

# Tips for Writing a Great Resume

from <http://www.quintcareers.com/resume.html>

## Here are the key components of a standard chronological resume:

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### Identification

It is essential that a potential employer can reach you.

This section should include your name, address, phone number(s), and e-mail address. If a college student, this section might also include a school address and a permanent home address.

### Job Objective

A job objective is optional and should only be included for new college grads and those changing careers. Otherwise, use your cover letter to show your career interests and job objective.

If you do use an objective, make sure your objective explains the kind of work you want to do, and keep it between two to four typed lines. [Read more.](#)

### Key Accomplishments

Some resume experts are suggesting adding a section that highlights your key accomplishments and achievements. Think of this section as an executive summary of your resume; identify key accomplishments that will grab the attention of an employer.

This section should summarize (using nouns as keywords and descriptors) your major accomplishments and qualifications

This section can also be labeled "Professional Profile," "Summary of Accomplishments," "Key Skills," "Summary of Qualifications," or "Qualifications."

### Education

For new college grads, this entry should be your next. For others with full-time work experience, this section should follow your experience section.

This section should include school(s) attended (including years of attendance), majors/minors, degrees, and honors and awards received.

For new grads only: There appears to be a growing trend of employers wanting your GPA in this section. If you decide to do so, make sure to use the GPA that puts you in the best light -- either overall GPA, school or college GPA, or major GPA.

## Professional Experience

This section can also be labeled "Experience," "Work History," or "Employment." We like using experience -- especially for new college grads, because experience is broader than work history, allowing you to include major school projects that showcase your skills and abilities.

This section should include company name, your job title, dates of employment, and major accomplishments. List experiences in reverse chronological order, starting with your most current experience.

List your [accomplishments](#) in bullet format (rather than paragraph format). Avoid discussing job duties or responsibilities.

If you don't have a lot of career-related job experience, consider using [transferable skills](#) to better highlight your work experience.

Finally, make sure to make use of [action verbs](#) when describing your accomplishments.

## Affiliations/Interests

This section is optional; include only if you have room on your resume for it. Items from this section are often used as an ice-breaker by interviewers looking to start an interview on an informal basis.

This section should only include professional memberships and non-controversial activities/interests.

## References

Many experts say this section is passe, but if you have room, include it. If nothing else, this section signals the end of your resume.

This section should only include a statement saying references are available upon request.

Do **not** include the names of your references on your resume.

## Avoid These 10 Resume Mistakes

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*by Katharine Hansen*

As a resume writer, I see hundreds of resumes, and the vast majority of them are much weaker than they could be. I see the same mistakes over and over. This article describes the 10 I see most often. All are easy to fix.

Don't make these resume mistakes:

### **1. Resume lacks focus.**

One way to sharpen your focus is through an objective statement. Your objective statement can be very simple and straightforward; it can be simply the title of the position you're applying for, which can be

adjusted for every job you apply for. Or you can embellish your Objective statement a bit with language telling how you'll benefit the employer. Something like:

Objective: To contribute strong \_\_\_\_\_ skills and experience to your organization in a \_\_\_\_\_ capacity.

To sharpen your focus, you can also add a section called something like "Summary of Qualifications," "Profile," or the like. Such a section can contribute to powerful resume opener that draws the reader in; it can be part of the top third of your resume that showcases your best selling points, catches the prospective employer's attention, and immediately demonstrates your value as a candidate. "Identify key accomplishments that will grab the attention of an employer."

## **2. Resume is duties-driven instead of accomplishments-driven.**

Resumes should consist primarily of high-impact accomplishments statements that sell the job-seeker's qualifications as the best candidate.

*Never* use expressions such as "Duties included," "Responsibilities included," or "Responsible for." That's job-description language, not accomplishments-oriented resume language that sells. After all, if you were an employer and wanted to run a successful organization, would you be looking for candidates who can perform only their basic job functions, or would you want employees with a proven track record of accomplishments? In these days in which most resumes are placed into keyword-searchable databases, you won't find employers searching resumes for words like "responsibilities," "duties," or "responsible for."

