

Tip Sheet - Resumes

Anyone can have a great looking resume!

By following these tips, you are well on your way to having a professional and effective resume. Remember there are many resources available to help you with creating this important document.

- **Attend the Resume Workshop:** Learn best practice in resume writing, get your questions answered, and begin your resume worksheet in a small group setting.
- **Use a Resume Writing Program:** We have three options in our Career Resource Centers. WinWay Resume, JobLink and Microsoft word all offer resume templates and different design and content options.
- **Work with a Career Development Facilitator:** Receive one on one support from one of our experienced staff. We are happy to help with your resume.
- **Be Prepared - Gathering Your Information:** Complete the resume worksheet before you get started. It is important to look at your background and experience to gather all the necessary information before writing your resume.

Overall Presentation

- **Use an eye pleasing font** (Times New Roman is the most popular and best received by employers)
- **Text size is important** – 12 pt. size is standard for general content. Headers/titles can be larger.
- **1 to 2 pages is standard length.** 1 for less than 10 years' experience, 2 for a seasoned professional.
- **Look at the big picture** - Information should be balanced on the page to be visually pleasing.
- **Utilize bullets, lines, indents, bold and italics** in a thoughtful way and in moderation to highlight key areas of information and separate content. Format throughout should be consistent.
- **Check for errors** - correct any spelling errors, text out of alignment, grammatical issues or other mistakes.
- **Have someone else review your resume** – Fresh eyes often see mistakes or can offer new ideas.
- **Use high quality resume paper** – It looks great – and is available **free** to those printing resumes at a Vermont Department of Labor Career Resource Center.

Contact Information

- **Highlight your name** – It makes it more memorable. 18 to 22 pt. font size is standard.
- **Think about your address** –If you are concerned about your address, consider a Post Office Box.
- **Share a reliable phone number.** The answering machine or voicemail should have a message which makes a good impression and does not cause any misunderstandings or confusion.
- **Utilize an appropriate email address.** Your email should look professional and not highlight personal habits or interests that cause a business concern.

Content

- **Highlight your accomplishments** – and lead those statements with action verbs.
- **Organize your content** - list your most recent experience and education first
- **Tailor your resume** to the job in which you are applying. Changing a few important details can make your resume point to a specific position and increase your chances for an interview.
- **Include relevant information** - Re-think jobs you have had that lasted under 6 months
- **Use Industry Language** – It is the language related to the job/industry/field you are applying for – using industry language shows you are up to speed on their type of work.
- **Certifications and Licenses** – put these on only if they are current and you have proof of them
- **Highlight your volunteer work** – it is a great way to get experience and show skills, especially when you are new to the job market.
- **Always appeal to the employer** – never refer to the personal advantages you would gain from the job. This is a common mistake in objective or goal statements.
- **Lead with the most important information** – for example – list your job title or the business first. Dates are important, but they are not the focus.

Important “Do Not’s”

- **Do not** use abbreviations
- **Do not** use “I” to refer to yourself. Instead, lead your statements with action verbs.
- **Do not** include personal information (age, height, weight or family status)
- **Do not** mention salary expectations or wage history
- **Do not** include a photograph of yourself unless you are applying to a European company, or a position such as modeling or acting where photographs are essential.
- **Do not** include references on your resume – these should be provided on a separate sheet of paper



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Action Verbs & Skill Statements

Action Verbs

Action Verbs are a key element in highlighting your accomplishments in your resume. These action verbs can help you begin your statements in an exciting and descriptive way.

Adapt/Modify/Adjust	Expedite/Accelerate/Advance	Organize/Assemble/Arrange
Advise/Counsel	Facilitate/Assist	Persuade/Convince
Analyze/Investigate/Research	Forecast/Predict	Plan/Schedule/Program
Appraise/Assess/Evaluate	Identify/Recognize	Present/Speak/Provide
Arbitrate/Mediate/Audit	Implement/Initiate/Instigate	Produce/Form/Synthesize
Brief/Inform	Influence/Persuade	Program
Budget	Inspect/Examine	Promote/Endorse
Classify/Categorize	Integrate/Incorporate	Recommend/Propose
Collaborate	Investigate	Recruit/Enlist/Employ
Consult	Lead	Redesign/Reorganize/Restore
Create/Invent/Design	Listen	Sell
Decide	Manage/Direct	Solve/Troubleshoot
Draft/Outline	Market	Summarize/Recap
Economize	Motivate/Encourage/Inspire	Supervise/Lead/Monitor
Edit/Revise	Multi-task	Teach/Train/instruct/Coach
Envision/Conceive	Negotiate/Bargain	Write/Publish
Estimate/Project	Operate	

Using Action Verbs in Skill Statements

Highlight your most marketable skills and the ones you want to use in your next job. Make sure your skills statements are descriptive and paint a picture of the great work you did. Skill statements in your resume will help you sell your greatest assets to prospective employers. Identifying skills that you used in the past and you want to use again are key in creating a great resume.

