

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the resume is to describe your life-work experience to best advantage for the prospective employer. It should be a precise description about the accomplishments, skills, and experience so that employers will want to know more in an interview. You may need more than one version for different jobs.



## The Resume Should Indicate:

1. Contact Information – your name, address, phone number, fax and email.
2. Background information in a summary or brief overview.
3. Education, training, employers, and dates of employment.
4. Specific accomplishments related to performance on the job and leadership activities in professional, civic or community affairs.
5. List employment experience and education, in reverse order (highest degree or most recent job).

## Omit:

1. Names and addresses of references. These can be supplied at the interview. Listing “References available on request” is not required; it is assumed.
2. Salary information. If requested, include in cover letter.
3. Personal data, such as age, marital status, height, weight, etc. Prospective employers must consider you solely on the basis of your qualifications. It is illegal to request pictures or information related to race, religion or national origin.
4. Personal pronouns. They weaken statements.
5. Objectives narrow your options. Your objective is to get an offer from the company.

## Include:

1. A general stated professional summary. It is an overview of what you have done and how you fit the needs of a company. Includes business environment experience, personal characteristics and industry key words.
2. Unpaid experiences as well as paid employment if it is significant, professional, pertinent to the industry.
3. Resumes placed on Internet sites must follow company format. Avoid bullets, italics, underlines. Use HTML format.
4. Careful editing to check for typos and grammatical errors. These may suggest to prospective employers your work is careless.
5. Must be more than one page with experience, but not more than two.

## EXPRESSING SKILLS & ACHIEVEMENTS

*The following guidelines are important. Translate skills and achievements into action statements.*

- Express skills with action verbs and industry key words to show benefits or results of the work you have performed. Express problems you have solved that lend punch and add variety to your resume.
- Quantify and qualify using statistics, percentages and numbers wherever possible.
- Include key words for nouns that specify areas of experience, e.g.: *Team Leader, Manager, Strategic Planning MIS, Bilingual. Computer Software Skills, Systems Analyst.*

- Begin statements with actions that are followed by results: **Increased** company market niche and profitability by designing customer preference survey and focus groups. **Supervised** ten focus interview teams to conduct focus groups of more than 350 people and 2000 surveys. **Analyzed** data and presented results of 2000 interviews to senior management.
- Omit personal pronouns, "I" and articles, "the" and "a".

## RESUME FORMATS

### Organizing Information

There are three basic styles of resumes: Chronological, Functional and Combination. Each format organizes information differently and has distinct advantages and disadvantages. The following descriptions will help you determine which format is most appropriate for you.

**Chronological** - *This type of resume lists work experience in reverse chronological order. It is best for the person who has had extensive experience in a chosen career field.*

#### Advantages:

- Allows for different formatting to include key words and career highlights.
- Human Resources interviewers, recruiters, and employers seem to prefer this format.
- Easiest to prepare since it is arranged by titles, companies and dates.
- Steady employment record is highlighted.
- Provides interviewers with a guide.

#### Disadvantages:

- Reveals employment gaps. (It is recommended that any gaps include reasons, e.g.: job search, family responsibilities, travel, or educational opportunity in cover letter.)
- May not emphasize areas that you want to maximize.
- Skills and achievements at last position must match current position search.

**Functional** – *Generally not recommended because it raises too many red flags.*

- Organizes work experience into skill clusters.
- Dates and place of employment are left out.
- Re-entry people and recent graduates may find this style effective.
- A special section, *Analysis of Experience*, is written instead of listing employment history. Usually three to four areas are emphasized, showing results and accomplishments.
- Sections may be arranged in any order.

#### Advantages:

- Stresses selected skills and experience areas that are marketable or in demand.
- Attempts to camouflage a spotty employment record.
- Allows the applicant to emphasize professional growth.



- Positions not related to current career goals can be played down.

Disadvantages:

- Employers are suspicious and need to see additional work history information.
- It does not allow you to highlight companies or organizations for whom you have worked.

**Combination** – *This type of resume combines the skills and achievement section from the functional format with the employment history listing from the chronological format.*

Advantages:

- Provides opportunity to emphasize the applicant's most relevant skills and abilities.
- Order of sections on the combination resume can be changed to market yourself in the best possible light.
- Good tool for almost anyone; however, re-entry people, recent college graduates and career changers find it particularly useful.
- Provides opportunity to highlight skills, while showing evidence of employment.

Disadvantages:

- Employers can lose interest unless it is very well written and attractively laid out.



## CHRONOLOGICAL FORMAT RESUME

1 **John S. Doe**

123 Disney Street, Toronto, ON M5H 2L6

416-876-9873

email: jsdoe@greenlighthotmail.ca

### PROFILE 2

Account Executive with sales and management experience in a variety of financial services and business environments. Dynamic leader with vision, organizational skills and a record of accomplishments built on ability to create relationships, produce results and bottom line growth. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with capacity to handle projects and corporate clients on an international basis. Bilingual in French, Spanish and Portuguese.

