

Resume Advice and Tips



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October 2010

Resume Writing Tips

A successful resume is one that compels a company to call you for an interview. It is more effective to prepare a resume targeted to a specific job, even if you have to change your resume for every company.

Purpose of a Resume

- To get your readers attention
- Capture interest
- Position yourself against the competition (including those who may be more qualified).
- GET AN INTERVIEW!

Remember that employers visually scan resumes very quickly; therefore it is important that your resume looks professional and dynamic.

How to Capture the Reader's Attention!

Positioning of information is critical in capturing a reader's interest. You want to make sure that your name, address and phone number is prominent on your page, bolded and is larger than everything else. For example;

Hubert VanDengo

45678 Bottle Dr.

Chitcami, ON

N7J 8H8

hubert_vandengo@hotmail.com

It is very important to choose headings that will attract the reader's attention. Use font size '12', a clear and easily readable font (such as Times New Roman or Arial), bold your headings and ensure your resume is aligned properly. Bullets help the reader gather quick information from your resume. For example;

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a corporate accounting position that will allow me to use my financial and budget analysis skills.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Accounting May 2008
Western University, London, ON, Dean's List

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

- Intermediate Accounting I & II
- Financial Accounting I & II
- Managerial Accounting
- Personal Income Tax

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Choosing a Format

1. **Chronological Format:**

The chronological style resume is the most common. With this format, your work experience is listed in reverse chronological order. Job duties and accomplishments are included with each position. This resume style works well for job seekers who have continuous employment and relevant work experience. **SEE EXAMPLE OF THIS STYLE IN THE BACK SECTION**

2. **Functional Format:**

The functional resume focuses on skills and is used for job seekers who have great transferable skills. This resume style is ideal for job seekers who are changing careers or who may not have direct employment experience for their targeted position. With this type of resume, transferable experience is listed and highlighted. **SEE EXAMPLE OF THIS STYLE IN THE BACK SECTION**

3. **Combination Format:**

The combination style resume includes a summary section to highlight skills and accomplishments. It also includes work experience in reverse chronological order **SEE EXAMPLE OF THIS STYLE IN THE BACK SECTION**



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Sections of a Resume

Heading:

The required heading at the top of the page should include your name, complete address including postal code, telephone number and email address.

Objective or Cover Letter:

This section is optional but assists the employer in understanding which position you are applying for. It should be a short phrase stating your current job objective. You can include a job title for which you are applying, competencies or skills you would like to use in your position. For example; “A sales position utilizing communication and organization skills.” If you decide to write cover letters then do not add an objective in your resume.

Summary of Qualifications or Profile:

This section is included directly below the objective if you choose to use a functional or combination style resume. A summary section is a great way to highlight your key skills, accomplishments, talents, or special knowledge related to the target job. For example; excellent verbal and written communication skills.

Education:

The education section should include your most recent diploma or degree or any educational background that will help you in the target job. You should also include where the educational institution is located, which date you finished or plan on finishing. If you have a degree, list it with your major and/or minor you achieved and any other educational background you have. List most recent educational pursuits first and work backwards.

Experience or Work History:

The experience section will be set up depending on your resume style. (See examples) Work history should include job title, employer, city, province, and dates of employment. Job duties and accomplishments should be listed in phrases using action verbs in the resume format of your choice.

Volunteer Experience:

The volunteer experience should be set up in the same manner as your work experience, including location, job duties and responsibilities. This can be very valuable experience to include on your resume, especially if you are lacking in relevant work experience.

Additional Headings:

An additional heading should be included if you want to convey more information to the employer. These headings are dependant upon your education and career objective. Example of additional headings include: Computer skills, Honours or Activities, Research skills

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Reference List

- Ultimately, your references can make or break your chances of obtaining a job
- A good reference can secure a new position and a bad one can ruin a great interview: always always always make sure your references are saying good things about you and are recent and relevant!
- Unless the employer specifically requests your references, do not include them with your resume, that includes letters of references
- When you arrive for an interview, be sure to have a copy of your reference list and any original letters of reference
- On your reference sheet, be sure to include YOUR name and telephone number: sometimes your list can become separated from your resume on employer's desks and you don't want to lose out on an opportunity if this happens
- When creating your reference list, ensure there is enough information for your potential employer to make a well informed telephone call
- Below is good example of this:

Donald Trump
President of Trump Towers
 1234 5th Avenue,
 New York, New York
 555.555.5555

Marsha Brady
Former Supervisor of McDonald's
 Chatham, ON
 Home telephone 555.555.5555
 Call between 10:00 a.m. to 2:00p.m.

LETTERS OF REFERENCE

- Contact former employers to inquire if they can assist you with a letter of reference of your past work performance, however, give them an opportunity to decline your request if they are not comfortable
- An example would be "Tom, I plan on beginning a job search in the next month. Do you feel you know me well enough to provide a letter of reference about my management/leadership/accounting skills?" If they decline, be grateful that you have avoided using someone that would not give you a glowing review of your skills
- Don't limit letters of references from your current and past supervisors. Consider recommendations from colleagues you have worked well with, even a letter from someone who worked for you
- Always keep your original letters of references in good condition and forward only copies during your interview

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Final Resume Checklist

- Type the resume in Arial or Times New Roman in 11 or 12 point size for text and name is at least 2 sizes larger.
- Limit your resume to one page if you can or two pages if you have a lot of relevant experience.
- The use of numbers instead of text for example “Raised over \$24 000 for Canadian Cancer Society”
- Make sure your resume is honest and accurate – never lie!
- Use indentations, Capital letters, Bolding, and bullets to effectively enhance important information.
- Adjust your resume to suit specific job/employers.
- Never include references unless otherwise stated by employer.
- Never include personal information such as age, marital status, a photograph, salary history or expectation or social insurance number.
- Generally include a cover letter with your resume, if not, add an objective
- **PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD!** Let several people including career service staff critique your resume.

