

Resume Basics: What Should be Included?

The primary purpose of a resume and cover letter is to create a positive impression and thereby secure an interview. These written communications should be well done and to the point, merging straight facts with a promotional approach. Preparation of these important employment tools will require planning, organization, and time.

We recommend using some of the following sections in your Resume (1-2 pages).

Personal Data: Name, address, phone number, e-mail, and web address (if applicable). Both a college address and a permanent address may be included.

Job Objective: (optional) Concisely describe the type of job you want. If you include "Job Objective" in your cover letter, you can omit it from your resume.

Education: Include your degree, major field of study, and institution name and location. You may also add your minor, independent research or class projects, GPA, or specific courses if these strengthen your background. Honors may be listed here.

Experience: Describe your duties using skill/action words, as they relate to the position you are seeking. Include volunteer and relevant summer, part-time, or internship employment. Highlight specific achievements. You can also use specific category names, such as "Teaching Experience," "Research Experience," "Customer Service Experience," etc.

Special Qualifications: Include computer skills, technical skills, laboratory/field techniques and equipment, certifications, special training, etc.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Add significant school activities, community activities, interests, honors and awards.

References: You may say "Available upon request", OR list names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses for faculty or previous employers. These can be listed on your resume or on a separate sheet. Seek permission before using names.

Other sections sometimes included on a resume are: skills, training, research, publications, professional associations, honors and awards, interests.

Other Helpful Hints

- Be creative—there is no single prescribed resume format.
- Prioritize categories on your resume to emphasize your strongest qualifications for a specific job or type of job.
- Use descriptive job titles such as Engineering Assistant, Peer Counselor, Accounting Intern.
- Emphasize skills that are transferable from one job to another, such as "communication skills", "organizational skills", etc.
- Keep resume relevant to the type of job you are seeking.
- Remember that people skim resumes; they don't read them.
- Watch for spelling, grammatical and formatting errors.