

RESUMES

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RESUME BASICS

1. Make sure that the most important and relevant information is listed near the top and clearly highlighted.
2. In general, resumes should be no more than two pages in length. Be concise.
3. Resumes should include: a profile or summary, expertise or skills, accomplishments, work experience, education. Resumes should not include references.
4. Target your audience. Your resume should be individualized for each position you are applying for. Resumes that are too general and that lack a clear focus are likely to be tossed out.
5. Keep the needs of the employer in mind. What can you contribute?
6. Use action words to describe your accomplishments. Present specific accomplishments and achievements: percentages increased, accounts expanded, awards won, etc.
7. Don't include too much employment history. Usually 10 -12 years is enough. Focus on the experience, skills and knowledge you have that are relevant to the kind of work you are seeking.
8. Do not lie. If a prospective employer decides to conduct a reference check and discovers you lied, you are out of the hiring pool.
9. Use white space liberally. Your resume should be easy to read and uncluttered.
10. Choose a standard font (Arial or Times Roman). Use headings consistently - same font, same size, etc. Don't overuse design elements such as bold, fancy fonts, etc. It will make your resume hard to read.
11. Ensure your resume is free of spelling and grammatical mistakes.
12. Make sure your resume looks professional. Print on a laser printer and use good quality white or off-white paper.
13. Remember: The sole purpose of the resume and cover letter is to get you an interview.

RESUME FORMATS

Chronological Resume

The chronological resume is the most common and readily accepted resume format. You should use a chronological resume if you have no large gaps in your work history and if your previous jobs relate to your current job objective.

A chronological resume focuses on your work history and lists it in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent employment.

Tips:

- List jobs from the last 10 to 15 years; they are often the most relevant and this helps minimize age discrimination.
- Highlight relevant skills and accomplishments under each company.
- Volunteer Experience and/or Interests: use if relevant to the job; avoid religious/political affiliations.

Functional Resume

A functional resume focuses on skills and accomplishments, instead of work history. These skills may have been acquired through work, education or volunteering. Skills are often grouped under appropriate headings to organize the information for the reader.

This format is often used for people with minimal job experience, career changers, those re-entering the workforce, those who have employment gaps, new graduates, new Canadians or those with a work history in a field that doesn't match. This format can also be used for repetitive jobs, where the same skills would be listed for each job.

Tips:

- Select skill headings that are relevant to the job for which you are applying.
- Group related skills and accomplishments under each skill heading. These may be from employment, volunteering, education or personal experience.
- Quantify your accomplishments, such as # people supervised, \$ sales, % savings.
- You could list an organization's name in describing a skill/accomplishment, so that it is easier for employers to match up where it was used/achieved.

Note:

It is said that recruiters and employers favour chronological resumes because they can easily see where you worked and what you did. But remember, there is no "right" format, only strategy when it comes to selecting the best resume format for your situation.

CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME SAMPLE

JASON BRADLEY

100 Railroad Street, Sydenham ON K0H 2T0 jbradley@gmail.com 123-456-7890

Payroll and Benefit Specialist

10+ years experience in Payroll and Benefits

Benefits administration experience includes program development and reduction of costs through development of alternative benefit programs

Team player interested in achieving organizational goals

Proven ability to coordinate many tasks efficiently and meet deadlines

Solid Computer skills including Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and HRIS

CHRP designation; member HRPAO

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Payroll Specialist, ABC Inc., Kingston, ON, 2003 - Present

- Processed biweekly payroll for 150 employees
- Reduced annual costs by \$75,000 by implementing TaxSaver benefit plans
- Administered payments, including bonuses, vacation, incentives and retroactive pay; provided assistance to employees to resolve payroll issues
- Reconciled payroll related accounts, including preparation of journal entries, adjustments and corrections

Human Resources Assistant, MNO Co., Napanee, ON 1999 - 2003

- Assisted in developing in-house training programs that saved more than \$250,000 in training costs over 4 year period and reduced staff turnover by 15%
- Compiled statistics, conducted analysis and prepared management reports on benefit plan utilization and trends
- Prepared benefit packages for 400 employees
- Assisted in the recruitment, interviews and selection of staff

Payroll Assistant, GHI Ltd., Kingston, ON 1997 - 1999

- Maintained staff attendance, overtime working hours and staff compensation data for payroll

EDUCATION

CHRP designation

Business Administration - Human Resources Advanced Diploma, St. Lawrence College, Kingston

