

# The Résumé

“Your résumé is, in essence, your personality on paper. It creates a first impression about you to the employer.”

Drake University Professional & Career Development Services • 2507 University Avenue • Des Moines, IA 50311 • [www.drake.edu/career](http://www.drake.edu/career)

## YOUR RÉSUMÉ

An outstanding résumé is a personal expression of yourself. It presents your qualifications to a prospective employer and convinces the employer that you are a qualified candidate. By tailoring the résumé to parallel the qualities the employer is seeking in a candidate, you can be confident your résumé will capture the employer's attention.

The objective of the résumé is to get you an interview. Your résumé should:

- Highlight your knowledge, skills and experience
- Show how your personal qualities and professional capabilities satisfy the employer's requirements
- Differentiate you from the crowd by emphasizing your accomplishments

There isn't one perfect résumé format, but an effective résumé will focus on the employer's needs; communicate your competencies; demonstrate a sense of direction in your career; and create a favorable impression by being concise, easy to read and professional looking. Each person is unique; therefore, each résumé should be unique. The following guidelines will assist you in organizing your experience and skills into a selling tool that will help you get the interview.

## RÉSUMÉ FORMAT SUGGESTIONS

### Header

Your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address are the most critical pieces of information on the résumé. The contact information should be at the top of the résumé in a font size that is easy to read. More employers are using e-mail to contact students. Always be cognizant of the professional image projected by your e-mail address, e-mail signature line and voicemail recording.

### Objective Statement

There are several thoughts about the objective statement and whether it should be part of the résumé or not. Certainly, your cover letter should clearly state your objective in applying for a position. Inclusion of the objective on the résumé is a personal preference.

A simple objective statement defines the type of position you are seeking. An expanded objective defines the type of work you desire and a brief picture of what you can bring to the position. You can tailor your résumé to a specific employer

by including the company name, position title and job number (if it has one), along with key strengths related to the employer's needs. Alternatives for the objective statement content include career interests, a professional summary, and/or a list of strengths.

### Education

There is nothing set in concrete that dictates that an education section must come first. It does work well for many students to highlight academic accomplishments at the beginning to catch an employer's eye. Basic information in the education section includes, the university name, city and state, degree(s), graduation date, and areas of study. Include your grade point average if you feel it is to your advantage. A general guideline is to include the cumulative GPA if it is above 3.0. You can give your GPA in your major if it is better than your cumulative GPA, as long as you identify what it represents. Always be prepared to discuss your GPA.

A number of items can be included in the education section for different majors. Education majors, for example, may want to list endorsements; actuarial majors may want to list exams passed. Listing your senior experience, research, senior thesis, study abroad, self-financing of your education or completing a four-year program in three and a half years is also an option.

Internship employers are interested in knowing where you are in your studies. If you feel it is important to include a list of your courses, then choose courses that will be important to the employer or that show a special academic focus that is not obvious from your degree title.

### Experience

Your experience can be full-time, part-time, seasonal, volunteer, paid or unpaid. Convey information that gives an employer a better understanding of the depth of your involvement at work. Draw on your internship experiences for examples of your work. Remember that employers hire people with skills, not majors. Decide what skills and knowledge are required of the position and emphasize those qualities in your experience. Focus on accomplishments rather than responsibilities. Be specific and avoid general statements, for example, “Performed office duties as assigned.”

Use titles to organize your experiences leading with those experiences that are related to your career objective, for example, student teaching experience, marketing experience, performance experience, journalism experience, or human services experience. Whether you begin with your position title or name of organization is a matter of preference, but be consistent throughout the résumé. Employer feedback indicates a preference toward statements

written in bulleted phrases that begin with action verbs versus a narrative format.

### Related Skills

List additional skills and experience that may be valued by the employer, such as computer software skills or foreign language abilities.

### Activities/Honors/Awards

The placement of this category depends upon how much you wish to highlight your extracurricular activities. If an award is for an accomplishment within the context of your job, think about listing it with your work experience. You want this accomplishment to be noted early in your résumé. Activities in which you had a leadership role are always worth promoting. Noteworthy athletic accomplishments or responsible student government posts also should be included. To decide how much and what to include, ask yourself: What am I trying to convey to a prospective employer? Does this activity/honor in any way illustrate my strengths in relation to this position?

### DOES YOUR RÉSUMÉ PASS THE 10-SECOND SCAN?

Limit your résumé to one page when possible. Depending on your field of study or years of experience, two pages may be appropriate.

