

# Session 10 -- Resume Writing Overview (original)

## What is a resume?

A resume describes where you have been, what you have done, and where you are currently directing your career. Most employers ask for a resume-many will not even consider inviting you for an interview without it. It is the quickest way for a potential employer to get a picture of your qualifications. Unlike a job application, where you have little choice as to what information to provide the company, resumes give you the opportunity to select only your strongest qualifications and skills.

## What should you include in your resume?

A resume is not just a list of past jobs, but a reflection of how your past experiences are related to your desired career or the job you are applying for. The order of information is variable depending on your strengths-you should always list your strongest suit (or the information most relevant to the specific job opportunity) first. Finally, you want to customize your resume to include search terms relevant to the company or job-posting, particularly if you are applying on lines. These words can be key words right from the job description and qualifications.

*Your resume is well worth your time and effort-it creates a lasting impression of your ability to meet employment requirements.*

## Types of resumes:<sup>1</sup>

### Chronological Resume

A chronological resume starts by listing your work history, with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current, or most recent job, first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. *This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history.*

### Functional Resume

A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. *It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/resumes/p/resumetypes.htm>

## Combination Resume

A combination resume lists your skills and experience first. Your employment history is listed next. *With this type of resume you can highlight the skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for, and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer.*

## Targeted Resume

*A targeted resume is a resume that is customized so that it specifically highlights the experience and skills you have that are relevant to the job you are applying for.* It definitely takes more work to write a targeted resume than to just click to apply with your existing resume. However, it's well worth the effort, especially when applying for jobs that are a perfect match for your qualifications and experience.

## Developing Your Resume

Self-reflective questions can help you to think about your best qualities and what you can bring to an employer that will help them achieve their goals as a company.

This process requires that you take a few moments to yourself and consider your work history, your likes and dislikes in a job, and the reality you face in balancing your personal and professional lives.

*Sit for a few moments and consider the following questions and record your responses on a sheet of paper:*

1. What did I do well during my last job?
2. What did I enjoy doing at my last job?
3. Have I received any training specific to the job I am seeking to attain?
4. What do I believe is the best skill I can bring to a company?
5. What do I want out of my next job?

*Consider the types of skills you can bring to an employer or for the job you are seeking and record them on a sheet of paper:*

## Job Content Skills<sup>2</sup>

- Directly related to a specific job and a skill you have received either through education or training such as welder for a welding position, CNC machinist certification for a CNC Machinist position, Registered Nurse for a nursing position, etc.

### **Transferrable Skills**

- Skills that can be used across a variety of positions such as budget management, organizational skills, analytical thinking, etc.
- Many skills you use at home can be translated into a job duty such as set-up of a family budget could be used as a descriptor for "analyze information," plan family events could be experience for "organizing events," handle family disagreements could be experience for "negotiate and problem solving"

### **Soft Skills**

- Skills that are reflective of your personal qualities and characteristics such as leadership, communication, ability to work with others, problem solving, etc.

### **Career History Template**

*Begin with your last job and develop a list of the last three jobs you have held including the month you were hired and the month you left and record this on a sheet of paper:*

- Title of Position
- Date Hired-Date Left
- Company

*Take each position you have held and consider the following for each position and record your answers next to each position:*

- Title of Position
- What were my responsibilities in this position?
- What were goals I achieved in this position as an individual?
- What were goals achieved by the company while I was in this position?

### **Educational History Template**

*Record your educational history beginning with your high school, year of graduation and/or grades completed, (or school you obtained your GED and date of achievement), College courses (2-year or 4-year taken), graduation date (if applicable), and any other training courses you may have taken and record that on a sheet of paper:*

### **Special Skills**

You may possess a skill that will enhance your capability on-the-job such as typing speed, ability to work with computers and the internet, bi-lingual, etc.

These skills can be very valuable to an employer and should be included on your resume. It may push your resume ahead of others and gain you an interview.

### **Community Involvement / Volunteerism**

Organizations you participate with and/or are involved in are important to show you contribute your talents personally in your community. Your community involvement/volunteerism may be your time at your Church/Synagogue or other Religious Institution, your child's school, in your neighborhood, etc.

These experiences also have built your skills and knowledge and can help you when seeking a new job.

*Think about your special skills and/or your community involvement/volunteerism and record them on a sheet of paper for your resume*

### **Resume "Must-Haves" Before Submission To An Employer**

- Clean and Error Free.
- Formatted Consistently
- Concise and Easy to Read
- Correct Grammar

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***Always have someone proof-read your resume before you submit it to an employer***

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### **How To Make Your Resume Stand-Out**

- Ensure you include in your resume and cover letter how you will be an asset to the employer:
  - o Employers want to hire individuals who understand their role to the company and how their role impacts the ability for the company to make money
  - o Your resume needs to communicate your ability to help the company succeed
- Soft skills are a key ingredient to employers
  - o Many employers today complain about the lack of soft skills in individuals they hire today-individuals who are unable to show up to work on-time, talk on their cell phones at work, dress inappropriately, etc.
  - o Ensure your resume includes your soft-skills and how you are "ready to work"
- Emphasize the use of action verbs and precise presentation of experience and skills
- Make sure your resume includes specific language included in the job description and how your experience matches those job needs
- Review other resumes or use any of the following online tools to review, these are only a sample, but can give you another place to compare your resume to:

- o <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/resumes/o/resumetypes.htm>
- o <http://www.exampleresumes.org/>
- o [http://www.labor.nv.gov/careerservices/findajob/res\\_fun.shtm](http://www.labor.nv.gov/careerservices/findajob/res_fun.shtm)
- Include a cover letter that speaks specifically to your skills and how you can advance the company:<sup>3</sup>
  - o Salutation : Use the employer's name and title
  - o First Paragraph:
    - Tell them how you learned about the position
    - Express your interest in the job and the company
    - Tell them a resume is enclosed
  - o Second and Third Paragraph:
    - Outline your qualifications
    - Show your knowledge of the company
    - Be concise and professional
  - o Fourth Paragraph:
    - Express your interest in the job
    - Request an interview
    - Thank them for their time
  - o Closing and Signature: Close with Sincerely, Cordially, or other formal phrase

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