

How to write a resume?

A good resume can get you an interview.

There is only one purpose of a Resume: to get you an interview with a prospective employer. You need to present your skills and experience in the best possible way and then stress why you fit the job. You need to impress the reader, whether the HR department or a recruitment company, so do not keep the best to last. It is worthwhile to spend some time on preparing an effective and error-free document that will immediately impress an employer. Use the KISS technique = Keep it short and simple.

1. Personal Details

- Your name should always head the Resume.
- Include your address, home and mobile phone numbers – also an email address.
- Give your date of birth, not your age.
- Personal information should be kept to a minimum.
- Don't include a summary of personal characteristics.

2. Employment History

- List the past employment details in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first, always giving the most space to your most recent or current position. Names of past employers with a very short description of the type of business the companies are in, together with dates of appointments (months and years only) and a brief outline of responsibilities are essential.

- List your experience in using a particular software programme, accounting system, manufacturing set up etc.
- Always include your specific contributions to each job, listing related responsibilities and achievements with each entry, rather than under a separate headline later in the Resume.
- List any membership of relevant professional associations or clubs.
- Never give reasons for terminating or leaving a job but be prepared to explain it during an interview.

3. Education

- Employers like to see details of your educational qualifications, from University to degrees and professional qualifications (include the major subject but not every thing studied).
- Outline any work-related training – notice the “work” related !
- If you can communicate in a foreign language include this as well.



4. Hobbies and personal activities

- List only hobbies or personal interests that are directly related to the position – two or three lines will do – notice the world related !

5. References

- Avoid the phrase “References available on request”, since this is self-evident and only takes space on your Resume which could be used more effectively.

6. Covering letter

- A thorough job analysis is the secret weapon. Do not ignore the stated criteria.
- Forget about the standard opening of “I have seen your ad”. Use the power impact technique to immediately catch the attention of the reader. Right after Dear Sir, write 4-5 lines with a Career Summary that includes the essential reason why you fit the job.
- Follow the opening by 3-4 short statements that are highlights of your background.
- The closing: where the company can contact you (e.g. a mobile telephone number) to discuss your valuable contributions you can bring along.

7. Style

- Always print the Resume on standard A4 plain white or pale coloured paper and matching envelopes.
- Always send a brief cover letter with the Resume you send out.
- Do not enclose copies of ID card, house registration, school or university papers. Instead bring it along for the interview and be ready to hand over copies if requested.
- Presentation is very important, so make sure your Resume is typed and not hand written.

- Leave plenty of space between paragraphs and allow adequate margins.
- Use plain English. Avoid professional jargon and abbreviations.
- Keep paragraphs short – preferably no longer than five or six lines.
- Your entire Resume should not exceed two pages in length.
- Don't include the date the Resume was prepared – this will shorten its useful life.
- Never state specific career objectives. These are more effective when you include them in your cover letter.
- Check that both your Resume and cover letter are completely free of errors. Proof read both documents thoroughly - and get a friend to proof read them as well.

8. General Advice

- Keep an on-going file of your achievements, no matter how insignificant they may appear now. One day you may need it for the Resume.
- Before the interview re-read the resume a couple of times as the interviewer will have done exactly that. You must know what is in it.
- Quality and presentation are essential so do not send out old printed paper or photo copies.