# Resume Development Guide

## *How do I make my resume great?*

The first impression potential employers receive from you happens even before you speak with them on the phone or walk through their doors. Typically, your resume is the first and primary opportunity you have to show an employer who you are and what you can do for them.

### FACT: An employer spends an average of 15 to 25 seconds reviewing a person's resume

It's imperative to place your best foot forward by creating a concise, powerful, and presentable resume. For those students who are just starting out in their professional career a one or two page resume should suffice. As your career unfolds your resume may expand to detail relevant experience, but shorter is almost always better. Remember that you have a very limited opportunity for your resume to stick.

A resume is organized in one of four ways: Chronological, Functional, Combination, and Targeted. Which type you choose depends largely on your work experience and skill set. Even the job you are applying for may determine the type of resume you wish to submit.

**Chronological**

The chronological resume begins with your work history. Your most recent employer is listed first followed by your previous jobs. This resume should be used when you have a strong work history that is related to the job you are applying for and you only have a few gaps in employment.

**Functional**

Functional resumes are used to highlight skills and experiences rather than your work experience. This resume style is frequently used by students who have vastly different work history than the job they are applying for as well as those with larger gaps in their employment.

**Combination**

This resume format combines both the chronological and functional resume. List your skills and experiences first, followed by your chronological work history. This format highlights your skills and abilities while also giving the employer the work history they prefer.

**Targeted**

A targeted resume is created to highlight your skills and abilities related to a specific job you are applying for. While this approach is more difficult and time consuming, it is to your benefit if the job you are applying for matches your skills and experience perfectly.

## *What are the essential parts of my resume?*

The common thread among these types of formats is the sections each of them must have. Every resume should include:

- Your contact information
- Education
- Experience

Ensure that employers can contact you by including your full name, current and/or permanent address, phone number(s), and email.

A word of caution for both your phone numbers and email address: **make certain they are professional.**
Cell phones, while a wonderful convenience can be detrimental to your job search, especially if you leave an inappropriate greeting for a potential employer. Make certain to remove all potentially harmful messages and songs from your greeting while you are interviewing. Keep it simple. Make certain to identify yourself by name in a polite and courteous manner in your greeting.

Your personal email should be kept simple by using your name and if necessary a combination of numbers. You should not hand out a personal email address that does not identify who you are to an employer. Examples of unacceptable emails: iluvdogs28@aol.com, or beergoggles420@gmail.com Acceptable email addresses should include all or part of your name or initials, and/or a combination of numbers only. Common combinations include jim.smith@hotmail.com, jsmith1@gmail.com, j.l.smith@yahoo.com.

## Tips for Keeping Your Resume in the Pile

**Look**

Remember, your resume is an extension of yourself. You should use resume paper or business stationary when printing. It's acceptable to incorporate a design only if it does not hinder the reviewer's ability to read your resume. If your resume is too busy looking, chances are no matter what your qualifications; your resume will be dismissed.

**Layout**

Ensure that your resume is easy to read. Section headings should be delineated by a different font size and formatting and/or by horizontal lines.

Your typeface should be readable by most individuals without strain. Don't make your text too small in order to fit all your information on one page. If necessary, adjust your margins or cut some non-essential material out. If neither of these options work, then it's acceptable to go onto more than one page but never over two.

**Unique Sections**

Customize your resume by creating unique section titles that showcase your skills, employment, and experience. Below are some sections to consider while you are creating your resume.

Academic Preparation
Achievements
Activities
Availability
Campus Involvement
Career Summary
Certifications
Citizenship
Community Service
Computer Skills
Co-Operative Education
Design Projects
Honors/Awards
Internships
Language Proficiency
Leadership
Licenses
Professional Affiliations
Projects
Publications/Presentations
Relevant Coursework
Related Employment
Skills
Study Abroad
Technical Skills/Programming
Travel
Volunteer Work
Work Authorization

*Refer to our Action Words and Keywords handout for additional help with your resume.