Instead, focus on accomplishments that set you apart from other job candidates. In each job, what special things did you do to set yourself apart? How did you do the job better than anyone else? What did you do to make it your own? What special things did you do to impress your boss so that you might be promoted? What were the problems or challenges that you or the organization faced? What did you do to overcome the problems? What were the results of your efforts? How did the company benefit from your performance? How did you leave your employers better off than before you worked for them? How have you helped your employers to:

- make money
- save money
- save time
- make work easier
- solve a specific problem
- be more competitive
- build relationships
- expand the business
- attract new customers
- retain existing customers

Accomplishments are the points that increase reader's interest, stimulate a request for a job interview, and really help sell you to an employer -- much more so than everyday job duties. In the above-cited study by Career Masters Institute, content elements that propel employers to immediately discard resumes include a focus on duties instead of accomplishments, while documented achievements were highly ranked among content elements that employers look for.

## **3. Resume items are listed in an order that doesn't consider the reader's interest.**

"The Resume Ingredients Rule," set forth by Donald Asher, author of numerous resume books (see our [Q&A with him](#)), says that information on a resume should be listed in order of importance to the reader. Therefore, in listing your jobs, what's generally most important is your title/position. So list in this preferred order: Title/position, name of employer, city/state of employer, dates of employment. I can't tell you how

many resumes I've seen that list dates first. Dates can be important to some employers, but they're generally not as important as what your position was and whom you worked for.

Education follows the same principle; thus, the preferred order for listing your education is: Name of degree (spelled out: Bachelor of \_\_\_\_\_) in name of major, name of university, city/state of university, graduation year, followed by peripheral information, such as minor and GPA. If you haven't graduated yet, list your information the same way. Since the graduation date you've listed is in the future, the employer will know you don't have the degree yet. .

**4. Resume exposes the job-seeker to age discrimination by going too far back into the job-seeker's job history.**

In your case, don't list your job of washing the dishes when you were 8 years old.

**5. Resume buries important skills, especially computer skills, at the bottom.**

There are few jobs today for which computer skills are not important. Yet many job-seekers, even those in technology fields, tend to tack a "Computer Skills" section to the end of their resumes. Similarly if language and international-business skills are important in the type of job you seek, list them in your Summary or Profile section, not at the end of your resume.

**6. Resume is not bulleted.**

Use a bulleted style to make your resume more reader-friendly. Use bullets consistently. Given that the reader can't easily discern a rationale for why some material is bulleted and other material isn't, it's best to bullet consistently throughout the resume.

**7. Resume uses a cookie-cutter design based on an overused resume template.**

**8. Resume lacks keywords.**

**9. References are listed directly on your resume.**

*Never* listed specific references directly on your resume. List them on a separate sheet, and even then, submit them *only* when specifically requested by an employer.

Even the phrase, "References: Available upon request," is highly optional because it is a given that you will provide references upon request. If you couldn't, you would have no business looking for a job. The line can serve the purpose of signaling: "This is the end of my resume," but if you are trying to conserve space, leave it off.

**10. Resume's appearance becomes skewed when sent as an e-mail attachment and/or resume is not available in other electronic formats.**

Have you ever noticed that when you send a resume (or any document) as an attachment from your computer to someone else's computer, it sometimes doesn't look the same on the other person's computer as it did on yours? Maybe it has more pages on the other computer, or maybe Page 2 starts at the bottom of Page 1, or maybe the fonts are different.

Action Verbs to Use

**A**

- Accelerated
- Accomplished
- Achieved
- Acted
- Activated
- Adapted
- Addressed
- Adjusted
- Administered
- Advanced
- Advertised
- Advised
- Advocated
- Aided
- Allocated
- Analyzed
- Answered
- Applied
- Appraised
- Approved
- Arbitrated
- Arranged
- Ascertained
- Assembled
- Assessed
- Assigned
- Assisted
- Attained
- Augmented
- Authorized
- Awarded

**B**

- Balanced
- Began
- Boosted
- Briefed
- Budgeted
- Built

**C**

- Calculated
- Captured
- Cataloged

- Centralized
- Chaired
- Charted
- Checked
- Clarified
- Classified
- Coached
- Collaborated
- Collected
- Combined
- Communicated
- Compared
- Compiled
- Completed
- Composed
- Computed
- Conceived
- Conceptualized
- Condensed
- Conducted
- Conferred
- Conserved
- Consolidated
- Constructed
- Consulted
- Contacted
- Continued
- Contributed
- Controlled
- Converted
- Conveyed
- Convinced
- Coordinated
- Corresponded
- Counseled
- Created
- Critiqued
- Cultivated
- Customized

