

RESUME 101

March 31, 2008



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i_ NTRODUCTION

By Nicole Newman

Although it may seem like other students are more certain of their career goals than you are, the fact is that most students are at times confused about what they want to do after they graduate.

Resume Nation, LLC provides assistance and support as you develop your focus through free consultations and personalized resume packages for as little as \$79.99.

You may find it interesting that in a typical year over half of U.S. graduates enter the

workforce, about a third go to graduate or professional school, and with the remaining engaging in other endeavors (according to Cornell Career Services).

A recent survey conducted by Resume Nation, LLC revealed that employers and graduate schools are interested in candidates who *know what they want to do*, and *what to do to present themselves effectively*. We want to help you become one of those candidates. Through this comprehensive guide, we hope

that you obtain the tools to market yourself through a resume and, in turn, land an interview that brings you one step closer to your dream job.

But don't just read this guide...feel free to highlight key phrases, write in the margins, and call us (1-800-650-1660) with questions, comments, or to simply say "thank-you".

Also, don't forget to check out our website, www.resumenationonline.net, where you will find samples of tons of resumes...good luck!

KNOWING A RESUME'S WORTH

DEFINITION

By Nicole Newman

Let's take a moment to consider a resume's various uses and its impact on the employer's hiring decision. A resume serves as a:

- Communications Document
- Marketing Document
- Interview Road Map
- Post-Interview Comparison Document

Your resume is primarily a **communications document**. Its objective is to effectively and clearly communicate to employers your work-related skills and abilities. Employers will be able to easily comprehend and assess your qualifications for current openings if your resume communicates effectively. A poorly organized resume will be impeded. Employers will most likely move on to the next pile of resumes, never giving yours a second thought.

Your resume is also a **marketing document** that can persuade employers of your value for the type of work for which you are applying. The document must convince employers of your "unique value" when compared to that of other candidates with whom you are competing against. Failure to quickly and effectively establish your value will relegate your resume to the reject pile.

A resume can have a significant impact on **interview** results. Many times, hiring managers use the resume as the basis for guiding the interview discussion. In doing so, the interviewer goes through the resume, line by line, asking appropriate probing questions along the way. Thus, a poorly organized or written resume can create confusion in this process, wasting time as the employer seeks clarification. Additionally, poor preparation may guide the interviewer down some side roads and back alleys that you may not wish to traverse. "**Side roads**" include, but are not limited to, discussions on your shortcomings or failures.

After the interview process, the interview team meets to make a decision among candidates. Your resume may then be **used as basis for comparing** you with competing final candidates. If the comparison is to be favorable, your resume must be well designed, causing your qualifications to stand out from others. A thoughtful, well-constructed resume can go a long way toward shifting the hiring decision in your favor.

As you can see, your employment resume is in many ways the **focal point or keystone** of your job-hunting process. Take the time and effort to prepare a thoughtful, well-organized resume. Doing so will surely result in a major payoff in your job search efforts.

How Employers Use Resumes

Employers use resumes at various points in the hiring process to:

- Determine whether to interview you, based on a perceived "fit" between your skills and interest and the organization's needs.
- Develop interview questions or start a conversation about your experiences, abilities, or interests.
- Draw inferences about transferrable skills- such as attention to detail- from how well you present yourself on a resume.
- Verify that you've presented yourself accurately. Correct reporting of all information about yourself- GPA, degree status, employment history, achievements, and extracurricular activities- is an important predictor of ethical behavior in the workplace, and employers check on this with your references.

STRENGTH...IN WRITING

On the basis of your resume, a prospective employer forms an impression of you before you even walk in the door for an interview! That's why strong resumes are so important. Most of us do not have the confidence or verbal skills to take our image from a low point and elevate it substantially during an interview. Many job seekers do not understand this critical point. They land interviews but don't get the job. So they flounder around trying to improve their interviewing skills. Yet, what they really need to do is step back and take another look at the image of themselves they have created in their resumes.

