



Resume Writing

WHAT IS A RESUME?

- A brief summary of your work and/or activity experiences, educational background and skills
- A document that highlights your qualifications and experience as they relate to the job you are seeking
- A way for you to market yourself effectively on paper to a specific audience—your reader

Use it to gain attention, arouse interest and generate action (an interview) so you can sell your strengths in person. And remember, there are no “set rules” to writing a resume—only guidelines.

RESUME BASICS

- Be accurate and honest
- Print on quality printer
- Avoid any mistakes
- Be consistent in format and style
- Consider overall page design
- Use matching paper for resume, letter and reference page
- Omit high school information unless related to objective

HOW IS A RESUME USED?

- To obtain full- and part-time jobs.
- To obtain internships, summer positions or admission to graduate/professional school.
- To obtain a leadership position in an organization.

RESUME VS. CURRICULUM VITA

A **curriculum vita (CV)** is a *comprehensive* biographical statement, usually three or more pages in length. A CV is used in the field of higher education and concentrates on academic pursuits, research and teaching or presentation skills. A **resume** is a *summary* of an individual’s educational, personal and work experiences as they relate to careers in a particular area and is typically one or two pages in length.

RESUME FORMAT OPTIONS

Chronological

- Emphasizes work or experience history around dates, listing related experience in reverse chronological order with a primary focus on work/activity accomplishments or specific job titles
- Highlights progression and growth through job titles and/or names of employers
- Is easy to follow
- Makes non-impressive job titles and frequent changes in career path clearly visible

- Use this style when your work, education or activity experience is strong and relevant to your objective; previous job titles or company names sound impressive; job history shows growth or to emphasize specific career-related accomplishments

Functional or Skills-based

- Highlights demonstrated skills and abilities
- Allows information to be organized around major areas of accomplishment to best support your job objective by using headings that are not date bound
- Draws on all sources of experience (employment, volunteer work, college activities and coursework) to describe skills
- Use when job titles and work history are not relevant and you want to de-emphasize them in order to draw attention to your transferable skills when/if you have little work experience

Combination

- Includes aspects of both chronological and functional formats
- Allows you to emphasize both work history and skills/accomplishments equally
- Allows you to include sections on prior work or activity experiences, as well as main functional skills

RESUME CONTENT

There are many opinions and examples of what should go in your resume. It is best to hone in on the highlights that best demonstrate your skills and abilities as they relate to the position for which you are applying.

Following is a list of categories most used in a standard resume. The categories you list and the order you choose depend on what you want to emphasize. Know that the reader’s eyes typically fall on the second quarter of the page, so the most relevant information should be placed there.

Heading/Personal Information

- Name (may include “nickname” or (nickname))
- Address (permanent and current addresses)
- Phone Number (differentiate between work, cell, and home, designate with “H” and “W” for example)
- Email Address (in black and not underlined)
- Personal Website (if appropriate)

Qualifications/Summary (Optional)

Use this section to sum up in four-six statements, the main points you want employers to know about you. This bulleted layout of key information may also be used effectively in a cover letter.

Objective (Optional) (Covered in depth on p. 4)

The objective may also be called job target, job objective, professional objective or career objective.

Argument for: It sets the tone for your resume, indicates the type of work you are seeking, and it forces you to focus on your primary area of interest. The objective says "this is what I want to do," and "these are the skills I want to utilize." The rest of the resume says "this is why I am qualified to do it." An objective indicates to an employer that you have direction.

Argument against: The information can be included in the cover letter, and if you narrow your objective too much, you may limit your employment possibilities.

If you choose to use an objective, include this type of information:

- Level of position, job title or industry area
- Type of organization that interests you
- Special interest area within an organization
- Description of job activities you wish to perform or skills you wish to gain
- Interests, knowledge or skills you wish to contribute to the organization
- Long and/or short term goals

Education

This section may include:

- List in reverse chronological order
- Name and location (City, ST) of college or university
- Month and year graduating
- Degrees, certificates or licenses received
- Major(s) and minor(s) received
- Grade point (if 3.0 and above; do not round up)
- Awards/Honors/Scholarships (if more than three, use a separate section)
- Percentage of schooling paid for by self
- Study abroad experiences
- Special training, trade schools or workshops

Related Coursework

This might be included in the Education Section. Use it when you are lacking related experience but want to demonstrate relevant academic training and knowledge by listing the titles of specific courses.