If your résumé is two pages, place your name and page number at the top of the second page.

- Keep statements brief; use simple, everyday language.
- Begin accomplishment statements with action verbs.
- Be specific: Give examples and emphasize achievements.
- Be positive, enthusiastic and honest. Don't exaggerate.
- Don't list personal references or mention salary or wages.
- Proofread for spelling and grammar errors.
- Have someone else proofread your résumé for spelling and grammar.
- Avoid fancy type or flashy paper.
- Make high-quality copies on a laser printer.

### CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

A chronological résumé lists education, work experience, activities and other appropriate sections. Within each section, entries are listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first) and highlight job titles, dates and places of employment. It reflects career growth and is easy to follow. See sample resume on page 4.

### THE ELECTRONIC RÉSUMÉ

With the ability to submit a résumé online or by e-mail and résumé management systems, many students feel they must develop a different résumé from the one sent by mail. There is no need to create a different résumé, simply alter the format. Keep your résumé in three formats:

1. A mail résumé, highly designed with bullets, italics and other highlights
2. A scannable résumé, simple formatting without bullets and other design highlights
3. An online résumé, a plain text document that can be sent through e-mail or cut and pasted into online forms

### SCANNABLE RÉSUMÉS

Many employers are using computerized tracking systems to manage the large number of résumés they receive. Instead of a person reading your résumé and deciding if your qualifications meet their needs, the résumé is scanned into a database. When writing a résumé that will be read by a computer, remember two main things — format and key words. Follow format guidelines provided by the company or the scanner may not interpret the words of your résumé accurately or may add format symbols that are not part of your résumé. The tracking software searches the database for key words that describe essential qualifications desired for the position. Key words in a résumé are usually nouns or noun phrases that define skills, experience and education. For example, a software company may search for specific software languages like "Java" or an insurance company may seek experience in "customer service." Be careful when using acronyms and abbreviations unless you are confident they are industry standards.

## ACTION VERBS

### Using data I have:

administered  
analyzed  
compared  
computed  
compiled  
coordinated  
designed  
developed  
directed  
edited  
figured  
implemented  
innovated  
organized  
planned  
recorded  
reported  
researched

### Interacting with people, I have:

advised  
coordinated  
counseled  
directed  
encouraged  
entertained  
evaluated  
guided  
helped  
instructed  
interviewed  
managed  
motivated  
negotiated  
organized  
persuaded  
protected  
referred

### Dealing with things, I have:

adjusted  
altered  
assembled  
balanced  
built  
driven  
fabricated  
guided  
handled  
inspected  
lifted  
made  
mixed  
moved  
operated  
repaired  
set up  
shaped

## HELPFUL HINTS

- Use key words (nouns) that describe your education, skills and accomplishments.
- Use white or light-colored paper of standard size.
- Don't fold, staple or bind your résumé.
- Avoid italics, underlining, graphics, shading, borders, bullets, lines and reverse type.
- Select a simple typeface such as Helvetica or Arial and use font size of 10 or 12 point.
- Consider using all capital letters for headings.
- Place your name and phone number or e-mail address at the top of each page on its own line.
- Avoid faxing if you know the résumé will be scanned.

## ONLINE RÉSUMÉS

The Internet offers new opportunities to get your résumé in front of employers. You can send your résumé via e-mail within the message text or as an attachment to company recruiters. Your résumé can be entered online into a company's résumé database through the company's employment web page. Your résumé can be posted with an online job posting service. You can list your résumé on a bulletin board service or listserv that specializes in connecting employers and job seekers. Finally, you can create your own home page to demonstrate your skills and highlight qualifications.

How you format and save your résumé depends on how you plan to transmit your résumé. Three common file formats are ASCII plan text, rich text or hypertext. The file type is selected in the save function of your word processing software.

Plain text (.txt) contains no special format styles, no bold, italics, bullets, tab spacing, tables or special fonts. Use plain text if you include your résumé in the text of an e-mail message. With the spread of viruses through e-mail attachments, it is recommended that you include your résumé in the message text as well as an attachment, so an employer has the choice of how to retrieve your résumé. Plain text format is used to copy and paste your résumé into an online form for application.

Rich text (.rtf) retains the special format styles (bold, italics, bullets, tab spacing, tables or special fonts) used in a résumé. The rich text format can be read by multiple software products. Use rich text if you attach your résumé to an e-mail message or upload your résumé online. Many Web sites now accept a Word (.doc) format as well.