Type I, Type II

t_YPES

By Nicole Newman

The way you choose to organize the content of your resume—by work history or skill sets—will emphasize different information about you. If you are not sure which format is most appropriate for your immediate goal, contact a professional resume writer at 1-(800) 650-1660, e-mail us at resumenationonline@yahoo.com, or visit us on AIM under the screen name *resumenation*.

CHRONOLOGICAL

Chronological resumes can be an excellent choice for job seekers with stable work histories and experience that matches the jobs they're seeking. They begin with your current position and go backward, listing each position you have held. This format is most widely used because employers are more familiar with it than any other style; it provides dates of employment, which many employers like to see; and it is the easiest to prepare since it requires less creativity than a functional resume.

The chronological resume has several disadvantages for someone with an erratic, short, unrelated, or older work history. Because the dates are prominently displayed, employers can see gaps in employment within seconds, even before glancing at the skill or experience sections. As a result, many chronological resumes are passed over. This format can also be redundant if you have had the same job title in several different jobs you've held.

Remember, create a chronological resume if...

- You have a strong work history. You have worked for two or more years in each position. You have gaps of only a few months between each job you've held.
- Your job titles create an image that matches the skills required for the job you want

- Your job creates an image that matches the salary level of the job you want.
- Your work history is strong but you have weak job titles. If you replace your job titles with skill headings or strengthen them, are you able to create an image that matches the position and salary you want? If so, you may still be a good candidate for a chronological resume.

FUNCTIONAL

A functional, or skills-based, resume is appropriate if your skills are far more impressive than your job titles. It can also highlight older work experience while de-emphasizing dates of employment by using a condensed work history at the bottom of the resume. This format is also a good choice if you've gained significant skills from a position that lasted a short period of time. It lets you devote a large portion of your resume to these skills while de-emphasizing length of employment.

Remember, create a functional resume if...

- You have held many jobs. A chronological resume will be too long.
- You have gaps in employment of more than two years. You need to use a condensed work history.
- Your past work history and job titles aren't related to your job objective. You must market your skills rather than your titles in order to look qualified for the position you want.
- Several of your job titles are the same. A chronological resume would be redundant.
- You have little or no work experience.
- You have no paid work experience. You must focus on skills gained from volunteer work, internships, and co-op experiences.

Resumap

The Resumap is a new format that clearly breaks with tradition. The writing of the resume is a left-brain exercise where thoughts occur in a rational, analytical, logical, and traditional manner. By engaging the right brain in this endeavor (the creative, imaginative, and stimulating side of the brain), the resume becomes a more dynamic document.

IT'S ALL A SCAN... s_ CANNABLE

By Nicole Newman

To facilitate their applicant tracking system, some employers now use a document scanner to “read” resumes into an electronic file. This computerized resume file can then be searched electronically to identify resumes that have words and phrases that indicate the candidate has the experience and the skills required for the current job opening. To find out whether an employer has an electronic tracking system, call the human resources department. If you learn that they are using electronic processing, ask for advice in the preparation of your electronic resume. If your resume is going to be scanned into a computer and processed electronically, you should prepare a special version of it. The following guidelines also apply to resumes that are submitted via e-mail or the web. To ensure a high level of accuracy during the scanning and searching processes, your electronic resume should be plain in appearance, following these guidelines:

- Use a font size of 10-14 points.
- Use a popular typeface; sans serif is preferred.

- Remove all underlining, italics, script, and boldface.
- Use light-colored paper and black ink.
- Use relevant keywords (industry jargon) to describe your skills and experience. Insofar as you have the qualifications mentioned in the job description, use the same vocabulary in your resume.
- Avoid using abbreviations except very common ones such as degrees (AB, PhD) and states (MA, NY).
- Use a traditional resume structure; avoid graphics.
- Do not staple or fold your resume.
- Always send an original copy.