### AREAS OF STRENGTH 3

Business Development  
Strong Negotiator  
International Experience

Research and Product Development  
Strategic Planning  
Forecasting and Budgeting

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

4 **Vice President Sales**, ABC Corporation, Toronto, ON **2001- Present**  
One hundred twenty nine-year-old financial services company with sales in excess of \$170 million. Promoted three times based on leadership and goal achievements. 5

- 6 • Reported directly to president of company. Developed and implemented short and long term strategic plan resulting in company becoming Number One Leader in the industry.
- Developed and maintained strong business relationships with customers resulting in approximately \$5 million in sales over a two year period.
- Trained and coordinated 100 territory managers in North and South America, resulting in increased sales and positive feedback from customers.
- Initiated business plans, marketing strategies, projections and forecasts, resulting in new growth for regional offices.
- Provided leadership in developing goals, implementing processes and policies for management, resulting in increased efficiency and profitability.

7 **Fund Advisor**, CAP Foundation, Inc. Mississauga, ON **1995 – 2001**

- Doubled the investment of the foundation and initiated new accounting procedures compatible with MIS system.
- Capitalized on research information to develop liaisons within the community resulting in the major agreements to expand funding and investment base through planned giving.

Previous experience includes **Controller, Michael Gordon Corporation, Mississauga, ON for seven years.** 8

### EDUCATION 9

**MBA**, Finance, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

**BS**, Business Administration, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Continuing Education Courses and Seminars in Executive Development, Sales Management and Finance 10

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND LEADERSHIP 11

Chairman of the Board of Ilene Barry Children's Shelter

Ethics Committee Co-Chair, Financial Services, National Association of American Executive Leaders

Treasurer, Hunter Foundation for Protection of the Environment

## CHRONOLOGICAL FORMAT RESUME CONT.

1. Use of word "resume" as heading unnecessary. Good use of space for the information employer needs about you. Uses only two lines instead of three or four. Email and or fax numbers are helpful. Omit cell phone number. You don't want an employer calling you when you are busy with something else.
2. Profile emphasizes general background related to employer or industry needs. Includes business environments, skill areas, and general accomplishments. The use of nouns is important for detection by scanners looking for a good fit. Use both hard and soft skills that are more detailed in body of resume. This should be a good general statement. It may be explained in detail, or with examples in an interview, or with follow up activities. May also be used as 30-second sound bite in response to "What do you do?" or "Tell me about yourself."
3. Strengths that have been developed through experience and accomplishments. Key words for electronic scanning or passes reader's five to 15 second glance test.
4. Use titles at beginning before company name to emphasize level of position. Dates are included in right margin. Company name, short description of the company, if not generally known, with some indication of size of sales volume is helpful. Do not include street address.
5. Progression in a company and promotion titles with different dates maybe confusing. Use a general statement and be prepared to discuss at the interview or on an application.
6. Bullets can be used to set off each major accomplishment. Remember electronic scanning or the internet listing may change formatting. Use spacing between each to make certain that it can be read in all formats. State problems, actions, results; quantify whenever possible. Never exaggerate. Be able to substantiate with documentation that does not compromise confidentiality of previous employer.
7. Position somewhat unrelated to present career focus but must be used for chronological order. Not necessary to go into great detail.
8. Previous employment or professional history is summarized if it has been more than 10-15 years. Do include names of companies and length of time for credibility. Interviewer can ask you more questions if needed.
9. Education at the end of the resume unless applying for an academic position. Degree followed by major, if related, name of institution, city and state. Date of graduation not included unless it is recent. Do not indicate that you have been out of school for more than 10 years – a red flag of age or that you may not be current. Omit GPA's, Dean's list, etc.
10. Additional continuing education and training to indicate keeping current with professional development. Continuous learning is important in a changing business environment.
11. Professional leadership and community affiliations replace hobbies and interest that are not relevant to job performance.

## COMBINATION FORMAT RESUME

**Jane Elizabeth Smith**

62 Fairytale Lane, Georgetown, ON L7G 6G1

905-345-8713

email: jesmith@snowwhitevillage.com

### SUMMARY 1

Recent graduate with Communications/Marketing degree. Academic background blended with hands-on marketing, event planning, and communications experience in a not-for-profit environment. Successful record in working with collateral materials including designing brochures and writing newsletters. Work well on multiple projects meeting time pressures and budget limits. Excellent organizational, leadership and presentation skills. Computer literate; Microsoft Office 2000, Print Shop and Press Writer. 2