Experience

Begin with the most recent experience. Include all types of *relevant* experience including full-time, part-time and summer positions; volunteer work, internships, self-employment, research projects and activities if the skills that were developed in those activities are directly related. It may be advantageous to create two sections—Related Experience and Other Experience. Determine whether to list job title or employer first by what is more impressive. Be consistent!

This section may include:

- Inclusive dates of employment

- Business or organization name with city and state of location
- Your job title
- Description of job duties using phrases that begin with active verbs (see p. 5)

Honors, Activities, Research or Professional Affiliations

Include activities that demonstrate job-related skills, leadership or membership in career related organizations.

Computer Skills

List as specifically as possible. Indicate level of knowledge, using terms such as "working knowledge of" or "proficient in." If seeking a technology position, include more specific sections to include programming languages, hardware, software, operating systems, databases, peripherals, etc.

Language Skills

Indicate your level of written, reading and oral proficiency in each.

Other (space allowing)

Add additional categories that reflect your uniqueness, such as interests or volunteer work, publications, presentations and hobbies, but always consider the relevance that category and its contents have to your objective and/or the position at hand.

Miscellaneous Information (space allowing)

- Willingness to travel
- Willingness to relocate or geographic preference
- Date of availability
- Special interests

References

On your resume indicate that your references are "Available upon request." List your references on a separate sheet of resume paper. Always obtain permission and keep your references informed of the positions you are pursuing. Include in your references:

- Complete name (using Mr., Miss, Mrs., Ms. or Dr.)
- Job title
- Name of the organization
- Work address
- Phone number (ask if they prefer work or home)
- Email address if appropriate

TIPS FOR RESUME WRITING

- **Paper:** Use good quality, light colored resume paper that will copy clearly and not come out gray. At least 50% cotton is considered good quality, and use 8 1/2" x 11" size. Use the same paper for resume, cover letter and reference page.
- **Color:** Print your resume in black ink. White paper is the most legible option, but ivory, pale beige or light gray is appropriate as well.
- **Typing:** Print resume on a laser printer, and provide spacing and white space so it is easily read. Check spelling and punctuation carefully. Capitalize major

headings. Use bold print or italics for emphasis, but do not mix more than two font styles. Do not use abbreviations such as etc. or acronyms. Anything important enough to be stated should be written out. States are an exception: Use U.S. Postal abbreviations.

- **Fonts:** Use popular, non-decorative typefaces such as Arial and Times New Roman. Type the body in in 10-12 point font and your name, 14 point or larger.
- **Margins:** Use 1/2" to 1" margins on all four sides.
- **Length:** Recent graduates should limit resumes to one page unless a second page is essential for details or to prevent crowding on the first page. Do not list every position ever held—only relevant information! If you use a second page, type your name and "page 2" on the top of the second page.
- **Reproduction of Copies:** Make sure any copies are not blurred. Always make copies from laser original.
- **Proof for Errors:** Resumes take a long time. Have CDS staff, professors, family and peers critique yours.
- **Custom Design:** Your resume may vary in different environments. Change the objective with every position and perhaps even the content or format to support different objectives. Avoid using templates as your resume should represent you, not Microsoft.
- **Attention Getting:** Most readers will only spend 20-30 seconds on the initial scan of your resume. Readers prefer bullets, bold print and indentions to guide their eyes quickly to main points.
- **Accentuate the Positive:** Highlight accomplishments, not just duties. Show how you contributed to or impacted the organization. Quantify your statements by using numbers, statistics and percentages.
- **Action Verbs:** Do not use passive (-ing) verbs. Keep the verb tense consistent with the dates you list—past activities should be in past tense and activities you are currently engaged in should be present tense.
- **Numbers:** Use numbers to better illustrate your experience. Grammatically, when using a number lower than 10, you should spell it out on a resume.
- **Punctuation:** Be consistent with how you punctuate or do not punctuate the end of bulleted statements.

"DO NOTS" FOR YOUR RESUMES

- Don't make it too long, but be sure to highlight the major areas which will help get you the interview.
- Don't make it too sketchy by just listing your jobs by title, companies and dates or your extracurricular activities. Tell something about your responsibilities and your accomplishments in the position(s) you held and in your extracurricular activities.
- Don't use the words "I," "My" or "Our" in the text of your resume; exception is the Objective.
- Don't date your resume or entitle it "RESUME."
- Don't be negative. For resume purposes the positive needs to be emphasized. Never introduce anything that could be perceived as a negative.

