



## RESUME WRITING

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## RESUME WRITING



- Remember: a Resume is a **self-promotional document** that presents you in the best possible light, for the purpose of getting invited to a job interview. It's *not* an official personnel document. It's not a job application. It's not a "career obituary"! And it's not a confessional.

## RESUME WRITING

- A resume **is like a commercial** it lets employers know about your best qualities
- In marketing terms, we'd like you to think of your resume **as a billboard**. It is not going to be possible to list every single item of interest about yourself in this document - you need to identify what will be of interest to your target audience and highlight that information.

## RESUME WRITING



- As you approach writing your resume, it is important to know that this is a marketing piece, an advertisement, for your unique set of skills, abilities and experience. It is a tool that you use to gain an interview. Employers today want to know **"What can you do for me?"** ...It is up to you to do the research and discover what employers in your field seek in a prospective employee.

## REMEMBER !

- The information you display in your resume must be **clear, concise and logical**. Make sure it contains no mistakes that can confuse the reader. People in charge of selection do not spend more than 10 seconds scanning your resume to see if they will read it or not, and about 30 seconds reading it to take a decision on inviting you or not to an interview. **DO NOT FORGET THIS!** For each position they may receive 300-400 applications.

## PURPOSES OF RESUME



- The ultimate goal of a resume is to gain you an **interview!**
- Enable you to assess your strengths, skills, abilities and experience - thereby **preparing you** for the interview process
- **Act as a reminder of you** to the employer/interviewer after you're done interviewing
- Be a basis for the interviewer **to justify your hiring**

## RULES FOR RESUME WRITING

- In resume writing there is **not any strict rule**. Almost every rule you have ever heard can be broken, if you have a very good reason. Some rules, however, are absolutes, including:
  - No typing errors
  - No errors in spelling
  - No lying or grandiose embellishments

## RULES FOR RESUME WRITING

- No negative information should be included
- Include only relevant information
- Never be more than two pages long

## RULES FOR RESUME WRITING



- Your resume must be long enough to detail what you have to offer a potential employer, BUT short enough to entice that employer to want to know more (that is, invite you for an interview.)
- As a general guideline, you should keep your resume to one page until you have 5-10 years of experience, then go to two.
- If you cannot fill two entire pages, you should condense it to one page.

## RESUME CONTENT

- It's not just about past jobs! **It's about YOU**, and how you performed and what you accomplished in those past jobs--especially those accomplishments that are most relevant to the work you want to do next. A good resume predicts how you might perform in that desired future job.

## RESUME CATEGORIES



- Identification
  - Your name, address, phone number, and email address
- Objective
  - Indicate the type of job you would like to apply for
- Education
  - Name of school, what you are studying, graduation date, and GPA

## RESUME CATEGORIES



- Honors
  - Awards and scholarships
- Experience
  - Paid or unpaid jobs show the employer that you have the skills needed to perform the job you are interested in. List your experience in reverse chronological order—start with your most recent experience and work backwards.

**Remember to use action verbs to describe your duties and accomplishments!**

## RESUME CATEGORIES



- Activities
  - Clubs, volunteer experience, sports . . . things that show community involvement and leadership skills.
- Skills
  - Things you can do that makes you special—using the computer, speaking a foreign language, etc. The skills you list will change depending on the type of job you want.

## THE CONTACT INFORMATION

- Easy answer...
- A section that provides information to help prospective employers contact you
- presents a first impression
- Is usually located at the top of the page
  - [What I may include?](#)
- Name, of course!
- Address and phone
- Campus
- Permanent
- Email
- Web address
- Fax number
- Any other means of contact

## THE OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

- A short section (usually 1-3 lines), often in the form of a sentence fragment, immediately below your contact information
- An “at a glance” picture of you and your career interests
- Other names: *Professional Objective, Resume Capsule, Career Goals, etc.*

- **Is this a good objective statement?**
  - [An internship allowing me to utilize my knowledge and expertise in different areas](#)
  - Well-written but raises too many questions
  - For example: What kind of internship? What knowledge? What kinds of expertise? Which areas?
- **A good objective statement answers questions**
  - What position(s) are you applying for?
  - What are your main qualifications?
  - What are your career goals?
  - What is your professional identity?

## OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

*For practice, fill in the parts in brackets*

- To utilize my [qualifications, strengths, or skills] as a [position title]
- A position as a [position title] for [company name] allowing me to develop my [qualifications, strengths, or skills]
- An opportunity to [professional goal] in a [type of organization, work environment, or field]
- [position title] with emphasis in [areas of expertise]

## THE EDUCATION

**Purposes: to inform and persuade**

- Give information about your schooling and training
- Persuade employers that your educational background is relevant to the job, providing evidence of your qualifications
- Help your resume stand out from others in the stack

## THE EDUCATION

**This section includes.....**

- Schools you have attended, including universities, community colleges, technical schools, etc.
- Location of school(s)
- Date of graduation, actual or anticipated
- Degree(s) earned or pursued
- Grade Point Average (GPA)

## THE EDUCATION

**What else may be included?**

- Extra information about your degree (major, minor or selective GPAs, funding sources, honors, etc.)—usually listed or included in parentheses
- Specializations and special projects—usually listed or described briefly
- Other relevant skills and training (relevant coursework, computer skills, language proficiency, certifications, licenses, etc.)—may be subsections or separate sections

## SELECTING CONTENT FOR READERS

- Consider how much space you have on your resume
- Read job ads closely
- Circle all educational experiences that may prove relevant to the job
- Select your most relevant educational experiences or those for which you have space

## THE EXPERIENCE

- A section that emphasizes your past and present employment and/or your participation in relevant activities
- Other common names: *Professional Experience, Work History, Field Work, Volunteer Work, etc.*
- Special names: *Technical Experience, Supervisory Experience, Aviation Experience, etc.*

## THE EXPERIENCE

- Provide information to help persuade prospective employers that your experiences make you qualified for the job
- Help your resume stand out from others in the stack
- Construct your professional identity
  - *This section includes....*
- Company or organization and location (city, state)
- Position title
- Dates of employment or involvement
- Descriptions of responsibilities, duties, achievements, etc.

## THE EXPERIENCE

- List your past and present experiences.
- Include:
  - jobs
  - volunteer positions
  - appointments
  - assistantships
  - internships
  - etc.
- *Use varied action words to describe experiences*
- **Answer the journalistic questions:**
  - **Who?** ...*With whom did you work?*
  - **What?** ...*What duties did you perform?*
  - **Where?** ...*Where did your job fit into the organization?*
  - **Why?** ...*What goals were you trying to accomplish?*
  - **When?** ...*What timelines were you working under?*
  - **How?** ...*What procedures did you follow?*

## SOME EXAMPLES OF ACTION VERBS

- Accomplished
- Analyzed
- Achieved
- Coordinated
- Contributed
- Delegated
- Designed
- Devised
- Enhanced
- Established
- Formulated
- Generated
- Implemented
- Supervised
- Trained
- Researched

## THE HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

- A section that emphasizes your participation in relevant activities and any honors you have received
  - Other names: *Awards, Memberships, Volunteer Work, Hobbies* Extracurricular activities
    - This section includes....*
  - Awards, grants, prizes, and special honors
  - Memberships in professional clubs and organization
  - Volunteer activities
  - Hobbies
- Note*
- Usually last section on the page
  - Sometimes omitted
  - May follow this section with "References Available upon Request"

## CATEGORIES NOT USED ON RESUME

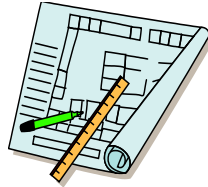
- Height, weight, age, date of birth, place of birth, marital status, sex, race, health, social security number (except on an International Resume)
- Reasons for leaving previous job(s)
- Picture of yourself
- Salary Information
- References (more on this issue later)
- The title "Resume"
- Religion, church affiliations, political affiliations
- Any statement that begins with "I" or "My"

## A FEW THINGS TO REMEMBER...

- There is really **no ONE right way** to write a resume—everyone is unique. There is room to “be yourself.”
- **Proofread** your resume very carefully for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You do not want ANY mistakes in your resume. Have someone review your resume for mistakes and use spell check!
- Get **feedback** from other people. Make sure that your resume looks good, is easy to understand, and says what you want it to say!