The electronic resume does not replace your regular resume. It is intended solely for scanning. When applying for employment, send copies of both your regular resume and electronic resume to the human resources department. When you write to other executives in the firm or go to interviews, always use your regular resume.

c_ VITAE

By Nicole Newman

A curriculum vitae (CV) is a resume used mostly by those professionals and vocations in which a mere *listing of credentials* describes the value of the candidate. A doctor, for instance, would be the perfect candidate for a CV. The CV is void of anything but a listing of credentials such as medical schools, residencies performed, internships, fellowships, hospitals worked in, public speaking engagements, and publications. In other words, *credentials do the talking*.

Primary materials include:

- Applicant Information
- Education

- Dissertation Title & Advisor
- Awards/ Honor/ Patents
- Grants & Fellowships
- Research Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Publications& Presentations
- Related Professional Experience
- Languages
- Memberships & Associations
- Cover Letter
- Dissertation Abstract
- Statement of Scholarly Interest
- Statement of Teaching Interest
- Transcript/ Course List

Combination

This style merges elements of the chronological and functional formats. It accentuates skills and capabilities, but includes employment information within the skill groups. The directness of the chronological format is retained, and skills are grouped by functional categories.

e_ ELEMENTS

By Nicole Newman

An effective resume consists of information that hiring managers are most interested in knowing about a prospective candidate. This information is presented by a few, vital elements. The following is a list of elements that are found in most resumes- many important, some optional.

Heading

Although the heading may seem like the most straightforward factor of your resume, do not make the mistake of taking it lightly. It is the primary section your prospective employer will view and it contains the information he or she will need to contact you. In most cases, the heading should include your name, home address, a phone number in which you can easily be reached, and an e-mail address.

Objective

When searching for a specific career path, it is essential to include a job or career objective on your resume. The one to two sentence statement aids employers in determining whether your goals are in line with those of their organization and the position available. If you are planning to use your resume online, you will want to list at least one “keyword” in the objective. This allows a prospective employer, searching hundreds of resumes for a certain skill or position, to locate the keyword and find your resume. Simply put, a keyword, or buzzword, is a shorthand way of getting a specific message across at a glance. For example, a lawyer may

include the key phrase “corporate litigation” within his or her objective. The prospective employer, in turn, will pull up his resume and know that he would like to plan, research, and illustrate cases at trial on behalf of the corporation.

Summary of Qualifications

Also known as the “relevant skills” section, the summary of qualifications has one major purpose: to motivate the hiring manager to read the rest of the resume. It provides a brief three-or-four bulleted summary highlighting what the candidate considers to be his or her most salient skills and qualifications for the position sought.

Today, with the virtual explosion of Internet recruiting, inclusion of a summary of qualifications on the resume is vital. This is so, since employers are increasingly relying on keyword search as the basis of electronic candidate identification and screening. It is a comprehensive list of job relevant traits, skills, and competencies. Thus, a well-written summary can cause your resume to quickly surface as a top candidate for the type of position you seek.

Work Experience

The most important element of all, your previous and current places of employment will provide the main focus of the resume. You will want this section to be as complete and carefully constructed as possible. By painstakingly identifying your work experience, you can get the core of your accomplishments and illustrate them in a way that highlights your qualifications.

As you create this section of your resume, remember the need for

precision. Include all necessary information about each of your jobs, including-but not limited to- employer descriptions, job title, dates of employment, name of your employer, city, state, responsibilities, special projects you handled, and accomplishments. Only list accomplishments for which you were directly responsible...exclude projects in which you briefly participated in or aided.

The most conventional way to list your work experience is in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent employment and working backward. This arrangement is meant to present your prospective employer with your most relevant, fulfilling position before considering your past employment. Simply put, your first job description can be likened to a first physical impression. If you are a recent graduate, highlight your summer employment, co-op experiences, internships, and part-time work. Entry-level students, however, may choose to begin their resume with the education section.