- Don't refer to religion, political party or national origin (or use statements that may indicate these) or recognize that you open yourself to unwelcome discrimination despite legislation and ethical concepts that make it wrong to discriminate because of race, religion or national origin. There is still much prejudice either open or hidden. If you have experience with a political party or religious organization that you would like to include, do not identify the organization; use a general term.
- Don't include salary information. Direct questions regarding this to a career counselor.
- Don't forget to proofread your resume several times.
- Don't list references. Prepare them on a separate sheet of paper ready to be submitted or sent with initial resume and cover letter.
- Don't ruin a well prepared and carefully developed resume by poor format or sloppy reproduction. Set up your resume as neatly as possible. Do not crowd it on the paper. Leave adequate margins and use quality resume paper in white, off-white or light gray. Purchase matching paper for cover letters and reference pages.
- Don't send a resume without a cover letter.
- Don't use an email address that is unprofessional.
- Don't include race, gender, high school information (unless applying for an internship and it is relevant), marital status, height/weight, birthplace, birth date or photograph.

RESUME MAILING

Use either a business envelope that matches your resume paper or a large manila envelope that does not require that you fold your resume. Always send a cover letter with your resume, placing it on top of the resume. Do not staple pages—use paperclips.

REFERENCES

Choosing your References

- Brainstorm a list of people who will speak highly of your past work performance (job, class work, research, etc.).
- A colleague may also provide a strong reference if you worked on a team project together.
- Character references should only be provided if requested—or if your choices are limited.
- Generally, provide three to five references.
- Ask the people you have selected if they will serve as a positive reference, and do not provide their names to an employer without asking first.

Preparing your Reference Page

- Check for the correct spelling of each reference's name, company, official job title, address and phone number where they wish to be contacted.
- You may also want to include email addresses.

Educating and Informing your References

Provide a copy of your resume to your references so

they may speak intelligently about your background and strengths. Inform them of the kind of positions you are seeking. Coach them about the skills and strengths you would like them to emphasize. Notify them of every position you apply for so they may anticipate the call and are prepared to "sell" you for that particular position. Thank your references and notify them when you accept a position.

OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

An objective should indicate the kind of job you are seeking, as well as tell employers what you can do for them. Employers want to fill a specific job that requires specific skills. The following do not tell employers much:

- A challenging opportunity in engineering.
- A challenging opportunity with a forward-looking organization, in one or more of the following areas: marketing, management or public relations.

YOUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD

- Fit your background/career desires.
- Show your confidence in career goals.
- Focus on the level of responsibility, work environment, specific skills or education you are seeking.
- Be clear and concise, indicating how your abilities, skills and background relate to your objective. One that states the obvious is not worth listing!

WAYS TO PRESENT YOUR OBJECTIVE

List by professional designation and/or level of position:

- Electrical Representative: Research and Design
- Public Accountant: Auditing and Taxes
- Sales Representative: Industrial Equipment
- Entry-level Bank Management: Loans
- Store Management Trainee: Merchandising
- Social Service Trainee: Child Welfare

INEFFECTIVE AND EFFECTIVE STATEMENTS

These statements have little meaning and may indicate you have little idea of your career objective:

- Opportunity for advancement
- A position dealing with people
- A position that requires creativity
- A challenging position
- A chance to...
- A company that recognizes...

These statements demonstrate better ways to present your objective:

- **Immediate Objective:** Entry-level accounting position with an Industrial Firm.
- **Long-term Objective:** Marketing position in the food or beverage field leading to top corporate management.
- **Functional Work Objective:** Position that includes responsibilities for systems analysis and creating data systems, evaluation of programs and projection of future sales trends.

- **Skills Objective:** Position that requires knowledge of decision-making models and application of models to production planning.
- **Skills/Industrial Objective:** Position that requires knowledge of COBOL and RPG11, requiring sales/customer service abilities in the software industry.

YOUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD MEET THESE GOALS

- Briefly state your employment goals without getting too specific and ruling out consideration for jobs.
- With a detailed objective (up to, but no more than, two sentences), focus on what you bring to the employer, rather than what you want from them.
- Your stated objective is supported by the facts and accomplishments stated in the rest of your resume.

An objective is **not** required for a personal resume, but it does help to focus it. However, if you do not put an objective in your resume, you need to cover these issues in your cover letter or letter of application and be prepared to discuss it in your interview.

SAMPLE OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

- Management position in production utilizing my expertise and skills, supporting my commitment to customer service, employee development and continuous improvement.
- Operations management position at a major operating facility for a growing pulp and paper or related company, fully utilizing management skills.

