

Résumés

Résumé

1. A brief account of one's professional or work experience and qualifications—often submitted with an employment application.
2. A summary.

Considerations

Content

- Keep the résumé short, 1–1.5 page max.
- Résumés for public relations specialists should be high quality and professional: no errors—spell check and proof read many times, make it graphically pleasing, and print on quality paper.
- Use key words and short descriptive sentences (fragments) where possible. Do not write lengthy paragraphs.
- Arrange the résumé to stress your strengths. You may want a topical or combination résumé rather than a chronological résumé.
- Focus on your work experience and strengths.
- Never have unaccounted-for gaps in employment.
- If you are, or have been, affiliated with more than a few organizations, activities, etc., do not list them all. Include only the half-dozen most recent/impressive.
- Do not list every class that you have taken in your field. If you list any, list the most important/relevant classes. Arrange these lists “rhetorically.”
- If you plan to list your GPA, make the most of it. Do not bother listing “overall” GPA if it is not very impressive. Alternatively, you might list the GPA in your major instead. If neither are very impressive, leave them off entirely.
- Do not list “interests” unless these will suggest you possess additional skills of value to the organization.
- Do not list religious affiliations, fraternities/sororities, etc. This is unprofessional and you run the risk of someone subconsciously (or consciously) discriminating.

Æsthetics

- Lots of white space.
- White paper or off-white only—colored is unprofessional and does not copy or scan well.
- 25%+ cotton bond paper will make your résumé stand out but is often not necessary with many résumés being scanned, etc.
- Do not use specialty papers—decorative borders, colored paper (pink or blue), etc.
- Do not fold—get full-page envelopes.
- Do not be overly creative unless you are applying in a creative field.
- Use a single font and a common font—never more than two fonts. Don't use Times.
- Never less than about 12-point unless the font is very readable at that size—when you are reading 200 faxed résumés you get tired.
- Experiment with your layout until you have one that is easy to read/follow.
- Always have extra, excellent, copies on hand when you go on interviews, etc.

Miscellaneous

- A résumé need not list every part-time/full-time or volunteer work experience you ever had. A résumé is a sales tool not a vita.
- Include job titles, duties, supervisor's name, and major accomplishments—i.e., “promoted to Senior Trainer after four months,” etc.
- Include short courses, special training, seminars, etc. that might be relevant to the employer.
- List relevant accomplishments, awards, leadership positions, professional publications, and citations.
- Include complete contact information: address, telephone (home, message, cellular), fax, and e-mail.
- **On telephones:** professionalism calls for recording over those annoying answering machine messages you had in college with a professional sounding message. Do not provide a message number that “random boneheads” have access to—such as fraternity/sorority houses apartments with several roommates, etc.
 - If you have no choice, “tactfully” explain to your friends/roommates that you may be receiving professional, job-related, calls and ask them to be congenial and professional when answering the telephone and taking messages. Have a confidant call you once in a while to be sure your messages are being delivered and the telephone is getting answered properly.
 - Always answer your telephone (or cellular telephone) professionally when you are on the job hunt. A rude person answering the telephone with “Yo, speak!” or “It’s your dime” will likely be the kiss of death for your job. I personally hang up when students ask me to call them and I receive such treatment from roommates. So will your future employer.
- The résumé is your chance to sell yourself. Never lie. Always adapt to your audience. Your résumé is an argument that says, “I am more qualified than that other guy/gal.” “I’m also smarter, nicer, and doggonit...people like me.”
- Describe your career goals: do not be pedantic, egotistical, vague, or mercenary.
- Describe your career aspirations in terms relevant to the employer and type of work. Do not sound too narrow.
- Describe your goals in terms of the position for which you are applying. Keep the specific employer in mind as you write these goals.
- Your résumé should reflect your own individuality, uniqueness, creativity, flair, style, *Kairos*, and *savoir-faire*. Have some.
- Update and revise your résumé often to keep it up to date.
- You may need to create several versions of your résumé for different occupations.

