



How to Write a Powerful Resume

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Why do I need a resume?

A powerful resume does two things:

1. Tells prospective employers what you can do for them
2. Proves you can do it better than anyone else

A powerful resume will bring results. The phone will ring. Interviews will be set. Opportunities will be presented.

A powerful resume makes an immediate positive impact on its reader. It must, since the average recruiter will spend no more than one-minute to decide whether or not to read on or stick it in the file of *lost* resumes. Your resume may be one of 300 others. Most often, you do not have a second time to present yourself. Be as specific and as direct as possible about what you can do for them.

If your resume is a strong, accomplishment-driven example of your experience, it can open doors and lead you to great opportunities. If your resume is poorly written or boring, it won't bring you the desired results.

When preparing your winning resume remember to include the following:

Header

Don't forget your contact information. List your full name, address, phone number(s), and Email address. And above all, be absolutely sure it's correct and up-to-date at all times. If you need to update anything, make corrections in advance of your submission. Do not hand-write corrections or updates under any circumstances!

Summary or Career Objective

It would be wise to stay away from objectives as they can limit your scope of opportunities. Instead, work at developing a summary of your experience. Your summary should be no more than one or two sentences. It is most effective to customize the summary to suit the demands of a specific opportunity. Be sure to match your skills, experience and education to their needs. Keep in mind to be honest at all times.

Education

List your most recent education first and work backward. List your degree, major, minor, dates of attendance, name of school. Also list your GPA if it is a 3.0 or higher. Include high school information only if you have no college or university credit.

If you are applying to a position that specifically requires a certain degree or are a recent graduate with little (or no) work experience, it would be best to list your education immediately after your summary. Otherwise, education can be listed after work experience on your resume.

Work Experience

List your experience, chronologically, with your most recent job first. Include the employer's name, city and state, along with dates of employment. List your job title. Outline your job duties and accomplishments in concise descriptions.

Remember to:

- Highlight your most important job responsibilities
- Use action phrases (see attached list)
- Incorporate tangible results when listing your accomplishments. Quantify your achievements with percentages or numbers like “increased customer enrollment by 30 percent” or “managed three-person project team”
- Use bullets to draw attention to your achievements
- Keep tenses appropriate! For current position, use present tense such as, “Answer phones.” For previous positions, use past tense, for example, “Answered phones.”
- **Do Not Be Repetitive ~ it can be boring and turn off the reader.**

Skills & Expertise

Be sure to list your technical and computer skills. List programming languages, software programs and operating systems you've used as well as certifications you have earned. Also be sure to highlight “soft skills” like foreign languages.

It's a good idea to include memberships in professional organizations. It shows you're serious about your career.

We recommend that you not list your hobbies or include personal information, such as marital status, number of children, etc. By doing so, you may be subjecting yourself to your prospective employer's judgment.

References

You don't need to waste valuable space on references. Most employers will ask for them later. However, if you need to fill an empty space at the bottom of your page, go ahead and put “Excellent references are available upon request.” **Prepare a separate sheet listing three to five professional references.** Hold onto this information until you are asked to provide them.

Some Resume Disasters to Stay Away From...

Never lie about job titles, dates of employment, and awards. Don't inflate statistics or percentages when speaking of accomplishments. Don't falsify college or grad school degrees. Background checks are commonplace in this market. Honesty is always the best policy!

Inconsistencies, job-hopping or changes in your career may raise red flags about your ability to maintain stability within an organization. Although we highly recommend that you present your resume in chronological form, if you have inconsistencies in your work history, it may be in your best interest to group these positions by category (a functional resume). List the category, for example "Customer Service" and then present the related work experience. Then list the next category "Sales" with its related job information. Keep in mind that some recruiters and potential employers tend to view functional resumes as red flags!

Keep your resume to one or two pages in length. If you ramble on and on about yourself for three or four pages, or use wordy paragraphs to describe your responsibilities in a job, your resume may be passed over. Be concise. Break up the information with bullets to highlight special accomplishments or responsibilities that are specific to the position for which you are applying. Be brief but powerful!

