



# RÉSUMÉ WRITING GUIDE

## Stand Out from the Crowd!

*Most Important: Schedule an appointment with a Career Services Team Member*

Many people agonize over writing a résumé, and often for good reason. It is challenging to write an effective, creative résumé that gets results. Most prospective employers decide after reading the first few lines whether or not they want to interview you. Add to that the vast sea of candidates with whom you're going head to head, and suddenly the entire process of crafting a winning résumé may seem daunting.

There are some tried-and-true rules to follow that can help you transform your résumé from blah to wow! Use the 10 tips that follow to help parlay your résumé into an interview and new job.

### 1. Don't Skip the Small Stuff

Of course your résumé must include your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address. In addition some individuals will include their LinkedIn address. Please remember that your email address must be professional in nature in order to identify who you are to potential employers.

### 2. Use Active Language

Use strong, energetic words. Avoid the use of personal pronouns such as "I" and "me," and steer clear of buzzwords and acronyms. Industry-specific jargon may be appropriate in the body of your résumé, specifically if you are considering a career-oriented field such as healthcare or manufacturing. Also remember, employers want to hear about your accomplishments.

### 3. Get to the Point

It's a smart idea to quickly capture an employer's attention with easily digestible information. Consider beginning your résumé with a condensed **Profile Summary** of your background, skills, and attributes. This includes a general description of the value that you will add to the organization and department. Computer software skills and level of foreign language proficiency will be a part of this section.

A summary also helps give your résumé focus, will help you develop a cover letter and may give the employer an opportunity to ask you initial questions.

### 4. Edit and Proofread Carefully

The importance of painstakingly proofing your résumé for typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors cannot be stressed enough. Enlist several other pairs of eyes to review your résumé – individuals whom you trust. Keep in mind that small mistakes may lead a potential employer to believe that a candidate might not make a very careful or conscientious employee.

### 5. Customize

If you have a broad range of experience, it may be worthwhile to edit your résumé, targeted to a specific industry or job. When you submit a résumé for a particular job, make sure the accomplishments you've highlighted match the specific skills for the position under consideration. Potential employers may not take the time to figure out why you might be a match; your résumé must make it clear for them.

### **6. Be Truthful and Accurate**

Make sure you have not included any misleading or false information on your résumé. Chances are your "inaccuracies" will eventually be discovered, and you'll lose all credibility with your prospective employer. This doesn't mean you should downplay what you really have accomplished. Just make sure your claims hold up to careful scrutiny.

### **7. Make your résumé simple and easy to understand**

If you use a template, be very careful as it may be difficult to cut, paste and generally edit from time to time. Start with a blank Word document and enter in the information. When you upload or email a résumé created using a template you run the high risk of sending someone a résumé with incorrect formatting. The most common type of résumé is the Reverse Chronological résumé which lists your experiences starting with the most recent.

### **8. Emphasize Achievements**

Employers are less interested in titles and duties and more interested in previous accomplishments. The fact that you implemented cost-cutting measures that reduced your department's expenses by 15 percent or were instrumental in implementing a new program may be very meaningful to a potential employer than simply stating that you oversaw a budget.

### **9. Put Education in the Right Place**

If you are a recent graduate who does not yet have much work experience, or if you are changing career fields, it is important to emphasize your education toward the top of your résumé. In addition to listing the college you attended, include information on degrees earned, majors and minors, grade point average, date of program completion, and any President's/Dean's list or honors received.

### **10. Include References and Portfolio**

A list of professional references you trust to speak well of your skills and past accomplishments to prospective employers should be on a separate document. *Do not put "References Available Upon Request" on your résumé, as this is a given.*

Possibly, you may also want to attach/upload a portfolio of your professional-quality work to illustrate your abilities.

## Elements of a Résumé

(In order of typical appearance on a résumé)

**1. Personal Information:** Include your name (if you have a professional license or certification, place that designation next to your name), address, phone number and email address (your LinkedIn might also be appropriate). This can be Right Justified, Left Justified or Centered. In general, remember there is value in contacting a Career Specialist in order to review/edit your résumé with you.

