



The strength of a good resume rests on selection and presentation of content. Keep in mind the needs of the employer who will be reading it. Consider what they are looking for in a candidate and make it easy for the reader to pick out those skills by selecting appropriate categories, using underlining, boldfacing or capitalizing and presenting relevant experience and skill areas higher on the page. Never use the same resume for multiple applications. Each application should have a resume tailored specifically for it.

## Make Your Resume Unique

When designing your resume, carefully develop your own categories to highlight your unique, relevant experiences and skills. It is frequently useful to separate your related or professional experiences from your other work experience by creating separate categories for these content areas. In doing this, you call more attention to your relevant skills by putting them in categories closer to the top of the resume so they are read first.

In place of Related Experience you might use your field of experience in the category heading. For example: Engineering Experience, Sales Experience, Business Experience, etc.

## Resume Content Areas

The following categories can be used as guideline to assist you in organizing your resume. In constructing a rough draft, do not be concerned with length. Remember, categories may be omitted or added in later revisions. There is not one way to organize your resume. Professional creativity is encouraged.

**Contact Information:** Present yourself with the name you use in your personal and business life (nicknames should be avoided). Use your permanent home city and state. It is no longer required to include your home address on resumes and is quickly being discouraged. Also, always include phone numbers with area codes and an e-mail address. Your e-mail address is a direct representation of you and should represent you in a professional manner.

**Objective or Profile:** The objective is one of the most important parts of a resume and should not be overlooked. It informs potential employers that you are moving in a certain direction, relates your work preference(s), and serves as a focal point from which to review and analyze your resume. It should be brief, clearly stated, and consistent with the accomplishments and demonstrated skills as documented on your resume. If you are considering more than one professional goal, you should consider developing more than one resume, each presenting a different objective.

Example:

*Mechanical engineering career in the automotive industry.*

*Engineering position requiring strong analytical and organizational skills.*

The profile is an alternative to an objective statement. It gives you the opportunity to present your strengths at the very beginning of the resume.

Example:

*Qualified by engineering education, supervisory skills and cooperative education experience.*

*Highly motivated, strong work ethic; available as needed for training, travel, and overtime.*

*Financed 80% of college tuition and expenses; additional 20% earned through scholarships.*

In writing the major areas of your resume, it is important to emphasize your abilities and accomplishments more than past duties. You may also want to indicate how well you performed. This will help infuse personal qualities such as character and personality into your resume.

**Education:** This category is particularly important if you have not had a great deal of work experience. Remember, your most recent educational experience should be listed first. Include your degree (B.S., B.A., etc.), major, institution(s) attended, date of graduation, minors or concentrations, and any special workshops, seminars, related coursework, or senior projects. The grade point average (GPA) is required information and should be included here.

**Work Experience:** Applicants may have limited work experience, but have been involved in internship or volunteer, or campus leadership experiences. These experiences are important to the employer and help demonstrate your skills. Be sure to include all significant work experience in reverse chronological order.

- Include: (1) the title of your position, (2) name of organization, (3) location of work (town, state), and (4) dates (ex. Summer 2008; 2007-08 academic year; May 2008-August 2008).
- Describe your work responsibilities with an emphasis on achievements using action words to communicate your skills. List the most important and most closely related responsibilities first.
- Identify the most relevant work experiences and describe them fully but briefly. Be brief with the irrelevant experiences or omit them. It is sometimes useful to divide your work experience into two categories: Relevant Experience and Other Experience.
- Indicate you worked to earn a certain percent of college expenses. Example: Earned 75% of college expenses through the following part-time jobs.

**Activities, Honors and Leadership:** These are important categories to include. If the activities involved work or leadership responsibilities, note it in some detail. The employer is interested in the skills you have developed, whether through volunteer or paid experiences. If you were elected to offices or committees, mention it. Recognition and demonstration of leadership roles are valuable. If you were just a member of an organization but did not actively contribute in some way, it may be best to not list it.

**Additional Information:** This category is useful for displaying information that doesn't fit in any other category. Computer skills, languages, activities, and others can be separate categories. Remember, most people are proficient in Microsoft Office software in this day and age so do not list these in your skills. It is almost assumed that applicants have a basic understanding of this software now.

**References:** Be sure to ask individuals if they would be willing to be a reference for you prior to mentioning their names to prospective employers. Names of individuals are not listed on the resume. Prepare a typed list of three references to provide at the interview. This list should include name, title, employer, address, preferred telephone number, and e-mail. Some will also choose to indicate what the relationship of this person is to them. It is no longer necessary to state at the bottom of your resume "References available upon request."