

## Tips For Proper Resume Writing

### 1. What IS a resume anyway?

Remember: a Resume is a self-promotional document that presents you in the best possible light, for the purpose of getting invited to a job interview.

It's *not* an official personnel document. It's not a job application. It's not a "career obituary"! And it's not a confessional.

### 2. What should the resume content be about?

It's not just about past jobs! It's about YOU, and how you performed and what you accomplished in those past jobs--especially those accomplishments that are most relevant to the work you want to do next. A good resume predicts how you might perform in that desired future job.

### 3. What's the fastest way to improve a resume?

Remove everything that starts with "responsibilities included" and replace it with on-the-job accomplishments. (See Tip 11 for one way to write them.)

### 4. What is the most common resume mistake made by job hunters?

Leaving out their Job Objective! If you don't show a sense of direction, employers won't be interested. Having a clearly stated goal doesn't have to confine you if it's stated well.

### 5. What's the first step in writing a resume?

Decide on a job target (or "job objective") that can be stated in about 5 or 6 words. Anything beyond that is probably "fluff" and indicates a lack of clarity and direction.

**6. How do you decide whether to use a Chronological resume or a Functional one?** The Chronological format is widely preferred by employers, and works well if you're staying in the same field (especially if you've been upwardly-mobile). Only use a Functional format if you're changing fields, and you're sure a skills-oriented format would show off your transferable skills to better advantage; and **be sure** to include a clear chronological work history!

### 7. What if you don't have any experience in the kind of work you want to do?

Get some! Find a place that will let you do some volunteer work right away. You only need a brief, concentrated period of volunteer training (for example, 1 day a week for a month) to have at least SOME experience to put on your resume.

Also, look at some of the volunteer work you've done in the past and see if any of THAT helps document some skills you'll need for your new job.

### 8. What do you do if you have gaps in your work experience?

You could start by looking at it differently.

**General Rule:** Tell what you WERE doing, as gracefully as possible--rather than leave a gap.

If you were doing anything valuable (even if unpaid) during those so-called "gaps" you could just insert THAT into the work-history section of your resume to fill the hole. Here are some examples:

- 1993-95 Full-time parent -- or
- 1992-94 Maternity leave and family management -- or
- Travel and study -- or Full-time student -- or
- Parenting plus community service

### 9. What if you have several different job objectives you're working on at the same time? Or you haven't narrowed it down yet to just one job target?

Then write a different resume for each different job target. A targeted resume is MUCH, much stronger than a generic resume.

### 10. What if you have a fragmented, scrambled-up work history, with lots of short-term jobs?

To minimize the job-hopper image, combine several similar jobs into one "chunk," for example:

- 1993-1995 **Secretary/Receptionist**; Jones Bakery, Micro Corp., Carter Jewelers -- or
- 1993-95 **Waiter/Busboy**; McDougal's Restaurant, Burger King, Traders Coffee Shop.

Also you can just drop some of the less important, briefest jobs.

But don't drop a job, even when it lasted a short time, if that was where you acquired important skills or experience.

### **11. What's the best way to impress an employer?**

Fill your resume with "PAR" statements. PAR stands for Problem-Action-Results; in other words, first you state the problem that existed in your workplace, then you describe what you did about it, and finally you point out the beneficial results.

**Here's an example:** "Transformed a disorganized, inefficient warehouse into a smooth-running operation by totally redesigning the layout; this saved the company thousands of dollars in recovered stock."

**Another example:** "Improved an engineering company's obsolete filing system by developing a simple but sophisticated functional-coding system. This saved time and money by recovering valuable, previously lost, project records."

### **12. What if your job title doesn't reflect your actual level of responsibility?**

When you list it on the resume, either replace it with a more appropriate job title (say "Office Manager" instead of "Administrative Assistant" if that's more realistic) OR use their job title AND your fairer one together, i.e. "Administrative Assistant (Office Manager)"

### **13. How can you avoid age discrimination?**

If you're over 40 or 50 or 60, remember that you don't have to present your entire work history! You can simply label THAT part of your resume "**Recent Work History**" or "**Relevant Work History**" and then describe only the last 10 or 15 years of your experience. Below your 10-15 year work history, you could add a paragraph headed "Prior relevant experience" and simply refer to any additional important (but ancient) jobs without mentioning dates.