Hypertext (.html) is used if you are creating a web page for your résumé and portfolio artifacts.

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR POSTING YOUR RÉSUMÉ ONLINE

- Read the Web site's security clause. Understand who has access to résumé information and how access is granted.
- Use your e-mail address for contact. Never include personal

information, such as address and phone number, for safety and security reasons.

- Start with an objective or summary of qualifications to grab the reader's attention. A cover letter may accompany an electronic résumé.
- Never include contact information for references and always get the permission from your references before posting information on the Internet.
- Always view your résumé or send it to yourself so you know how it looks.

## REFERENCES

References are an important part of your job search. Choose three to five people who can articulate why you would be a welcome addition to their organization. Faculty with whom you have studied and supervisors from current and previous positions are best.

List references on a separate page with the same heading as your résumé and on the same quality paper. The reference page is provided at the interview or when an employer requests it. Make sure that you ask permission of those you want to list as references before providing their names to an employer.

Robert D. Jones  
6404 Wood Avenue • Urbandale, IA 50322  
Phone: 515-255-5555 • Email: student.jones@drake.edu

### REFERENCES

Dr. Don Smith  
Professor of English  
Drake University  
233 Howard Hall  
Des Moines, Iowa 50311  
(515) 271-2222  
professor.smith@drake.edu

Ms. Marilyn Mitchell  
Director of Human Resources  
Preferred Financial  
1111 Grand Avenue  
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265  
(515) 267-3333

Mr. John Doe  
Manager of Volunteer Services  
United Way  
1290 9th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309  
(515) 267-5555

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Professional & Career Development Services toll-free at **1-800-44-DRAKE, x3721**; locally or from outside the United States, call **1-515-271-3721**. E-mail Professional & Career Development Services at [pcds@drake.edu](mailto:pcds@drake.edu). Check us out on the Web at [www.drake.edu/career](http://www.drake.edu/career).

**Drake**  
UNIVERSITY

# MARY GRAY

Current Address  
1300 34th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50311

Cell: 515-277-6655  
Home: 515-222-4545  
Email: mary.gray@drake.edu

Permanent Address  
4941 Concord Road  
Chicago, IL 60606

## OBJECTIVE

To obtain an intern position to acquire valuable experience in marketing and business management.

## EDUCATION

Drake University, Des Moines, IA  
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration  
Double Major: Marketing/Management, Minor: Advertising  
Graduation Date: May 2008, GPA 3.22

Trevecca Nazarene University, Nashville, TN  
Southwestern Company Intensive Sales Seminar, Summer 2007

## INTERN EXPERIENCE

Southwestern Company, Claremont, NH  
Sales Representative Intern, Summer 2007

- Established strong public relations within the community
- Developed rapport with customers by listening intently and understanding their needs
- Motivated customers to purchase Southwestern books by cold calling and using references
- Organized and kept detailed records of sales and contracts
- Showed self-motivation and problem solving skills
- Profited \$5,000 in five weeks while working 80 hours per week

Sterling Communications Advertising Firm, Lincoln, NE  
Intern, Spring 2006

- Obtained experience in departments: Sales, Creative, Accounting, Management
- Assisted with constructing customers' Web sites
- Completed sales calls

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Oakmoor Family Fitness Center, Des Moines, IA  
Sales Counselor/Customer Service, 2006–present

- Promote and sell new memberships
- Extend customer service by meeting with potential members and setting appointments
- Encourage members to begin new lifestyles and reach fitness goals

## COMPUTER SKILLS

Efficient in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, FrontPage  
Experience in Adobe Photoshop, Quark, iMovie, Dreamweaver

## PRESENTATION

"How Color Effects the Marketing World," American Marketing Association Conference, April 7–10, 2004, San Antonio, TX

## HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

Adams Leadership Academy, 2005–present  
American Marketing Association, 2005–present  
Drake Presidential Scholarship, 2004–present  
Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society, Fall 2004–present  
Drake Activities Board, 2007–2008  
Alpha Kappa Psi-Business Fraternity, 2007–2008  
Chapter's Pledge President  
Drake Relays Committee, 2006–2007  
Young Life Leader, 2005–2006  
Peer Advisory Board, 2006  
Peer Mentor/Academic Consultant, 2005  
Drake Publicity Committee, 2005  
Drake University Academic President's List, Fall 2004,  
Spring 2006, Fall 2007  
Leaders and Luminaries Nominee, 2003