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Chronological Resume Sample

John J. Smith

55 Main Street • Chatham, ON • N7L 1G9 • 519-555-555 • j.smith@hotmail.com

Summary of Skills

- Versatile worker with experience in customer service, construction and call centres
- WHMIS certified 2009; SmartServe 2008; Lift Truck License 2006
- Proficient with computers, including Microsoft Word, Excel and Publisher
- Leadership ability; worked as supervisor for construction crews
- Recipient of Five Year Volunteer Appreciation Award
- Operate a variety of hand and power tools

Employment Experience

The Carpet Guy Chatham, ON
Flooring Installer 2008 – present

- Remove sub-floors and cut carpet, vinyl and laminate for flooring installation
- Attach baseboard and quarter round to finish room
- Clean work area and pack tools at job end

Superior Masonry Chatham, ON
Labourer/Bricklayer 2006 – 2008

- Retrieved and unloaded bricks, mortar and tools
- Mixed and applied mortar to bricks for construction of walls/chimney
- Positioned bricks according to drawings and blueprints

Bowlerama Chatham, ON
Bartender/Food Attendant 2004 – 2005

- Prepared drinks and food for customers
- Kept accurate daily, weekly and monthly inventory
- Made necessary repairs to equipment and building

RTO Canada Chatham, ON
Repo Man/Home Delivery 2003

- Prepared paperwork for client delivery and pick up
- Processed transactions for new and existing accounts
- Prepared trucks for delivery and retrieved products from other stores

Education

John McGregor Secondary School Chatham, ON
Ontario Secondary School Diploma

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Functional Resume Sample

TRAVIS CALDWELL

501 Ocean Way • Merlin, ON • N0P 1W0 • 519-555-5555

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Experienced heavy equipment operator with a background in construction and landscaping
- First Aid and CPR trained; Forklift Operator Certificate
- High school graduate
- Proven leadership skills; earned crew leader position

EQUIPMENT OPERATOR SKILLS

- Certified in the use of heavy equipment, including excavator, backhoe-loader, bulldozer, dump truck, skid steer and forklift
- Operated Hitachi 160, 220, 400 excavator
- Drove shunt truck; picked up, placed and parked trailers from train tracks
- Performed maintenance on equipment to keep in good working condition

CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

- Restoration experience; demolition, clean-up and repair of residential and commercial properties damaged by fire and water
- Operated heavy equipment to dig trenches, manholes, and excavate, move, load earth, rock and gravel during construction operations
- Loaded and unloaded materials from trucks

LANDSCAPING SKILLS

- Operated X mark mower and 580 tractor
- In-depth experience hedge trimming, leaf blowing and push mowing
- Operated large tractor loader to remove snow

WORK EXPERIENCE

Caliber Systems	Excavator Operator	Chatham, ON	2007 – 2010
G&L Construction	Excavator Operator	Blenheim, ON	2007
Parry Leon Inc.	Shunt Truck Driver	Merlin, ON	2006
Valley Landscaping	Landscaping/Snow Removal	Chatham, ON	2003 – 2005

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

5 th Wheel Training Institute	Heavy Equipment Diploma	Warwick, ON	2007
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Combination Resume Sample

CARRIE MORRIS

1000 King Street W. • Chatham, ON • N7M 1N2
519-555-5555 • c.a.morris2@live.ca

Summary of Skills

- Over 4 years experience in the food service industry
- Enthusiastic with an exceptional attendance record; willing to work shifts
- Knowledge of computers, including the internet and e-mail
- Excellent problem solving skills, with the ability to quickly adapt to new situations
- Willing and able to accept new challenges, flexible to take on other duties
- Progressed to higher levels of responsibility; independently opened and closed store and balanced books at day end

Customer Service Skills

- Able to multi task in a fast paced environment
- Ability to work effectively in both individual and team oriented environments
- Excellent interpersonal skills; friendly with ability to identify with customers
- Experience operating cash machines, greeting and taking orders from customers

Domestic Management Skills

- Perform routine housekeeping duties such as washing dishes, dusting, and laundry
- Prepare and serve nutritious meals for a family of four
- Maintain a safe environment for young children while providing age-appropriate activities to entertain

Planning/Organization Skills

- Manage schedules and logistics for a busy family
- Balance priorities to create and implement budget
- Plan, organize and supervise extra-curricular activities for children
- Ability to prioritize and complete tasks with speed and accuracy

Employment History

McDonald's Chatham, ON
Customer Service Manager 2007 - 2009

- Prepared schedules, coordinated shifts for team of 15 employees
- Professionally responded to customer concerns and complaints
- Balanced books and prepared bank deposit

Dairy Queen Chatham, ON
Customer Service 2005 - 2006

- Quickly and accurately processed cash, credit and debit transactions
- Practiced safe food handling practices; kept workplace clean and sanitary

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CARRIE MORRIS • 1000 King Street W. • Chatham, ON
519-555-5555 • c.a.morris2@live.ca

Volunteer Experience

Tecumseh Public School Chatham, ON
Home and School Association Member 2008 – present

- Promoted the welfare and education of youth
- Provided volunteer support during fundraising activities and school trips

Grand Avenue Church Chatham, ON
Sunday School Teacher 2006 – present

- Created lesson plans, gathered materials and taught weekly lessons to children

Education

Chatham-Kent Skills Centre Chatham, ON
Grade 12 Diploma

References available upon request

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