WEB AND CDS OFFICE RESUME RESOURCES

Resumes: National Association of Colleges & Employers
www.jobweb.com/resumesample.aspx?id=896&terms=res+writing

Career Development Services Handbook

www.auburn.edu/career

Optimal Resume

www.auburn.edu/career (icon at bottom of page)

E-Resume Review

Email Word resume to cdsserv@auburn.edu to receive a counselors feedback within 48 hours.

Resume Drop-Off Service

Bring a copy of your resume by the office (303 Martin Hall) to have a counselor review it and provide feedback for you to pick up within 48 hours.

Walk-in resume critique

Bring your résumé in during our walk-in hours and let a counselor help you refine it.

ACTION VERBS

Choose an action verb when you state the duties you performed or are performing in the "Experience" section of your resume. Use the past tense form for previous jobs and the present tense form if you are presently performing those duties. Here are 180 action verbs that will be useful to you. Go through the list and see which ones you can use to give punch to your resume.

accomplished	cut	indoctrinated	purchased
achieved	decreased	influenced	recommended
acted	delegated	informed	reconciled
adapted	demonstrated	initiated	recorded
addressed	designed	innovated	recruited
administered	determined	inspected	reduced
advanced	developed	installed	referred
advised	devised	instituted	regulated
allocated	diagnosed	instructed	rehabilitated
analyzed	directed	integrated	remodeled
appraised	dispatched	interpreted	repaired
approved	distinguished	interviewed	represented
arranged	diversified	introduced	restructured
assembled	drafted	invented	retrieved
assigned	edited	investigated	reversed
assisted	educated	launched	reviewed
attained	eliminated	lectured	revitalized
audited	enabled	led	saved
authored	encouraged	maintained	scheduled
automated	engineered	managed	screened
balanced	enlisted	marketed	searched
built	established	mediated	set
calculated	evaluated	moderated	shaped
catalogued	examined	monitored	solidified
chaired	executed	motivated	solved
clarified	expanded	negotiated	specified
classified	expedited	operated	stimulated
coached	explained	organized	stored
collected	extracted	originated	streamlined
compiled	fabricated	overhauled	strengthened
completed	facilitated	oversaw	summarized
composed	familiarized	performed	supervised
computed	fashioned	persuaded	surveyed
conceptualized	focused	planned	systematized
conducted	forecast	prepared	tabulated
consolidated	formulated	presented	taught
contained	founded	prioritized	trained
contracted	generated	processed	translated
contributed	guided	produced	traveled
controlled	headed up	programmed	trimmed
coordinated	identified	projected	typed
corresponded	illustrated	promoted	upgraded
counseled	implemented	provided	validated
created	improved	publicized	worked
critiqued	increased	published	wrote

Functional Resume Format Sample

Frank A. Functional

222 Poplar Street • Opelika, AL 36801 • H 334.000.0000 • C 334.000.0000
 fafunction@auburn.edu

OBJECTIVE Internship position in advertising firm utilizing creative, writing, and interpersonal skills

EDUCATION Auburn University, Auburn, AL
Bachelor of Arts in English; May 2006
 GPA 3.80

APPLICABLE CLASSES Advertising Marketing
 Public Relations Business Writing

KEY SKILLS

- Created and distributed custom designed logo and promotional materials
 - Designed weekly flyers to advertise social functions
 - Developed ad lay-outs for school newspaper
- Writing**
- Wrote, edited, and distributed monthly newsletter for academic honor society
 - Published fictional short stories in campus annual literary magazine
 - Promoted non-profit organization through press releases on state-wide level

Interpersonal

- Coordinated publication of newsletter with 22 fraternities, Greek Life Office, and printing company to meet deadlines
- Exceeded goals for campus newspaper ad sales
- Responded to phone and walk-in inquiries about non-profit organization

Computer

- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Publisher, Photoshop, Internet, and email
- Working knowledge of web page design

EXPERIENCE/Social Fraternity, Publicity Chair (January 2004—Present)
ACTIVITIES *The Plainsman*, Sales Rep (September 2003—Present)
Phi Beta Kappa, Secretary (March 2003—Present)
National Kidney Foundation, Intern (January—April 2004)

