

# Professional & Career Development Services

## the resumé

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

### Your Resumé

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

The objective of the resumé is to get an interview. It 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 is no one perfect format, but an effective resumé 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 resumé should be unique. The following guidelines will assist you in organizing your experience and skills into a selling tool that will help you get an interview.

### Resumé Format Suggestions

#### Header

Your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address are the most critical pieces of information on your resumé. Contact information should be at the top of the document in a font size that is easy to read. Keep in mind that more employers are using e-mail to contact students, and 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 resumé. Certainly, your cover letter should clearly state your objective when applying for a position. Inclusion of the objective on the resumé 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 offers a brief picture of what you can bring to the position. You can tailor your resumé 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 no rule that dictates that an education section must come first, although 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 completion of 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. 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. Try to focus on accomplishments rather than responsibilities. And be specific — avoid general statements, such as, "Performed office duties as assigned."

Use titles to organize your experiences, and lead with experiences that are related to your career objective,

such as student teaching, marketing, performance, journalism or human services. Whether you begin with your position title or the name of the organization is a matter of preference, but be consistent throughout. 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 resumé. 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 Resumé Pass the 10-Second Scan?

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

If your resumé 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 resumé for spelling and grammar.
- Avoid fancy type or flashy paper.
- Make high-quality copies on a laser printer.

### Chronological Resumé

A chronological resumé 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. This style reflects career growth and is easy to follow. See sample resumé on page 3.

### The Electronic Resumé

With the ability to submit a resumé online via e-mail or resumé management systems, many students feel they must develop a different resumé from the one sent by mail. There is no need to create a new version— simply alter the format. You'll likely need three of these:

- A printed resumé, highly formatted with bullets, italics and other highlights
- A scannable resumé, simply formatted without bullets and other design highlights
- An online resumé, a plain text document that can be sent through e-mail or cut and pasted into online forms

### Scannable Resumés

Many employers are using computerized tracking systems to manage the large number of resumés they receive. Instead of a person reading your resumé and deciding if your qualifications meet their needs, the document is scanned into a database. When writing a resumé 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 accurately or may add unintended format symbols. Tracking software searches the database for key words that describe essential qualifications for the position. Key words in a resumé 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

analyzed  
 compared  
 computed  
 compiled  
 coordinated  
 designed  
 developed  
 organized  
 planned  
 recorded  
 reported  
 researched

### Interacting with people, I have

advised  
 coordinated  
 counseled  
 directed  
 evaluated  
 guided  
 instructed  
 managed  
 motivated  
 negotiated  
 organized  
 persuaded

### Dealing with things, I have:

adjusted  
 assembled  
 balanced  
 built  
 driven  
 guided  
 handled  
 moved  
 operated  
 repaired  
 set up  
 shaped

# MARY GRAY

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515-277-6655  
mary.gray@drake.edu

- Objective** Results-driven student with proven sales and customer service skills seeks an internship 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 2012, GPA 3.22
- Trevecca Nazarene University, Nashville, TN  
Southwestern Company Intensive Sales Seminar, Summer 2010
- Intern Experience** Southwestern Company, Claremont, NH  
Sales Representative Intern, Summer 2009
- 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
  - Worked 50 hours per week, achieving more than \$1,000 in sales in a three-hour shift
- Sterling Communications Advertising Firm, Lincoln, NE  
Intern, Spring 2009
- Obtained experience in several departments: sales, creative, accounting and management
  - Assisted with constructing customers' websites
  - Completed sales calls
- Work Experience** Oakmoor Family Fitness Center, Des Moines, IA  
Sales Counselor/Customer Service, 2007-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** Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, WordPerfect, FrontPage  
Experience in Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, iMovie, Dreamweaver
- Presentation** "How Color Effects the Marketing World," American Marketing Association Conference, April 7-10, 2010, San Antonio, TX
- Honors and Activities** Peer Mentor/Academic Consultant, 2011  
Alpha Kappa Psi Business Fraternity, 2010-2011, chapter's pledge president  
Adams Leadership Academy, 2009-present  
American Marketing Association, 2009-present  
Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society, Fall 2009-present  
Peer Advisory Board, 2010  
Drake Relays Committee, 2009-2010  
Drake Presidential Scholarship, 2009-present  
Drake University Academic President's List, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011

## The Scannable Resume: 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 resumé.
- Avoid italics, underlining, graphics, shading, borders, bullets, lines and reverse type.
- Select a simple typeface, such as Helvetica or Arial, and use a 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 resumé will be scanned.

## Online Resumés

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

How you format and save your resumé depends on how you plan to transmit it. Three common file formats are ASCII plain 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 resumé in the text of an e-mail message. With the spread of viruses through e-mail attachments, it is recommended that you include your resumé in the message text as well as an attachment, so an employer has the choice of how to retrieve it. Plain text format is used to copy and paste resumés 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 resumé.

The rich text format can be read by multiple software products. Use rich text if you attach your resumé to an e-mail message or upload it online. Many websites now accept a Word (.doc) format as well.

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

## Posting Your Resumé Online: Helpful Hints

Read the website's security clause. Understand who has access to resumé 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 resumé.

Never include contact information for references and always get the permission from your references before posting information on the Internet.

Always view your resumé 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 the hiring organization. Faculty who know you well and supervisors from current and previous positions are best.

List references on a separate page with the same heading as your resumé 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.

### ROBERT D. JONES

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