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## How To Write A Resume That Will Impress That Employer

By Laura Adams

Your resume is the first impression that an employer has of you. At the most basic level, a resume is simply a description of the skills, experience, education, and professional achievements that make you qualified for a position. A good resume will accurately inform an employer about your background. A great resume, however, can do much more. A great resume has the ability to persuade an employer that you have the unique talent and experience desired and that you deserve a personal interview for the position.

So how do you write a great resume? There is no one right way to write a resume, but common practice has developed a standard or resumes that candidates would do well to observe. Keep in mind that a resume is a marketing tool - you are marketing yourself to prospective employers. Therefore, although you do not want to significantly deviate from accepted standards, the content and format of your resume should express your individuality.

The Format:

The format you select for your resume should attract attention and create interest, but not detract from your overall presentation. Use of capitalization, bold lettering, underlining, indentations, different fonts, and white space can add variety to your resume and emphasize important information. The format should be consistent throughout the individual sections of the resume, be visually appealing, and be easy for the reader to follow.

A resume has several parts, which are typically included in this order:

1 Name and Contact Information

2 Objective Statement

3 Education

4 Professional Experience

5 Skills

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Additional parts may include a section for Summary of Skills, Awards and Honors, or References.

### Name and Contact Information

You should include your name, full address, telephone number with area code, and email address (if applicable) at the very top of your resume. If you are currently residing at a temporary address, such as a student's college address, you may include it in addition to your permanent address depending on the circumstances.

### Objective Statement

If you choose to include a professional objective statement, it should be a concise and meaningful statement that describes your career goals in detail. An objective can include your goals in regards to

your desired position title, industry, level of responsibility, and desired utilized skills. The elements included in your objective should be reinforced and supported throughout your resume and your cover letter.

### Education, Certifications, and Career Training

Your highest level of education achieved, whether you completed the program or not, should be the first listed in this section. All other schools you attended should follow.

For each individual school, list the following:

Name of the school

Dates you attended or graduated

Degrees earned (or degree program you were in, if not completed)

Major and minor subject areas

You may also list any honors, awards, Dean's list commendations, and GPAs if they will enhance this section of your resume.

Next you should list any career specific certifications or completed training courses that support your objective statement and enhance your resume. Be careful not to overdo this section, though, since too much information in this section will detract from the most important section of the resume, the Professional Experience section.

You should only include high school information if you do not have a college degree or if you achieved high commendation in some area that reinforces your career objectives.

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### \*\*\* NOTE \*\*\*

If you have a college degree, you should position the Education section near the top of your resume before your Professional Experience. If you do not have a degree, the Education section should follow your Professional Experience.

### Professional Experience

This is the most critical section of the resume. The professional experience section should be tailored as much as possible to the target position and should focus on those key areas that relate to your desired career goals. If the bulk of your experience can be directly correlated to your desired position, then you can stick to a single Professional Experience section. If your career path is divided, though, it may be necessary to split your experience between a section detailing your experience in the desired area (for example, "Professional Teaching Experience" or "Professional Writing Experience") and a section for "Other Experience".

To write an effective professional experience section, consider the following tips:

Include your job title, the name of the employer, the location of the position (city, state), and the dates you were employed.

If you want the emphasis to be on your title, list this first. If where is worked is more important than what you did, you should list the name of the employer first.

You can de-emphasize the dates of employment by omitting the months if you feel that including them will detract from your presentation.

This section is not strictly limited to full-time professional positions only. Take advantage of this flexibility and include any full-time or part-time positions, related volunteer work, relevant campus, and internships that best reflect your skills.

For each position, use detailed actions words and adjectives to describe your responsibilities, new abilities you developed, and any skills you applied.

Include any specific accomplishments you achieved for each position, as well as any accolades you received for your work. For example, if you were Salesperson of the Year or achieved the highest rating on a customer satisfaction survey, be sure to include it. Remember, you are trying to market yourself!

Be details in your descriptions without exaggerating. **DO NOT LIE ON YOUR RESUME!**

### Skills

The Skills section of your resume should highlight any relevant skills that might not otherwise be disclosed on your resume. This section will be highly individualized to both the person and the position

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they are seeking.

You should list those skills most relevant to the position you are seeking at the top of this section.

Examples of some skills you may want to include are:

Computer skills: specific computer systems, applications, and programs

Languages: your level of proficiency in reading, writing and speaking various languages

Various functional skills: any functional skills not mentioned elsewhere such as editing skills, interpersonal relationship skills, negotiating skills, etc.

Industry experience: any industries in which you have worked

Other Optional Sections:

Summary of Skills:

A quick 3–4 line summary of your relevant qualifications for the position may be included at the top for the resume under your contact information and objective statement (if included). The key is to be as specific as possible and tailor the summary to the position.

Honors and Awards:

List any career, academic, leadership or athletic honors you have received. Academic awards may alternatively be listed under the Education section of the resume.

References:

You may include a statement declaring "References Available upon Request" if you need to fill space on your resume. Otherwise you should list references in a separate document. References should typically only be provided when requested or once it is clear that the competition for a position is narrowing. Do not include specific reference names or contact information on your resume.

Other Categories:

If there is additional information that you feel is important to include but does not fit into any of these categories, you can create custom categories. Examples of custom categories may include Background, Professional Activities, Recitals/Art Shows, Professional Memberships, Presentations, Publications, and Special Skills.

Laura Adams is a qualified careers advisor with 11 years experience.

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## **Tips For Writing Your Winning Resume**

**By Gabriel Adams**

Your resume is one of the most important documents that you will create in your lifetime. Many times an employer will not even give you a chance at a job without a stellar resume. Usually the difference between getting a job interview and not getting a job interview is how well you write your resume. You usually can not speak to your prospective employer until they have first seen your resume, so your resume writing has to do the speaking for you. Writing a resume is not very difficult if you just remember a few basic techniques.

1. Career Objectives - The career objective section should be located at the top of your resume. This section should contain your career goals and aspirations. It is a good idea to tailor this section so that it applies to the job which you are applying. This will let your prospective employer know that you are interested in the job, and that this job is a step towards your overall career objectives.

2. Work History - Make sure when you are writing your resume you give your last three jobs in your work history. Also if for some reason there are gaps in your work history make sure you write an explanation for the absence on your resume. Also, when you are writing about the tasks you performed on this job, try to emphasize the tasks that relate the most to the job you are trying to get.

3. Skills Section - This section is the most often overlooked when someone is writing a resume. However the skills section is the most important section in a resume. You want to make sure that you list all of the skills you have obtained, as well as the amount of experience that you have in each skill. This is very important to employers, because it tells them how much training they will have to give you if you are hired.

4. References - Depending on the job you are applying for, an employer may or may not contact your references for information about you. If they try to contact your references and they can not contact them, it will reflect poorly on you, and you might not get called in for an interview. Make sure that you keep your contact information current when writing your resume, and notify your references when you submit a resume so they will be prepared to be contacted if necessary.

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to help you write your winning resume.



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