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The Résumé

The résumé (along with a cover letter and list of references) is often the first piece of information or “advertising” a potential employer will receive about you. It is important that the résumé leaves the employer with a good first impression in order to get the opportunity to meet in an interview setting. The way you market your skills and experiences on your résumé is often as important as the skills and experiences themselves.

Hopefully by the time you get ready to write your résumé, you have already spent a few years **building** your résumé, taking advantage of opportunities to develop your skills, learning about different work environments, and clarifying your career goals.

There is no single way to write a résumé, and with the advance of technology, it is possible to create your résumé in countless different formats. You are the ultimate judge in how your résumé will look, but it is to your advantage to have your résumé critiqued by the staff at Career Services to ensure that it meets the standards set by employers in the professional world. Career Services has a variety of references, electronic resources, and free publications available to further guide you in the development of your résumé.

As a job seeker, you might be applying for positions in a few different settings. Your résumé should be individualized to each specific job for which you are applying.

A résumé generally consists of the following information:

Contact Information:

Name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and/or website address. If you have a campus and permanent address, be sure to include both and indicate when you can be reached at either address.

Objective:

One to two lines at most, the objective is an optional part of the résumé. It’s a good idea to have one to clarify and connect the skills on your résumé to a targeted career path, and to let the prospective employer know what type of position you are applying for. It is appropriate to leave the objective off if your résumé clearly reflects a very specific occupation. Generally, a well-written objective includes the type of position you are applying for, the environment in which you want to work, and the skills you want to use in the position. *Be very specific!*

Education:

List your degrees in reverse chronological order; including institution, date of graduation, majors and minors or emphases, and cumulative and/or major GPA if it is above a 2.5. If you have not received the degree you are currently working on, state the anticipated graduation date. You might also want to list related coursework, computer skills, or academic honors in this section.

Experience:

This section is often divided into a few categories, usually career-related experience (“related experience”, “professional experience”...), and non career-related experience (“other experience”, “additional employment”...). It is important to remember that non-paid experience is **experience**, nonetheless. Volunteer experience, active participation in student activities, research projects, student teaching and internships all provide opportunity to learn skills required in a future professional work setting, often more so than your paid employment! “Related experience” refers to experience that is related to your

career objective, and this may change a bit if you are applying for positions in different work settings. You may use a reverse chronological format or a functional format depending on your unique experiences. Always include your position title, organization or employer, location, and general dates of each experience.

Activities:

Include in this section memberships in campus, community, or professional organizations. Remember, if you held a position of leadership in an organization, it might be related experience. In order to prevent discrimination, it is also advisable to leave off affiliations with organizations that indicate religious, political, or sexual orientation preferences.

Military Experience, Honors/Awards, Certificates or Licenses, Professional Memberships

As applicable.

Credentials or References:

References should **not** be listed on the résumé, but included with résumé on a separate sheet. A statement such as "References Available Upon Request" is optional, as employers will assume you have references.

General Résumé Do's:

- Keep your résumé to one page if possible. However, do not leave out important information!
- Include a cover letter and list of references with each résumé sent.
- Print your résumé using a laser or high quality printer, and copy onto high-quality résumé paper (light colors--nothing with flecks, marbling, or other features that aren't easily reproducible).
- Limit the description of your work experiences to 4-6 sentences, in bullet or paragraph format, using **Action Verbs**.
- Have 2-3 people proofread your résumé for typos and spelling errors.
- Have your résumé critiqued by Career Services **before** making multiple copies.
- Allow sufficient time in your job search for revision of your résumé as needed!

General Résumé Don'ts:

- Use the word "I." A résumé is NOT a narrative.
- Include personal information including age, marital status, number of children, religious affiliation, weight, height, or include a photo.
- Print your résumé using a dot-matrix printer, or use any other color ink than black.
- Attempt to "personalize" your résumé by using pictures, fancy font styles, unique paper, or a non-traditional résumé format. Exceptions might include Art, Graphic Design, or Advertising majors.
- Use short, non-descriptive statements to explain your experiences.
- Repetitive, verbatim, sentences in more than one experience section.
- Include your references on your résumé.
- Wait until the last minute to have your resume critiqued by Career Services. More often than not, revisions will be suggested that might interfere with meeting an application deadline.