

# General Resume Guidelines

Your resume can be looked at as a brief commercial about yourself. It lets the employer know a little bit about your background. While a job application provides the basic facts, a resume lets your personality show.

A hiring manager only looks at your resume for less than 30 seconds. If you don't grab their attention right away by clearly showing how your qualifications match a specific job, you won't be considered any further. The ultimate goal for your resume is to get you an interview.

## ***Parts of a Resume***

- **Heading** - include your full name, your current address with the number, street, apartment number, city, state, and zip code. Include your area code, your phone number(s) and e-mail address.
- **Education** - Present your education in reverse chronological order. Include all degrees as well as the names and locations of the schools from which you received them. Include academic honors, elected offices and extracurricular activities under the institution where you earned these.
- **Professional Summary** - Highlight important experiences relevant to the position you're seeking and your most important talents and describe personal strengths. For example, you can include a sentence describing yourself as a results-focused, persistent, and collaborative individual.
- **Work Experience** – Include full-time, part-time, volunteer, school leadership roles and experience demonstrating skills and accomplishments. List the organization name, the location (city and state only), your title and the years you worked in that position. Describe your experience - what you accomplished, how you made a difference, don't just copy your job description.
- **Military History** – Tell the employer the branch of service, your highest rank, type of discharge and date of separation. List any special assignments, duties, clearances, collateral duties, and decorations that relate to the job that you are seeking. Technical military training can be listed under the Education heading on your resume. (A Military heading is only listed if you have military experience.)
- **Personal Information (optional)** – Activities, honors, awards, etc. Research projects and independent studies that relate to the job you are applying for and non-related activities can be noted in this category.

## **Guidelines**

### **DO**

- ✓ Lead with your strongest statements related to the job or goal.
- ✓ Emphasize your transferable skills.
- ✓ Include your employment-related accomplishments.
- ✓ Target your qualifications, using measurable outcomes, values and percentages when possible.
- ✓ Clearly communicate your purpose and value to employers.
- ✓ Maintain eye-appealing visual appearance.
- ✓ Use the best format to showcase your skills.
- ✓ Be creative and relevant to job.
- ✓ Always include a cover letter when mailing your resume.
- ✓ Appear neat, well organized and professional.
- ✓ Correct all typographical and spelling errors.
- ✓ Use high-quality 8½" X 11" resume paper.
- ✓ Make margins on all sides approximately 1".
- ✓ Length should be one to two pages. Never exceed two pages.
- ✓ Font size should be 10 to 12, using a conservative font style in black ink.

### **DON'T**

- X Use abbreviations (exceptions include middle initial and directions such as N for North)
- X Use "I" to refer to yourself.
- X Mention salary expectations or wage history.
- X Print on a dot-matrix printer.
- X Use fancy typeset, binders or exotic paper.
- X Send a photograph of yourself.
- X Include any statement you cannot prove.
- X Include personal information (age, height, weight, family status, picture) or religious or political affiliation unless applying to a religious or political organization
- X Change the tense of verbs or use the passive voice.
- X Use the title "resume."
- X Include references. Use a separate sheet.
- X Include hobbies or social interests unless they contribute to your objective.
- X Staple or fold your resume.
- X Include post cards for employers to return.
- X Use sentence format. Instead use action verbs and a few words with lots of impact.