

How to Craft a Compelling Resume



A solid, well-organized, professional resume is within anyone's reach. All it takes is clear writing in proper English and an understanding of how a resume should be organized.

But remember, resumes are business documents—they follow patterns that many English teachers would consider incorrect. Here are some helpful hints.

Unless you have more than 10 years of experience, your résumé should fit on one page. Use a simple, clean, and professional layout.

Know what you want

Compose a clear and focused job objective. State what you want to do, for whom, where, and at what level of responsibility.

Stand out from the crowd

Instead of just listing names, dates, and job skills, describe the benefits and results of your performance. For each entry, list your major accomplishments, emphasizing recent achievements. What problems or challenges have you faced? What actions did you take to overcome them? How did your actions benefit the company? Most companies value workers who boost profits, reduce costs, save time, and implement other efficiencies.

Sell yourself

You only have one shot to make a great impression. Highlight your strengths and outstanding skills or abilities. List your education, training, and any relevant awards.

Remember that keywords matter

Recruiters use keywords to search résumés in their prospective candidate databases for open jobs. Select some of the most important keywords in your field and pepper them throughout your résumé and cover letter.

Keep it positive

Refrain from listing the reasons for termination or leaving a job. Prospective employers may find negativity in even the best reasons. You're far better off explaining employment lapses in person.

No typos!

Ensure the résumé is error-free. Proofread, and have others proofread, too. Make your résumé understandable by avoiding jargon and using plain English.

Before applying for a job, make sure that your skills match the company's job description. If a match exists, prepare an effective cover letter and send it to the prospective employer along with your résumé.