**2. Summary Profile:** This may be used to highlight your (transferable) skills and experience and provide a general background necessary to answer the question “Who am I?” This enables the potential employer to become familiar with the added value that you may be able to provide. Note your skills that differentiate you from others. Do not say “Strong interpersonal skills.” Say, “Demonstrated strong interpersonal skills as a personal trainer for 12 years working with over 2,000 clients.” You can choose to highlight areas of expertise, abilities and strengths. This would also be an appropriate location to note your bilingual skills and any specific computer software skills.

**3. Education:** Generally, Education should be placed above Experience. Your Career Specialist will let you know if it is appropriate to place Education in another location on your résumé.

- List all colleges where you received a degree or certificate in reverse chronological order. Include your major and date of completion and GPA if it is 3.00 or higher.
- It may be appropriate, if you are a recent college graduate and you have limited experience to list certain information from your secondary school experience.

**4. Current Licensure/Certification:** Include any licenses/registrations and/or certifications that you may have attained along with the number (#). (You may also note for example, Basic Life Support: CPR/AED-The American Heart Association).

**5. Internship Experience or Clinical Rotations:** This is viewed by potential employers as very important and does provide you with a level of useful experience. Remember to view your Internship or Externship or Clinical Rotation as a “perpetual interview,” as you never know if you’ll be offered a position. Also, references may be a part of this experience as well.

Note your functions and skills utilized and learned (similar to **Employment**) during this very important experience

**6. Employment:** For a Chronological Résumé, start with your most recent job and go backwards. It should look similar to this:

Employer Name	City, State	Month Year-Month Year
<b>Job title</b>		

- Highlight major skills or accomplishments in bullet form
- Try to list specific accomplishments with numbers (and figures if possible)
- Do not repeat details that are common to similar positions
- Do NOT use pronouns (the word “I” when describing job responsibilities). Use action words (see attached samples of action words)

### 7. Volunteer Activities/Recognition/Professional Associations:

(Please only include the topics where you have appropriate information.)

*Volunteer Activities:* Including volunteer activities shows your employer that you are active in the community and you are in service of others.

*Recognition:* Note honor societies, awards, employee recognition.

*Professional Associations:* This section demonstrates to the employer that you are dedicated to your profession and you are interested in keeping up with current trends. Joining a professional organization or association will allow you to network with potential future employers and stay savvy in your field.

### Résumé Format

Now that you have a general idea of what content to put on your résumé, you need to think about the overall appearance of your résumé. *The way your résumé looks is, of course, very important.* A neat and well organized résumé speaks volumes to the employer.

**Pages and Length:** Dependent upon your experience, your résumé may exceed one page, but will not exceed two pages in length.

**Margins and White Space:** Dependent upon the amount of information and length, you may use a .5 margin or a 1 inch margin on all sides.

**Fonts:** Our preferable font for résumés is Calibri. This will ensure that when you email your résumé it is readable by the recipient. The preferred font size is 11 point, with your name being 14 font size.

**Final Product:** Spellcheck and carefully review your document as well. Have a trusted individual also PROOFREAD your résumé.

Remember when you are called for an interview; bring at least three (3) copies of your résumé to distribute on ivory-colored paper. Also, bring at least two (2) copies of your reference list with you.

#### A note about **REFERENCES:**

List your references on a separate document and use the same font and style as your cover letter and résumé. *Do not put "References Available upon Request" on your résumé.* Always ASK a reference before you list them and be sure to let them know if they could be expecting a call from an employer.

**REFERENCE LIST:** On your References Page you should provide the following information:

Name (First and Last)

Title & Company

Complete Address

Telephone and Email

(Perhaps note how the reference knows you-example-my supervisor for 3 years; my instructor, etc.)

Place your name at the top of the document with your phone and email

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**FIRST & LAST NAME** (add license, registration, or certification if appropriate)

ADDRESS | PHONE NUMBER | EMAIL ADDRESS | LinkedIn Address (if Appropriate)

## PROFILE

INSERT INSERT INSERT INSERT INSERT

## EDUCATION

Goodwin University, East Hartford, CT  
DEGREE of Sciences, MAJOR

GRAD DATE YEAR

## CERTIFICATIONS/ORGANIZATIONS

FIRST AID/ CPR  
EMT-B

## INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

ORGANIZATION NAME, CITY, STATE  
*POSITION TITLE NAME*

- DETAILS ABOUT POSITION
- JOB ROLE
- DID YOU TRAIN ANYONE? DID YOU WORK WITH ANY NEW MACHINES?