### THREE TYPES OF RESUMES

- o Chronological
- o Functional
- o Hybrid



### THE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

- o **Chronological:** The chronological resume format lists work experience first, beginning with your last (or current) job. After tracing your work history, the chronological format continues with your education and concludes with extra skills and interests that may contribute to your ability to perform the job.
- o When would you use this type?
  - You have a significant amount of continuous experience, OR
  - Your experiences have been progressively more responsible.
- o What is the general outline of this type?
  - List experience in reverse chronological order
  - Most important information at the top

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Objective</b>             | Write a short statement about the purpose of your resume, indicating if it is for a specific company and/or for a specific career (field of work specific).   |
| <b>Employment</b>            | <p><b>Company Name</b> - City, State, Dates of employment (e.g. January 2005 to present)</p> <p><b>Job Title</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write two or three bulleted statements about the work you performed beginning with activities that are relevant to your current job search.</li> <li>• Express how your performance made you an asset to the company, it's bottom line, your co-workers, customers, etc.</li> <li>• Be positive but be accurate; neither exaggerate or understate what you brought to the job.</li> </ul> <p><b>Company Name</b> - City, State, Dates of employment (e.g. May 2003 to Jan 2005)</p> <p><b>Job Title</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave some white space between companies to make it easy for an interviewer to distinguish between your jobs.</li> <li>• Prioritize your job activities in accordance with how they relate to your resume objective.</li> </ul> <p><b>Company Name</b> - City, State, Dates of employment</p> <p><b>Job Title</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep listing your jobs, going back ten to fifteen years, or to the first one, if you have limited job experience.</li> <li>• Start statements with active verbs like "accomplished, organized, created" whenever possible.</li> <li>• Refrain from using the word "I". Your interviewer knows the resume is about you!</li> </ul> |
| <b>Additional Experience</b> | Use this section when your job experience spans more than ten to fifteen years.<br>Or use this section to detail relevant volunteer experience.<br>Prioritize additional experience as it relates to your current job search.   |
| <b>Education</b>             | <p><b>Your course of study or degree</b></p> <p><b>Name of School</b> - attendance dates (e.g. 1995 to 1999)</p> <p>List courses that are relevant to your resume objective</p> <p>List extra-curricular activities, honors, awards, etc that are relevant to your resume objective.</p>  |

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Skills</b>     | Use this section to detail relevant personal and professional skills that don't appear elsewhere on your resume. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Skills: Equipment Skills:</li> <li>• Office skills:</li> </ul>                                     |
| <b>Activities</b> | Use this section to detail relevant personal and professional activities that don't appear elsewhere on your resume. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Service Professional Affiliations</li> <li>• Memberships</li> <li>• Volunteer Work</li> </ul> |



123 University Circle, #218  
Fairfax, VA 22001  
703-555-1234  
gmaison@gmu.edu

123 Home Lane  
New York, NY 12345  
917-555-1234

#### OBJECTIVE

To apply my financial management and customer services skills in a full time position in a large financial services organization.

#### EDUCATION

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA  
Bachelor of Science, Finance, GPA 3.8  
Expected May 2004

Related Courses Include:  
Principles of Investment  
Portfolio Management  
Money and Capital Markets  
International Financial Management  
Financial Institutions  
Statistical Analysis

#### EXPERIENCE

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, September 2002 to present  
Office Assistant

- Managed day-to-day operations of busy university services office. Efficiently handled all incoming phone calls and provided visitors with requested information.
- Planned, organized, and facilitated student orientation meetings; hired, trained, and supervised new student staff.
- Learned new software applications during three successive computer system upgrades. Assisted other staff members in troubleshooting new systems.

DMG Securities, Inc., Washington, D.C., June-September, 2002  
Finance Intern

- Assisted in the management of up to 20 portfolios for individual investors; participated in weekly meetings with upper-level management.
- Researched relevant initial public offerings in order to predict possible price increase or decrease. Communicated results in PowerPoint presentations.
- Prepared reports and presentation materials for upper level management.

George Mason University Investment Club, Fairfax, VA, 2002-2003 Academic Year  
President

- Researched various funds and made recommendations to fellow members. Researching investment earned the George Mason Investment Club an extra \$500 per year.
- Developed, organized, and managed monthly speaker series. Invited local business leaders to speak to Investment Club members.

#### TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Access and Excel. Working knowledge of PowerPoint.

## THE FUNCTIONAL RESUME

- When would you use this type?
  - When you don't have a lot of experience in the specific area of work for which you are applying
- What is the general outline of this type?
  - Group your skills and qualities into 3 or 4 functional areas
  - Strengthen your skills and qualities by listing where you acquired them

## Georgia Mason

123 University Circle, #218  
Fairfax, VA 22001  
703-555-1234  
gmaison@gmu.edu

#### SKILLS SUMMARY

- Successful internship as financial analyst; knowledge of portfolio management.
- Experience using Internet to conduct market research.
- Adapt at mastering new software applications and assisting colleagues.
- Dedicated, hardworking individual skilled at managing multiple tasks.