**D**

- Debugged
- Decided
- Defined
- Delegated
- Delivered
- Demonstrated
- Designated

**E**

- Designed
- Detected
- Determined
- Developed
- Devised
- Diagnosed
- Directed
- Discovered
- Dispensed
- Displayed
- Dissected
- Distributed
- Diverted
- Documented
- Drafted

- Earned
- Edited
- Educated
- Effected
- Eliminated
- Emphasized
- Employed
- Encouraged
- Enforced
- Engineered
- Enhanced
- Enlarged
- Enlisted
- Ensured
- Entertained
- Established
- Estimated
- Evaluated
- Examined
- Executed
- Expanded
- Expedited
- Experimented
- Explained
- Explored
- Expressed
- Extended
- Extracted

**F**

- Fabricated
- Facilitated
- Fashioned
- Finalized
- Fixed
- Focused
- Forecasted
- Formed
- Formulated
- Fostered
- Found
- Fulfilled
- Furnished

**G**

- Gained
- Gathered
- Generated
- Governed
- Grossed
- Guided

**H**

- Handled
- Headed
- Heightened
- Helped
- Hired
- Honed
- Hosted
- Hypothesized

**I**

- Identified
- Illustrated
- Imagined
- Implemented
- Improved
- Improvised
- Incorporated
- Increased
- Indexed
- Influenced
- Informed
- Initiated
- Innovated

- Inspected
- Inspired
- Installed
- Instituted
- Integrated
- Interacted
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Introduced
- Invented
- Inventoried
- Investigated
- Involved
- Issued

**J**

- Joined
- Judged

**K**

- Kept

**L**

- Launched
- Learned
- Lectured
- Led
- Lifted
- Listened
- Located
- Logged

**M**

- Maintained
- Managed
- Manipulated
- Marketed
- Maximized
- Measured
- Mediated
- Merged
- Mobilized
- Modified
- Monitored
- Motivated

**N**

- Navigated
- Negotiated
- Netted

**O**

- Observed
- Obtained
- Opened
- Operated
- Ordered
- Orchestrated
- Organized
- Originated
- Outlined
- Overcame
- Overhauled
- Oversaw

**P**

- Participated
- Performed
- Persuaded
- Photographed
- Pinpointed
- Piloted
- Pioneered
- Placed
- Planned
- Played
- Predicted
- Prepared
- Prescribed
- Presented
- Presided
- Prevented
- Printed
- Prioritized
- Processed
- Produced
- Programmed
- Projected
- Promoted
- Proofread
- Proposed
- Protected
- Proved

- Provided
- Publicized
- Purchased

**Q**

- Qualified
- Questioned

**R**

- Raised
- Ran
- Rated
- Reached
- Realized
- Reasoned
- Received
- Recommended
- Reconciled
- Recorded
- Recruited
- Reduced
- Referred
- Regulated
- Rehabilitated
- Related
- Remodeled
- Rendered
- Reorganized
- Repaired
- Replaced
- Reported
- Represented
- Researched
- Reshaped
- Resolved
- Responded
- Restored
- Retrieved
- Reviewed
- Revised
- Revitalized
- Routed

**S**

- Saved
- Scheduled
- Screened

- Searched
- Secured
- Selected
- Separated
- Served
- Shaped
- Shared
- Simplified
- Simulated
- Sketched
- Sold
- Solved
- Sorted
- Spearheaded
- Specialized
- Specified
- Spoke
- Sponsored
- Staffed
- Standardized
- Started
- Streamlined
- Strengthened
- Structured
- Studied
- Suggested
- Summarized
- Supervised
- Supplied
- Supported
- Surpassed
- Surveyed
- Sustained
- Synthesized
- Systematized

**T**

- Targeted
- Taught
- Terminated
- Tested
- Tightened
- Totaled
- Tracked
- Traded
- Trained
- Transcribed
- Transformed

- Transmitted
- Translated
- Traveled
- Tutored

**U**

- Uncovered
- Undertook
- Unified
- United
- Updated
- Upgraded
- Used
- Utilized

**V**

- Validated
- Verbalized
- Verified
- Vitalized
- Volunteered

**W**

- Weighed
- Widened
- Won
- Worked
- Wrote

**X**

*Any ideas??*

**Y**

*Any ideas??*

**Z**

*Any ideas??*