information. This e-portfolio could include presentations, work samples, endorsements and testimonials, a biography, a professional blog, etc.

Resume Blasting services exist, which blast your resume to hundreds of niche job boards at one time. Use those services sparingly, as they do not allow you to tailor your resume and cover letter for specific situations. Often, these services are not free, so be mindful of costs, particularly if you are unemployed at the time.

Here are some examples of Resume Blasting companies:

www.resumeExpress.com , www.careerexpress.com , www.e-cv.com ,
www.executiveagent.com , www.hotresumes.com ,
www.jobsearchpage.com , www.resumeblaster.com ,
www.resumebooster.com , www.resumebroadcaster.com ,
www.resumehits.com , www.resumemachine.com , www.resumerabbit.com
, www.resumezapper.com , www.rocketresume.com ,
www.seemeresumes.com , www.wsacorp.com .

THE 30-SECOND RESUME

Finally, to round out the resume creation process, develop a 30-second resume, or elevator pitch, that succinctly articulates your work search goal and makes a solid first impression of what you uniquely offer. This may come in handy if someone calls you on the phone, if you run into a recruiter while networking, or if you are sent to a recruiter's voicemail.

Tips for this Guide have been compiled from **How to Write a Resume and Get a Job (Esperanza Series) (Paperback)** by Luis Cortes (Author); and **Amazing Resumes What Employers Want to See -- and How to Say It** Jim Bright, Ph.D. , Joanne Earl, Ph.D.. (paperback)