**14. What if you never had any "real" paid jobs -- just self-employment or odd jobs?** Give yourself credit, and create an accurate, fair job-title for yourself. For example:

- A&S Hauling & Cleaning (Self-employed) -- or
- Household Repairman, Self-employed -- or
- Child-Care, Self-employed

Be sure to add "Customer references available on request" and then be prepared to provide some very good references of people you worked for.

### **15. How far back should you go in your Work History?**

Far enough; and not too far! About 10 or 15 years is usually enough - unless your "juiciest" work experience is from farther back.

### **16. How can a student list summer jobs?**

Students can make their resume look neater by listing seasonal jobs very simply, such as "Spring 1996" or "Summer 1996" rather than 6/96 to 9/96. (The word "Spring" can be in very tiny letters, say 8-point in size.)

### **17. What if you don't quite have your degree or credentials yet?**

You can say something like:

- Eligible for U.S. credentials -- **or**
- Graduate studies in Instructional Design, in progress -- **or**
- Master's Degree anticipated December 1997
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### **18. What if you worked for only one employer for 20 or 30 years?**

Then list separately each different position you held there, so your job progression within the company is more obvious.

**19. What about listing hobbies and interests?**

Don't include hobbies on a resume unless the activity is somehow relevant to your job objective, or clearly reveals a characteristic that supports your job objective. For example, a hobby of Sky Diving (adventure, courage) might seem relevant to some job objectives (Security Guard?) but not to others.

**20. What about revealing race or religion?**

Don't include ethnic or religious affiliations (inviting pre-interview discrimination) UNLESS you can see that including them will support your job objective. Get an opinion from a respected friend or colleague about when to reveal, and when to conceal, your affiliations.

**21. What if your name is Robin Williams?**

Don't mystify the reader about your gender; they'll go nuts until they know whether you're male or female. So if your name is Lee or Robin or Pat or anything else not clearly male or female, use a Mr. or Ms. prefix.

**22. What if you got your degree from a different country?**

You can say "Degree equivalent to U.S. Bachelor's Degree in Economics-Teheran, Iran."

**23. What about fancy-schmancy paper?**

Employers tell me they HATE parchment paper and pretentious brochure-folded resume "presentations." They think they're phony, and toss them right out. Use plain white or ivory, in a quality appropriate for your job objective. Never use colored paper unless there's a very good reason for it (like, you're an artist) because if it gets photo-copied the results will be murky.

**24. Should you fold your resume?**

Don't fold a laser-printed resume right along a line of text. The "ink" could flake off along the fold.

## High School Student Looking For Part-Time Work Resume Example - "Chronological"

**CHARLIE CROWLEY**  
6693 High Street  
Nutley, New Jersey 07110  
(201) 123-4567

**Job wanted: Part-time after school and weekend job**  
...Stockroom helper ...Grocery bagger ...Golf Caddie ...Dishwasher  
...Theater maintenance helper ...Arcade guide

- Reliable. Willing and able to show up on time.
- Honest and trustworthy.
- Good attitude around others. Willing to help, patient with people, do my share, willing to learn.

### Paid Work Experience

#### 2005-06 **Handyman**

- Worked on Nutley rental property owned by my relatives
  - ... Replaced broken wood fence.
  - ... Painted inside and outside walls.
  - ... Cleared out trash left by tenants.

#### Fall 2005 **Babysitter**

- Do on-call work for parent during football games.

#### 2005-06 **Bagger** after school, weekends, vacations

- Bagged groceries at US Army Commissary, Hamburg, Germany

#### 2005 **Woodworker and Salesman** part-time during school year

- Produced wood handicrafts; sold them to teachers and other students.
  - ... Increased sales by giving customers a chance to try out the merchandise and show it to others.
  - ... Increased income by raising prices on popular items.
  - ... Used woodworking tools to make handicrafts.

#### 2004 **Golf Caddie**

- Caddied every day during summer vacation.