REFERENCES Available upon request

Chronological Resume Format Sample

Ima Tiger

Imatiger@auburn.edu

Current Address: Auburn University, Box 9999
 Auburn, AL 36849
 (334) 844-0000

Permanent Address:
 9999 Dream Street
 Sunshine, AL 36123
 (870) 572-0000

OBJECTIVE

Position as Financial Administrative Assistant with Lots of Money, Inc. utilizing creative, communication and organizational skills.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration, Finance Major, May 2005
 Auburn University; Auburn, AL; GPA 3.5

EXPERIENCE

- Intern**; January 2005—Present
 XYZ Corporation; Auburn, AL
- Assist Financial Manager with day-to-day activities
 - Developed new filing system, creating a more productive method of accessing client information
- President**; January 2005—Present
Treasurer; January 2004—December 2004
 Social Sorority, Auburn University
- Direct 8-member executive council to achieve chapter and national goals
 - Served as liaison to 225 member organization and national organization
 - Reviewed, assessed and set budget of \$25,000
 - Restructured investment patterns of organization funds
 - Communicated effectively with members, bank, University administration and national representatives

Sales Manager; Summers 2002, 2003 and 2004
 We Are Hip Inc.; Gulfport, MS

- Supervised 5 sales clerks
- Maintained budget, inventory and payroll

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Quicken, Internet and email

HONORS

Merrill Lynch Award, Charles W. and Eloise T. Elise Scholar, Financial Management Association National Honor Society

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Combination Resume Format Sample

Cani B. Acombo

Box 999 Auburn University • Auburn, AL 36849 • (334) 000-0000 • cmbobo@auburn.edu

OBJECTIVE

Admittance into University of Mississippi Master of Arts in Creative Writing program

EDUCATION

Auburn University; Auburn, AL
Bachelor of Arts, English Major; May 2006
 GPA 3.5

WRITING

The Plainsman; Auburn University; Auburn, AL

EXPERIENCE

- *Editor*, April 2003-Present
- Proof incoming articles for weekly newspaper
- Write editorial piece on national, local, and campus events
- Create short stories for entertainment section bi-weekly

Happy Summer Camp; Statesville, GA

Creative Assistant; Summers 2003, 2004, 2005

- Wrote, directed, and produced student play
- Supervised, edited and compiled 50 campers' collection of creative writing

KEY SKILLS**Writing**

- Edited faculty research paper to be published nationally
- Wrote 4 short stories and 3 poems that were published in the University literary magazine
- Critiqued and creatively enhanced camp newsletter and parent letters

Creativity

- Participated in traveling improv drama group
- Designed history of film presentation for senior level course, open to entire campus

Computer

- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Publisher, InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Internet, and email
- Working knowledge of web page design

HONORS

Dean's List All Semesters, Sigma Tau Delta

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Reference Page Format Sample

Cani B. Acombo

Box 999 Auburn University • Auburn, AL 36849 • (334) 000-0000 • cmbobo@auburn.edu

REFERENCES

Mrs. Jane Doe
 Advisor
The Plainsman
 Foy Student Union
 Auburn, AL 368349
 334.844.0000
 janedoe@auburn.edu

Mr. John Smith

Director
 Happy Summer Camp
 1212 Plaza
 Statesville, GA 22222
 111.111.1111
 j_smith@camp.org

Dr. Sunny Shine

Professor
 English Department
 Haley Center
 Auburn University, AL 36849
 334.844.1234
 shinesu@auburn.edu

Name

Current Address

xxx Street
City, ST ZIP
Phone Number

Permanent Address

xxx Street
City, ST ZIP
Phone Number

email address

OBJECTIVE

State a specific job title you are seeking and list the skills that you bring to that position

EDUCATION

University; City, ST
Degree; Majors; Date of Graduation
GPA (Overall is assumed. Add Major GPA if it is higher and label as such)

APPLICABLE COURSEWORK

List courses (in columns) that illustrate that you have the knowledge whether or not you have had the opportunity to utilize it yet or not

EXPERIENCE

Job Title; dates of employment

Employer; City, ST

- Active verb format (past tense if experience is completed)
- List experiences present to past
- Include volunteer work, internships, co-ops, part-time jobs and leadership positions if they are relative to objective
- Use numbers—For example, how many people did you supervise? How much money did you manage?

Special/Senior Projects

- List skills gained while working on a class project

ACTIVITIES/HONORS

List sports, clubs, student government and honoraries. Include any offices held. Include volunteer activities, honors and awards.

KEY SKILLS

Foreign Languages: List oral and written competency levels

Computer: Include hardware and software proficiencies

Certifications/Licenses: List dates

INTERESTS

Optional section

REFERENCES

Available upon request (optional section)