Education

Your educational background is often a deciding factor in an employer’s decision to interview you. Remember to emphasize your academic accomplishments as much as you did those that are career-based. If you are seeking your first professional job, your education will be your greatest asset because your related work experience may be minimal.

-cont.-

In your education section, include all degrees or certificates you have received, your major or area of concentration, minor, honors you earned, and any relevant activities you participated in, organized, or chaired. Places of education should be listed in reverse chronological order as well, beginning with your highest level of attainment.

Activities

Maybe you were active in various organizations or clubs during your years at school or within your local community. Often, an employer will look at such involvement as evidence of initiative, dedication, and great social skills. Examples of your ability to fulfill a leadership position should be evidenced on your resume, if you can provide them.

Certificates and Licenses

If your chosen career path requires specialized training, you may already have certificates and licenses. You should list these if the job you are seeking requires them and you, of course, have acquired them. If you have applied for a license but have not yet received it, use the phrase “application pending”. Since license requirements vary by state, check with the state’s board or licensing agency if you plan to relocate.

Publications/ Research

Many professions encourage, or even require, that you publish works. If you have written, co-authored, or edited any books, articles, professional papers, or works of a

similar nature, you will definitely want to include this element. Ensure that the publications’ date, the publisher’s name, and your involvement is listed.

Professional Affiliations

An additional, potential element in your resume is an element that includes professional memberships. Use this section to describe your involvement in professional associations or unions that pertain to the position that you are seeking. Employers may view your membership as representative of your desire to stay up-to-date and connected in your field. Include the dates of your involvement and whether you took part in any special activities or held any offices within the organization.

Special Skills

This section is to mention any special abilities you have that relate to the job you are seeking. Common examples include fluency in a foreign language, extensive travel abroad, or knowledge of a particular computer application. However, for each skill you list, you should be able to describe how it would be a direct asset in the type of work you’re seeking because employers may ask just that in an interview. If you can’t come up with applications, then your special skill are merely extraneous information.

Personal Information

Some people include personal information on their resumes. This is generally not recommended, but you might wish to include it if you think that something in your personal life,

like a hobby or talent, has some bearing on the position you are seeking. This kind of information is often referred to at the beginning of an interview, when it may be used as an “icebreaker”.

d_ONT...

- List an e-mail address from an account provided by your current company. Keep in mind that others may have access to your messages.
- Include an objective if you are uncertain of the exact nature of the job you are seeking. Writing an objective that is too specific could result in your not being considered for a host of perfectly acceptable positions. If you decided not to use an objective heading, clearly define what position (s) you are looking for in your cover letter.
- Assume that the new prospective employer is going to be familiar with the companies you have worked for. By excluding familiarity, the employer may see you as a candidate who requires extensive industry and product orientation training, resulting in wasted time and money.
- Just list results quantitatively. Convey to the resume reader the degree of improvement you’ve brought. For example, simply stating that you “increased sales” has little meaning. Stating, however, that you “increased sales by 50% in the first year” gives a much stronger message that is likely to grab the employer’s attention.
- List your high school experience if you have completed college. If you have attended a prestigious secondary school that is career-related, however, include it if space allows.
- Don’t write names of organizations that indicate race, sex, or creed. If included, you may be subject to discrimination.

RESUME DO'S

By Nicole Newman

On contact information:

- Provide your work phone number if you are able to take calls at your current place of business, since most employers will attempt to contact you during customary business hours.
- Ensure that your voice mail or answering machine greeting is clear and professional.

On employment history:

- Provide a brief description of current and previous companies, set in italics.
- List your key functional responsibilities in a quantitative manner, indicating volume, size, complexity, and efficiency. Be sure to include your reporting relationships (title of the person to whom you reported), and size and scope of the position.
- Use bulleted lists to illustrate your accomplishments, beginning with action words.



" My resume editor was extremely helpful, generous, courteous, and interested in what I wanted to accomplish. She spent a lot of time to make sure that she had enough information to generate a high quality resume."