### SPECIAL SKILLS 3

News Releases and Media Relations  
Event and Volunteer Coordination

Promotional Materials  
Customer Relations

### HIGHLIGHTS 4

- Provided administrative support for marketing and communications department of a not-for-profit agency. Supported Director in all activities related to writing, editing and distribution of news releases. Developed alliances with the media to promote activities and increase visibility of agency events. 5
- Developed and designed brochures and other promotional materials resulting in increase of volunteer activities resulting in expanded client direct services.
- Published author of feature articles for college newspaper. Won second place in Advertising class project, national student ad competition. 6
- Served in leadership role for student organizations developing liaisons with local and national professional associations. 7

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, FULL AND PART-TIME, WHILE A STUDENT 8

Staff Assistant, Nathaniel Marks Centre, Mississauga, ON

2005 – Present

Receptionist, Berke Durant & Associates, Inc., Mississauga, ON

2003 – 2005

Previous Part-Time Employment Includes Summer Camp Counselor and Retail Sales

### EDUCATION 9

BA, Marketing and Communications Major, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Graduated with Honors 2007

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND VOLUNTEER WORK 10

President, Student Association, Marketing Club, University of Toronto

Public Relations Committee Co-Chair, Crossroads Project

Student Liaison, Board of Directors, Executive Women of the City

## COMBINATION FORMAT RESUME CONT.

1. Indicates recent academic achievement with actual experience in related area. Experience associated with college majors will not always be paid work. Can be volunteer, internships, and independent study.
2. Computer and technical skills are a major part of job search focus. Integral part of the industry needs. Make certain they are updated to include latest software skills.
3. Special skills are included. They indicate you know what employability skills sets are important factors and that set you apart from other entry level persons. Interpersonal and communications skills are highly desirable traits, as are leadership, teamwork, etc.
4. This heading indicates you are emphasizing skills and accomplishments related to your search. Each highlight should be placed according to importance of employer needs as well as skill levels and time spent using these skills.
5. Begin with strong action verbs. Indicate your role in the action. For example, "supported" the executive director is more effective than "helped".
6. College related activity impresses employer and substantiates claims.
7. Demonstrated leadership working with persons outside of academic environment. Indicates maturity and ability to shorten learning curve in a new situation.
8. Heading of Professional Experience while a student indicates that, although the work history may be spotty, irregular, or inconsistent, there was good reason for it, as opposed to someone who couldn't keep a job. It also explains why the positions may not be directly related to new career focus. Emphasizing that you worked and went to school at the same time indicates that you manage time well, can handle stress, deadlines and can prioritize.
9. Education is at the end of this resume when there is related work experience that can be highlighted. Degree first, followed by major area of study, name of academic or training institution, followed by year of graduation or expected date of graduation.
10. Leadership activities indicate well-rounded individual with additional skills and abilities. Replaces hobbies and interests that are not relevant to job performance.

## RESUME DO'S AND DON'TS

### Resume Do's

1. Write brief phrases. Full sentences not necessary.
2. Start with a first draft. Expect to do several revisions.
3. Begin with a summary statement that describes the functional area of your work.
4. Use present tense in describing current job. All previous positions are described in past tense.
5. Support all activities and responsibilities with results and accomplishments.
6. Describe specific responsibilities.
7. Summarize early employment by briefly describing your functions at the end of the resume.
8. Pick a resume format and be consistent. Dates appear on the right side of the page.
9. Write out all numerals up to and including the number "nine". Use the numerical form for 10 to 999,999.
10. Layout resume so that a job description or a sentence on the first page does not run over to the second.
11. Proofread final product for correct spelling, punctuation, grammatical, and typographical errors. Have independent, "critical" person proofread for errors you may have missed.
12. Omit information or dates that may be used to screen you out.

### Resume Don'ts

1. Don't use italics, dashes, or underlining to emphasize items and make them stand out. They confuse scanners and electronic mail attachments.
2. Don't use abbreviations. Use professional and technical information when it is relevant.
3. Don't use odd-sized, bordered, or colored paper – anything that may be considered eccentric.
4. Don't include your picture with the resume.
5. Don't list references; reserve them for the interview or follow-up activities.
6. Don't include personal data, marital status, number of children, or "excellent health".
7. Don't devote more space to earlier jobs than to more recent employment. Employers are interested in most recent, relevant experience.
8. Don't list grad point average or college honors unless you are a recent graduate.
9. Don't leave gaps between employment dates. List jobs by years rather than by month and year. Briefly state a good reason for the gap, e.g.: returned to school full-time, worked on temporary jobs, or left career for family responsibilities.

## COVER LETTERS

Always include a cover letter explaining your reason for submitting the resume. It serves as an introduction, highlights specific qualifications or objectives you may have for this job, and exhibits written communication skills. Do not use standard letters from books. Create your own business letter. Every resume, whether faxed, e-mailed, or hand delivered, must include a cover letter. The cover letter can also include additions to the resume that specifically match the job description.



## Other Uses for Letters

- To initiate networking.
- As follow-up after interviews, to thank interviewers, emphasize skills, and summarize your fit for the position.
- To cover any omissions or errors during the interview.