#### EDUCATION

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA  
Bachelor of Science, Finance, GPA 3.8  
Expected May, 2004

#### EXPERIENCE

Finance  
Assisted in the management of up to 20 portfolios for individual investors; participated in weekly meetings with upper-level management.

- Researched relevant initial public offerings in order to predict possible price increase or decrease. Communicated results in PowerPoint presentation.

Researched various funds and made recommendations to fellow members. Researching investment earned the George Mason Investment Club an extra \$500 per year.

Management  
Developed, organized, and managed monthly speaker series. Invited local business leaders to speak to Investment Club members.

Managed day-to-day operations of busy university services office. Efficiently handled all incoming phone calls and provided visitors with requested information.

Planned, organized, and facilitated student orientation meetings; hired, trained, and supervised new student staff.

Technology Skills  
Proficient in Microsoft Word, Access and Excel. Working knowledge of PowerPoint.

Prepared reports and presentation materials for upper level management.

Learned new software applications during three successive computer system upgrades. Assisted other staff members in troubleshooting new systems.

#### WORK HISTORY

Office Assistant, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, September, 2002 to present.  
Financial Intern, DMG Securities, Inc., Washington, D.C., June-September, 2002.  
President, George Mason University Investment Club, Fairfax, VA, 2002-2003 Academic Year

## THE HYBRID RESUME

- **Skills Format:** The skills resume begins with a list of skills that relate to the job for which you are applying. The skills resume format is exceptionally useful when 1) you are applying for a job in a different field than your work experience, 2) you have large gaps in your work experience or 3) you have little or no paid work experience.
- When would you use this type?
  - Your most related experience is not your most recent, OR
  - You have related experience and want to add special emphasis to your skills and qualities
- What is the general outline of this type?
  - Resume is organized by skill categories
  - Under each category, experiences are in chronological order

**Georgia Mason**  
703-555-1234 • 123 University Circle, 4210, Fairfax, VA 22001 • gmason@gmu.edu

**SKILLS SUMMARY**

- Successful internship as financial analyst; knowledge of portfolio management.
- Experience using Internet to conduct market research.
- Adept at mastering new software applications and assisting colleagues.
- Dedicated, hardworking individual skilled at managing multiple tasks.

**EDUCATION**  
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA  
Bachelor of Science, Finance, GPA 3.5 Expected May, 2004

Relevant Courses Include  
Principles of Investment Money and Capital Markets Financial Institutions  
Portfolio Management International Financial Management Statistical Analysis

**FINANCE EXPERIENCE**  
DMG Securities, Inc., Washington, D.C. June-September, 2002  
Finance Intern

- Assisted in the management of up to 20 portfolios for individual investors; participated in weekly meetings with upper-level management.
- Researched relevant initial public offerings in order to predict possible price increase or decrease. Communicated results in PowerPoint presentation.
- Prepared reports and presentation materials for upper level management.

George Mason University Investment Club, Fairfax, VA, 2002-2003 Academic Year  
President

- Researched various funds and made recommendations to fellow members. Resulting investment earned the George Mason Investment Club an extra \$500 per year.
- Developed, organized, and managed monthly speaker series. Invited local business leaders to speak to Investment Club members.

**TRAINING & COORDINATION EXPERIENCE**  
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA. September 2002 to present  
Office Assistant

- Managed day-to-day operations of a busy university services office. Efficiently handled all incoming phone calls and provided visitors with regional information.
- Planned, organized, and facilitated student orientation meetings; hired, trained, and supervised new student staff.
- Learned new software applications during three successive computer system upgrades. Assisted other staff members in troubleshooting new systems.

**TECHNOLOGY SKILLS**  
Proficient in Microsoft Word, Access and Excel. Working knowledge of PowerPoint.

## RESUME CATEGORIES – IDENTIFICATION

- Name – **Biggest** thing on the resume
- Full Address – May need current & permanent
- Phone number with area code
- Email – (Make it professional!)
- Website – If you have a personal one to share

## RESUME CATEGORIES - OBJECTIVE

- What does an objective do?
  - Clarifies the purpose of your resume
  - Presents a clear statement of your goals
- When should I use an objective?
  - Always have one in mind! – What is your purpose?
  - Include it on the resume when it is very targeted
    - specific type of position
    - specific skills you offer

## RESUME CATEGORIES – OBJECTIVE (2)

- Some objective writing tips...
  - Keep it clear & simple
  - Be specific
  - Avoid using trite words like "challenging" and "stimulating"
  - Focus on what you will offer, rather than what you are looking for
  - *Remember: Everything on the resume should support this purpose/objective*