-Mike from Houston

On education:

- Work in reverse degree level order. If you have completed graduate-level work, begin with that and work your way back through your undergraduate education.
- Include your high school ONLY if you earned special state or national honors, had a grade point average that was much better

than the norm, or if it was your highest level of education.

- Write your projected date of completion if you are still in school.

On certifications & licenses:

- Make sure that the information you list is completely accurate. Locate copies of your certificates and licenses, and check the exact date and name of the accrediting agency.



"Now I have another problem... I need a rejection letter!"

- Susan from Atlanta

DESCRIPTIVE QUALITIES

By Nicole Newman

Once you have a clear focus, you will be ready to present your qualifications to employers, graduate schools, organizations sponsoring fellowships, or service programs. As you compete with other candidates, you can increase your chances of making the best possible impression by being able to discuss your relevant strengths. In a 2007 survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, employers identified personal

qualities as well as specific skills among the top ten attributes they seek in candidates:

1. Verbal & Written Communication
2. Integrity
3. Interpersonal Skills
4. Initiative
5. Strong Work Ethic
6. Teamwork
7. Computer Skills
8. Analytical Skills
9. Flexibility
10. Detail - Orientation

ACTION

By Nicole Newman

Resume writing differs from all other forms of writing. The rules of punctuation and sentence building are often ignored. Instead, functional, direct phrases that make use of verbs that imply action are utilized. Action words characterize you to prospective employers as an energetic, proactive individual, someone who completes tasks and achieves results from his or her work. Resumes that exclude action words are not affective in gaining the attention of any employer, no matter how qualified the applicant. The following list of commonly used verbs will help you create a strong resume. Action words in **bold, pink type** should be used with caution. For they may be too hot for you to handle! :

accomplished
 achieved
 acted as/on
 adapted
 addressed
 adjusted
 administered
 advised
advocated
 aided
 allocated
 amended
 analyzed
 applied
 appraised
 approved
 arranged
 ascertained
 assembled
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carried out
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-cont. -

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negotiated
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obtained
operated
orchestrated
ordered
organized
oriented
originated
overhauled
oversaw
participated
performed
persuaded
planned
polled
predicted
prepared
presented
preserved
presided
priced
prioritized
probed
processed
produced
programmed
projected
promoted
proofread
proposed
provided

publicized
published
purchased
pursued
quantified
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screened
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set (up)
settled
shortened

simplified
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solicited
solved
spearheaded
specified
spoke
standardized
streamlined
strengthened
studied
submitted
substantiated
suggested
summarized
supervised
supplied
supported
surpassed
surveyed
synthesized
systematized
tailored
targeted
taught
team-taught
tested
trained
transferred
transformed
translated
transmitted
trimmed
tutored
unified
updated
upgraded
validated
verified
wrote

Notes:

ABOUT US

Resume Nation is a leading resume writing service aimed at providing unparalleled, marketable resumes for college students. As former students ourselves, us professional writers understand the difficulties in obtaining entry-level positions. To combat this, we generate documents that illustrate your related skills, qualifications, and educational experiences. At Resume Nation, we do not guarantee our clients false promises. Instead, we work with you to form a noteworthy resume that will land you an interview...how's that for superior customer service?

Resume Nation is a network of independently contracted resume writing professionals who specialize in serving entry-level candidates. Unlike other sites, that have one or two writers on staff, our network allows us to offer resources that our competitors simply cannot. We make an effort to hire professionals from all careers and disciplines.

In addition to hiring professionals in accordance with industry standards, we put all of our writers through our own, in-house, intensive, training and apprenticeship programs.

Because each writer is independently contracted, you are really working with them. Your personal resume writer is only an e-mail away. They can contact you at anytime to get more information or clarification. Once they e-mail you with your final draft, you may contact them with any changes or revisions within 30 days.

Notes:

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