## WORK EXPERIENCE

ORGANIZATION NAME, CITY, STATE  
**POSITION TITLE NAME**

Month Year-Current

- DETAILS ABOUT POSITION
- JOB ROLE
- DID YOU TRAIN ANYONE? DID YOU WORK WITH ANY NEW EQUIPMENT?

ORGANIZATION NAME, CITY, STATE |

NCLUDE DATES

### POSITION TITLE NAME

- DETAILS ABOUT POSITION
- JOB ROLE
- DID YOU TRAIN ANYONE? DID YOU WORK WITH ANY NEW EQUIPMENT?

ORGANIZATION NAME, CITY, STATE

INCLUDE DATES

### POSITION TITLE NAME

- DETAILS ABOUT POSITION
- JOB ROLE
- DID YOU TRAIN ANYONE? DID YOU WORK WITH ANY NEW EQUIPMENT?

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE /RECOGNITION/ MEMEBERSHIPS (as applicable)

***(SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE)***

**Your Name   Your email   Your phone**

**REFERENCES**

(usually three–five)

**Joanna Smith**

Director, Human Resources  
Alston Industries  
1072 High Street  
Vernon, CT 06066  
860-555-5555

Intern - daily for 20 hours/week for 24 weeks

**John Smithley**

Manager  
McGregor Company  
1001 Route 20, Suite 210  
Manchester, CT 06040  
860-555-3535

Direct report - five years

**Samantha Ruiz**

Marketing Director  
Samson Enterprises  
108 Fifth Street  
East Hartford, CT 06118  
860-555-555

Direct report - 4 years

**Steven Patel**

Family Services Specialist  
Department of Administrative Services  
2040 Central Ave.  
Manchester, CT 06040

Colleague - worked with Steven three years

**Résumé Rubric**

	<b>Résumé should effectively land you an interview.</b>	<b>Résumé could land you an interview (borderline case).</b>	<b>Résumé is average, needs improvement to rise to the "top of the stack."</b>	<b>Résumé needs significant improvement and would be discarded during screening</b>
<b>Format</b>	This résumé fills the page but is not overcrowded. There are no grammar or spelling errors. It can be easily scanned.	This résumé almost fills the page, but has some uneven white space. There may be a single spelling or grammar error.	The font and spacing of this résumé are not appealing and cannot be easily scanned. There are spelling errors and grammatical mistakes.	This résumé is either one-half page or three pages long. The font is too big or may be hard to read. There is more white space than words on the page. There are multiple spelling and/or grammar errors.
<b>Education Section</b>	This section is organized, clear, and well defined. It highlights the most pertinent information and includes: institution and its location, graduation date, major, degree, GPA, study abroad (as appropriate), and any relevant course work.	This section is well organized and easy to read. It includes institution and its location, graduation date, major, and degree. GPA and “extra” information, such as study abroad and course work are missing.	Information such as institution and its location, graduation date, and major are included, but degree and GPA are not listed. This section is not well organized and there is no order to how information is formatted.	This section is missing the most crucial information. Institution is listed, but not its location and graduation date is missing. The major is included, but not degree. No GPA is stated.
<b>Employment Section</b>	This section is well defined, and information relates to the intended career field. Places of work, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Descriptions are clear and formatted as bullets beginning with action verbs. (This section could be split into related and other experience.)	Places of work, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Descriptions are formatted as bullets beginning with action verbs, but are not detailed enough to help the reader understand the experience. Information does not relate 100 percent to the intended career field.	Descriptions are not presented in bulleted lists that begin with action verbs. Instead, complete sentences in paragraph form are used to describe positions. Places of work are included for each position, but not locations, dates, and titles.	There is no order to the descriptions of each position. Descriptions are not detailed and don't illustrate the experience. No locations and dates of employment are listed.
<b>Volunteer Activities/Recognition/memberships</b>	This section is well organized and easy to understand. Activities and honors are listed, and descriptions include skills gained and leadership roles held. Dates of involvement are listed.	This section includes all necessary information, but is difficult to follow. Leadership roles within organizations are listed, but skills are not defined. Dates of involvement are listed.	This section is missing key information such as leaderships positions held or dates of involvement. Organizations are listed; the organization, not individual involvement in each, are described.	This section is missing—or contains very little—information. Organization titles or dates of involvement are not included, and there are no descriptions.

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