## RESUME CATEGORIES – EDUCATION

- Be sure to include:
  - Names of Schools
  - Degrees Earned
  - Major / Minor
  - Date Attended or Graduation Date
- Could also include
  - GPA (general rule, include if 3.0 or above)
  - Honors / Awards
  - Selected Courses

## RESUME CATEGORIES – EXPERIENCE

- Remember – Experience can be:
  - Paid part-time/full-time positions
  - Internships
  - Volunteer work
  - Club/campus group involvement
  - Significant course projects

## RESUME CATEGORIES – EXPERIENCE (2)

- Required Information
  - Name of Employer / Organization
  - Location – City & State
  - Position Title
  - Dates
  - Duties, Responsibilities & Accomplishments

## WRITING THE DETAILS...

### STORMING & FORMING EXERCISE

1. Put the resume aside; begin with a blank sheet of paper
2. Choose a position or activity that is easy to talk about
3. Brainstorm a list of everything that you did in that position / activity

## WRITING THE DETAILS...

### STORMING & FORMING EXERCISE (2)

4. For each item on your brainstorm list, search for specifics
  - How much? How often?
  - How many people? How much \$?
  - What were the results?
5. Condense your brainstorm to 3-5 concrete tasks & accomplishments, using positive action verbs to introduce each

## RESUME CATEGORIES – EXPERIENCE (3)

- Guidelines for duties, responsibilities & accomplishments
  - Include most relevant skills & qualities
  - Most relevant information comes first
  - Use strong action verbs
  - Provide evidence of skills & qualities by
    - Quantifying information
    - Acknowledging accomplishments & evaluations

## RESUME CATEGORIES - OTHER

- Qualifications Highlights
- Summary
- Relevant Courses
- Course Projects
- Honors & Awards
- Work Experience
- Management Experience
- Research Experience
- Leadership Experience
- Other Experience
- Computer Skills
- Professional Associations / Memberships
- Languages
- Community Service

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

- There is no perfect resume
- There is no "cookbook" – only traditions & guidelines
- Keep your language concise, crisp & clear
- Provide concrete evidence (#, %, \$)
- When in doubt, ask "does it support my purpose?"

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...  
THINGS TO AVOID

- Avoid stating salary requirements
- Avoid providing reasons for leaving past employers
- Avoid limiting geographical considerations (unless necessary)
- Avoid expounding on philosophy or values
- Avoid offering any negative information

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...  
FORMATTING

- Attract & hold your reader's attention
  - Combinations of capital lettering, underlining, bold face type, and indentations can jazz up your paper (yet, watch for employers who scan resumes)
  - Well placed white space can help the reader's eye move across the paper
  - Whatever format you choose, be sure to **be consistent**



QUESTIONS !!!



### ASK YOURSELF

- What did I like about my previous position? What aspects or functions I would rather skip this time?
- For what reasons am I changing or looking for a new job? Always be honest in the answer. It is not necessary to lie, but neither is it necessary to give all the details or to speak ill of the company and ex-colleagues/bosses.
- Are there periods of inactivity in my professional history? How I can explain them positively? What have I learned and what abilities have I used, for example travelling, taking care of my children, looking for work for a long time...

### PREP STEP 1:

#### KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

- Think functional skills & personal qualities
- Build your list of...
 

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| work experience | activities       |
| academics       | clubs            |
| volunteer work  | languages        |
| classes         | technical skills |
| course projects | and so on...     |

### WITH A LITTLE PREP...

- Your resume can then:
  - Focus on skills & qualities you want to use most
  - Present your strengths based on the employers needs

### PREP STEP 2:

#### KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Learn as much as you can about the position, field & employer
  - Career Library
  - Professional Associations
  - Employer Websites
  - Career Network (user id: student, password: jack\$\$pot)
  - Patriot Job Web Contacts

### ASK YOURSELF

- Before writing up and sending your resume you must ask yourself a few questions. Write the answers and later there will be time to shape the resume
- What do I think the company and/or the selector are looking for?
- What abilities are required in somebody to develop and carry out the position?
- What achievements and functions in previous positions have I carried out that can help me to do well in my new job?

### ASK YOURSELF

- Do I have the correct academic preparation? Have I updated my knowledge?
- Do I speak languages?
- Do I have other life experiences that have helped me to develop skills and capacities to solve problems? (for example travelling abroad alone, volunteering in some NGO, taking on responsibilities at university...)
- What type of position is ideal for me? Do I like to work alone or in a team? Am I creative or do I prefer to be directed in a project?