

# Resume Tips

## **The Value of Your Resume**

A resume' is your opportunity to tell potential employers about your skills, your abilities, your experiences, and your education, as well as a chance to show that you belong in that job. Your resume' is in reality a marketing tool. As such, you should include information that will enhance your best qualities and eliminate potentially controversial information. Think of your resume' and your cover letter as paid advertising. On each resume' and cover letter you have 92 in.<sup>2</sup> per available page. On the average, you will have 184 in.<sup>2</sup> to sell yourself and about 30 seconds to catch and keep the reader's attention. So, if you are aiming for a salary of \$50,000, each square inch of space on your marketing materials is worth \$271.00. If you are shooting for a salary of \$80,000, each square inch of space on these materials is worth \$435.00. This is premium-advertising space – use it well.

## **Preparing a Resume**

A resume' will not get you a job. However, a poorly prepared one could very well cost you a job. A well-prepared resume' is the vehicle for “getting your foot in the door” and is one of your most valuable marketing tools.

There are any number of acceptable resume' formats to choose from. However, most will follow a format similar to this:

- 1. Contact Information** – name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail (if you have one.)
- 2. Career Objective** – this is an optional area and one where opinions differ as to the effectiveness of its use. There is a school of thought that believes the use of the Objective statement should be avoided because you run the risk of eliminating yourself from consideration for a job you might have a strong interest in. The other school of thought believes that an appropriately worded Objective statement is absolutely critical in effectively marketing yourself. Whichever school you adhere to is strictly a personal choice, however, should you choose to include the Career Objective area in your resume', strive to tailor your objective to the job you seek.
- 3. Summary of Qualifications** - this section will provide a concise overview of your qualifications as they relate to your Career Objective. You should emphasize those skills you have developed in terms of interpersonal, organizational, supervisory, etc.
- 4. Education** – List school, city and state. On a separate line, list degree, major, graduation date (If you have not graduated, state expected graduation date.). List any professional certifications or licenses you have attained.
- 5. Work Experience** – Include your work experience in reverse chronological order – that is, begin with your most current job and work backward. For each work experience include:

- Name of organization and location of work (city, state).
  - Dates of employment – use month and year format.
  - Title of position held
  - Describe your work responsibilities with emphasis on specific skills and achievements. Describe what you contributed to or accomplished on the job. Use action verbs to describe job duties. Minimize jargon and abbreviation and be concise.
  - Use present tense of the verb for current work and the past tense for work that has ceased.
- 6. Special Skills** – Include information such as computer skills, additional training, language skills, etc. If you are seeking a position in Information Technology, Engineering or other technical field, you might consider using “**Technical Skills**” for this area and include the hardware platforms, operating systems, computer programming languages, databases, technical tools, technical equipment, etc. that you are skilled in.

### **Resume Tips to Make Your Resume More Effective**

- Use white or off-white 8 ½ x 11-inch paper.
- Use a font size of 10 – 14 points.
- Use non-decorative typefaces. Choose one typeface and stick to it.
- Use action verbs to describe your experience: (e.g., “developed”, “increased”, “solved”, etc.).
- Briefly discuss your responsibilities and include statistics that will help the employer with the order of magnitude.
- Only include significant accomplishments if, in fact, they are important. Otherwise you risk “cheapening” your qualifications.
- Do not exaggerate the importance of your achievements.
- Omit personal information such as age, marital status, height, weight, and gender.
- Minimize jargon and abbreviations and be concise.
- Be brief as you go further back in your career and/or if you have previous non-industry related experience. Summarize in 1 or 2 sentences.
- **DO NOT** leave time voids or gaps in your resume. They will be discovered and will raise questions. Your risk losing your credibility.
- Print on one side of the paper and keep the resume’ as short as possible.
- Always mail a cover letter with your resume’