

# RESUME GUIDELINES

The purpose of a resume is to secure an interview. It will not get you the job, but it may open the door for an interview. A resume is a summary of your qualifications, education and experience, in light of your career objective. It should be a marketing tool, to present you as a person whose strengths and skills meet the needs of the potential employer. It should be clearly written, concise and well-organized.

Your resume should be constructed to reflect YOU. There are no rules about form and content, but here are some general guidelines:

- ✓ Be consistent in your layout so it is easy to scan quickly.
- ✓ Begin with contact information: your name, address (optional), phone number, and email address. In addition, list a message number or cell number at which you can be reached during working or school hours and ensure that your voicemail message is a professional greeting.
- ✓ Devise your own format, one which reflects your strengths, personality and professional attitude, but make sure it is appropriate for the field or organization you are targeting.
- ✓ Avoid specialization of your work experience if you are trying to transfer skills to other employment fields; your information must be easy to read and understand, and it should not contain jargon unfamiliar to other industries.
- ✓ Include experiences (paid or unpaid) that focus on the skills you have that are related to the job you seek. Emphasize successes and accomplishments, particularly any quantifiable or visible improvements or savings in past jobs.
- ✓ Use one-line phrases to describe your work experience, starting with action words; they communicate quickly and are easy to understand. Consider "bulleting" (listing) each phrase for emphasis.
- ✓ Include a "skills" section to highlight any job-applicable skills needed for the job you're applying for.
- ✓ Unless you are applying to organizations that you know share your beliefs, carefully consider references that reveal your political, social, ethnic or religious background.
- ✓ Resumes should be printed on top quality bond paper or linen; a cream color is best, but white or off-white is also acceptable. Avoid dark or variegated paper as it doesn't copy or fax well.
- ✓ The quality of the print is very important. Type your resume on a computer and print it on a laser printer. Use bold print and italics for emphasis. Avoid underlining words and multiple columns if you know a resume scanner will be used.
- ✓ A cover letter should always accompany your resume when you submit it to the employer; the font and stationery should match what is used for the resume.

Remember, your resume will need revising from time to time even if you don't change jobs. Be flexible and revise your resume as your professional objective expands or narrows, or as you feel the need to modify your approach. You should develop different resumes for different career areas or organizations, focusing on the individual job descriptions, and revise your resumes to address those requirements.

## Hard Skills, Soft Skills & The Difference Between The Two

### Hard Skills

Hard skills are specific, teachable abilities that are based in fact. Some examples include:

- Speaking a foreign language
- Typing speed
- A degree or a certificate
- Proficiency in computer programming
- 10 years of customer service experience
- Operating machinery
- Public speaking experience (not to be confused with communication skills)

### Soft Skills

Soft skills are subjective and may or may not be true. They are often associated with personal attributes and character. Some examples include:

- Motivated team player
- Strong communication skills
- Time management
- Organizational skills
- Good with children
- Reliable, responsible, committed

How would you take a soft skill, such as “Good with children”, and turn it into a hard skill? \_\_\_\_\_

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