Never use the pronoun "I" when writing your resume. Resumes should be written in the third person. Rather than "I was responsible for the day-to-day accounting functions of a busy manufacturing plant," try, "Managed day-to-day accounting functions for \$2M manufacturing plant."

Proof your resume before it goes anywhere! Your resume is a valuable tool only if you treat it like one. If it is presented to a company with typographical errors and chocolate fingerprint smudges, you are presenting a personal image that few prospective employers will look upon favorably. It's a good idea to have another person proof read your resume. Another set of eyes will often pick up an error that you have missed.

ACTION WORDS!

It is important to incorporate active or strong language in your resume. It grabs the reader's attention. Be sure to use words that accurately describe your duties and use a variety of action words rather than repeatedly using the same one.

A

Accomplished
Achieved
Acted
Adapted
Addressed
Administrated
Advised
Aided
Analyzed
Applied
Approved
Assembled
Assigned
Assisted
Attended

B

Balanced
Broadened
Budgeted
Built

C

Calculated
Catalogued
Challenged
Checked
Communicated
Compiled
Conducted
Contributed
Coordinated
Corrected
Created

D

Decided
Delivered
Demonstrated
Designed
Developed
Devised
Directed
Distributed

E-F

Edited
Eliminated
Enhanced
Established
Evaluated
Exhibited
Facilitated
Filed
Founded

G

Gained
Generated
Guided

H

Headed
Helped
Hired

I

Identified
Implemented
Improved
Increased
Informed
Initiated
Innovated
Installed
Instituted
Interviewed
Instructed

J – M

Joined
Judged
Launched
Led
Lightened
Located
Maintained
Managed
Marketed
Merged
Met
Minimized
Monitored
Motivated

N – O

Named
Negotiated
Observed
Obtained
Operated
Orchestrated
Originated
Organized
Overhauled
Oversaw

P

Participated
Performed
Planned
Prepared
Presented

P (cont'd.)

Prioritized
Produced
Projected
Provided
Purchased
Pursued

Q – R

Qualified
Quantified
Recommended
Remedied
Reorganized
Represented
Researched
Resolved
Revamped
Reviewed
Revised
Rewarded

S

Scheduled
Secured
Selected
Solicited
Solved
Specialized
Streamlined
Studied
Suggested
Summarized
Supervised
Supported

T-W

Tabulated
Targeted
Trained
Transformed
Translated
Transmitted
Typed
Updated
Upgraded
Used
Utilized
Validated
Verified
Welcomed
Worked
Wrote

Kathleen Connor
1234 Main Street
Portland, ME 04101
H: 207-773-3333 C: 207-650-1234
katyc@yahoo.com

Summary

Administrative Assistant with over 13 years of experience working in demanding, high level corporate positions offering extensive computer knowledge, strong people skills, precise attention to detail, and polished business etiquette.

Work Experience

X-Cel CORPORATION, Portland, ME 12/96 to Present

Administrative Assistant to the President

International sales company headquartered in Portland with offices throughout Europe and Southeast Asia.

- Responsible for providing administrative support to the President, as well as to other high level executives within the organization
- Organize and facilitate corporate events, national board meetings and executive conferences
- Coordinate extensive travel itineraries and maintain detailed expense reports
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality at all times
- Supervised corporate-wide computer software transition project from Access to customized database

AXE COMMUNICATIONS, INC., Portland, ME 4/89 to 12/96

Administrative Assistant – Human Resources

Leader in the telecommunications industry with over 300 branches nationwide.

- Consulted with managers regarding recruitment, hiring, employee relations and other related issues
- Edited, co-wrote, and formatted biweekly company newsletter
- Developed and maintained the HR section of company web site
- Produced monthly computer-generated employment reports for the corporate office
- Provided assistance in interpretation and application of company policies and procedures
- Performed wide range of administrative and organizational activities

Skills and Languages

- ❖ Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, PeopleSoft
- ❖ Proven communications and writing skills
- ❖ Multilingual ~ Fluent French and Spanish

Education

University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME

Currently working toward BS with an emphasis in Human Resources Management

Anticipated graduation May 2007

Andover College, Portland, ME

Associates Degree - Computer Sciences

May 1989 G.P.A. 3.1

References

Available upon request