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### Work Experience in School

#### **Animal Care Project**, Nov. 2004 to Apr. 2005

- Successfully raised a pig to sell at the County Fair.
  - ... Won three blue ribbons. Earned over \$200.
  - ... Fed pig every day, cleaned the pen, gave the animal shots when it was sick, checked its weight weekly.

#### **Free Enterprise Class**, 2003 (Junior High)

- Sold school supplies such as pencils, pens, paper, notebooks.
- Designed, built, and sold wooden plaques which were popular with teachers.

**EDUCATION:** will graduate from high school in June 2007.

## Sales Director Resume Example - "Functional"

### LINDA MOWRY

348 Somerset Road  
Hayward, CA 94541  
(510) 123-4567

### OBJECTIVE

A position as Sales Coordinator, Representative or Account Executive.

### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Twelve years successful experience in direct sales of a range of products and services.
- Extensive practical hands-on experience as co-owner and manager of a small business.
- Motivated and enthusiastic about developing good relations with clients.
- Effective working alone or as a cooperative team member.
- Professional in appearance and presentation.

### RELEVANT SKILLS

#### SALES & NEW ACCOUNT DEVELOPMENT

- Increased a small publication's advertising revenue through market research and promotion.
- Developed new distribution outlets for a special-interest magazine in Northern California
  - Made cold calls and follow-up visits to retail outlets throughout the region.
  - Organized detailed routebooks and financial recordkeeping.
  - Successfully increased readership by more than 40 percent over a two-year period.

#### CUSTOMER RELATIONS

- Served as vendor representative for Jana Imports:
  - Coordinated product information and distribution for 75 field representatives and major accounts.
  - Promoted giftware products at trade shows throughout the region.
  - Handled face-to-face contacts with new and established customers.
- Oversaw the production of advertising and its placement in major trade publications.

#### ADVERTISING, MARKETING, DISTRIBUTION

- Organized and styled merchandise for effective presentation in a 20-page giftware catalog.
- Kept accurate, current computer records of inventory, international suppliers, brokers, shippers, etc.
- Handled all aspects of order taking and processing, both at Bill's Dairy and Jana Imports.

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2001-present	<i>Sales Coordinator</i>	JANA IMPORTS, Oakland
1996-2000	<i>Distribution Coordinator</i>	DEJA VU PUBLISHING CO., San Rafael
1990-95	<i>Co-Owner / Manager</i>	BILL'S DAIRY PRODUCTS, Livermore

### EDUCATION

Bay City College, San Francisco, Liberal arts studies 1987-90

## Print Designer Resume Example - "Chronological"

**Christopher Bond**  
8001 Piedmont Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 12345  
123-555-1234  
[chrisbond@thenet.net](mailto:chrisbond@thenet.net)

### Catalog Production Coordinator

#### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Seven years as a print production professional, working in corporate and independent settings.
- Degree in journalism with additional training at daily news publication.
- Noted for accelerating production through strong managerial skills.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2000-pres.          Thomas Govington (independent artist), Atlanta, GA

##### **BROCHURE PRODUCTION SPECIALIST**

- Designed and coordinated production of a four-color brochure that portrayed the artist's talent in three media: paint on canvas, ceramics, and bronze.

1994-00          Johnson Paper, Incorporated, Atlanta, GA

##### **CATALOG PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

- Managed full production of a 400-page catalog distributed to more than 4000 retailers and 80 distributors.
- Coordinated deadlines among six departments that sprinted from creative to shipping in less than two months per run.
- Supervised 35 artists and technicians; handled relations with more than 15 vendors.
- Represented the Production Department at management meetings.
- Instructed local college interns in print production techniques and systems.

1991-93          Emory University Press, Atlanta, GA

##### **PRINT PRODUCTION INTERN**

- Gained hands-on experience in every aspect of print production, working under the press's most senior printer.
- Frequently assisted in technically demanding assignments for major clients.

#### EDUCATION AND AFFILIATIONS

B.A., Journalism, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, 1985  
Junior year abroad in Madrid for work-study program at prominent newspaper

American Printers Association  
International Paper and Print Production Institute