Bachelor of Arts, University of Toronto, Toronto

VOLUNTEER WORK

Fundraising Committee Member, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Kingston, ON 2002 - Present

FUNCTIONAL RESUME SAMPLE

Jennifer White

100 Kingston Road, Sydenham, ON K0H 2T0 jennifergwhite@yahoo.ca 613-456-7890

Summary of Qualifications

- 3+ years experience as Receptionist in a busy manufacturing environment
- Strong computer skills, including MS Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, MYOB, email and Internet; accurate and quick data entry; 65 wpm
- Skilled 20-line Meridian switchboard operation; used exceptional telephone and communication skills to support management and staff, and assist callers in a calm and professional manner
- Bilingual; Fluent in English and French

Employment Skills

Reception

- Greeted customers and clients; maintained reception area as a welcoming and professional environment
- Answered 20-line phone system as primary receptionist
- Exceptional customer service skills; built rapport easily and provided courteous and efficient service
- Trained and supported all relief staff to ensure professional first point of contact

Office Administration

- Supported Executive Assistant with reconciling accounts, word processing, planning and coordinating functions, travel arrangements
- Created and maintained database of 750 customer accounts
- Typed letters, contracts, and 50 page monthly reports
- Opened and distributed mail; completed courier documentation

Work History

Receptionist, JKL Company, Kingston, 2000-2004

Customer Service Specialist, Department Store, Kingston 1997-2000

Cashier, Pizza Store, Kingston, 1993-1995

Education

Office Administration Diploma, St Lawrence College, Kingston

Ontario Secondary School Diploma, Sydenham High School, Sydenham

Volunteer Experience

Receptionist, Inverary Kids Centre, 2005-Present

ACTION VERBS FOR RELEVANT SKILLS

Management Skills

administered
analyzed
approved
attained
chaired
consolidated
contracted
coordinated
delegated
developed
directed
evaluated
executed
improved
increased
organized
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
reviewed
scheduled
strengthened
supervised
trained

Communication Skills

addressed
arbitrated
arranged
authored
channeled
collaborated
convinced
corresponded
developed
directed
drafted

edited
enlisted
formulated
influenced
interpreted
lectured
mediated
moderated
negotiated
persuaded
promoted
publicized
reconciled
recruited
spoke
translated
wrote

Research Skills

clarified
collected
critiqued
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
extracted
identified
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
investigated
organized
reviewed
summarized
surveyed
systematized

Technical Skills

assembled
built

calculated
designed
devised
engineered
fabricated
maintained
operated
overhauled
programmed
produced
remodeled
repaired
solved
upgraded

Teaching Skills

adapted
advised
assessed
clarified
coached
communicated
coordinated
counselled
demonstrated
demystified
developed
educated
enabled
encouraged
evaluated
explained
facilitated
guided
informed
instructed
persuaded
set goals
stimulated
taught
trained

Financial Skills

administered
allocated
appraised
audited
balanced
budgeted
calculated
computed
forecasted
managed
marketed
planned
projected
researched

Creative Skills

acted
conceptualized
created
customized
designed
developed
directed
established
fashioned
founded
illustrated
initiated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
originated
performed
planned
revitalized
shaped

Helping Skills

assisted
clarified
coached
demonstrated
diagnosed
expedited
facilitated
familiarized
guided
motivated
referred
rehabilitated
represented
solved

Clerical or Detail Skills

approved
arranged
catalogued
classified
collected
compiled
dispatched
executed
generated
implemented
inspected
monitored
operated
organized
prepared
processed
purchased
recorded
retrieved
screened
specified
systematized
tabulated
validated

RESUME CHECKLIST

- My resume is either one page or two pages in length (with contact information on both pages).
- My skills and experience clearly match the job requirements.
- My contact information is clear, professional and includes a phone number with voice messaging.
- I have selected the best format and strategies to describe my skills and experience.
- My strongest and most marketable points are made first.
- I have listed my accomplishments (how my work benefited the organizations where I worked), not just my duties and responsibilities.
- I have quantified the results I have achieved where possible.
- I have eliminated words that do not add to my resume and made sure I am using strong action verbs.
- There are no false statements. (These can be grounds for dismissal.)
- I have not 'aged ' myself by including dates of education and/or by going beyond 10 –15 years of work experience.
- References are not included on my resume.
- I have checked for grammatical and spelling errors by using computerized tools and by having it read by someone else.
- My resume is printed on good quality paper.