Examples:

Simple Statement	Unloaded several trucks every day.
Action Verb Skill Statement	Unloaded 12 trucks and approximately 12,000 pounds of glass daily; consistently achieved 100% customer satisfaction ratings.
Simple Statement	Answered customer calls successfully.
Action Verb Skill Statement	Answered over 100 customer calls per day and achieved 24-hour problem-resolution rate of 98%.
Simple Statement	Tracked expenses and saved money.
Action Verb Skill Statement	Created an Excel spreadsheet to track expenses that saved 20%, or over \$2,000, per year for 3 years.

Resume Worksheet

Gathering Your Information

It is important to look at your background and experience to gather all the necessary information before writing your resume. By listing your experience, education, skills, abilities, etc., you can then select those items that are relevant to specific employers, and build your resume.

This worksheet is designed to help you gather the raw materials to include in your basic resume.

Contact Information: *Clear, well presented contact information sets the stage for a good looking resume. Including a phone number, address and appropriate looking email address creates a great first impression.*

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Alternate or Cell	
Email Address	

Skills Acquired through non-employment activities *(Home, Hobbies, etc.)*

Responsibilities <i>Example: Washing dishes at home</i>	
Hard Skills <i>Example: Auto Repair</i>	
Soft Skills <i>Example: Customer Service</i>	

Highlighting your Qualifications *(Quantify and Qualify your summary of skills to create an effective summary for the beginning of your resume. It may be helpful to complete the employment section first to gather information for this section.)*

Quantify your Experience	
List your Best Assets	
Highlight your Accomplishments	

Experience/Work History: *List all paid jobs, volunteer work, internships or freelance jobs. Begin with your most recent employment and work back. Generally, it is good to go back 10 years in your work history.*

Position	
Organization	
Town, State	
Dates	
Duties/Skills/ Accomplishments:	

Position	
Organization	
Town, State	
Dates	
Duties/Skills/ Accomplishments:	

Position	
Organization	
Town, State	
Dates	
Duties/Skills/ Accomplishments:	

Position	
Organization	
Town, State	
Dates	
Duties/Skills/ Accomplishments:	

Education: *Begin with your most recent education and work back. Listing details and significant coursework can help target your resume towards a specific job.*

Course of Study/Degree/Major	
School Name/Type	
City, State	
Year of Graduation	
Significant Coursework/GPA/Awards	

Course of Study/Degree/Major	
School Name/Type	
City, State	
Year of Graduation	
Significant Coursework/GPA/Awards	

Other Information: *Associations/Professional Affiliations/Publications/Experiences/Certifications, etc.*

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Tip Sheet –References

Positive work references will make the difference in finding the job you want!

By following these tips, you are well on your way to having professional references.
Remember there are many resources available to help you with creating this important document.

Work with a Career Development Facilitator: Receive one on one support from one of our experienced staff. We are happy to help with planning, organizing and presenting your references.

Selecting References

- Always get permission first.
- Ask potential references if there is anything about you they would not be able to speak positively about.
- Think carefully about who you choose in order to avoid the possibility of a negative reference.
- Keep in touch with your references – and not just when you need them!
- To create your reference list, write down all the people you know who can vouch for your abilities. You won't use all of these people for any one job – instead tailor your references to each job you apply for.
- List at least one former boss – preferably more. Most employers are mainly interested in what your supervisor has to say.
- Out of courtesy, be sure to let your references know that they may be getting a call.
- Select references who can speak to your skills, knowledge and accomplishments.
- Avoid references who are too personal – employers want to know primarily about your work skills.

Overall Presentation

- List your references on a separate sheet of paper – not as part of your resume.
- Do not hand out your list of references unless asked. Most prospective employers will not call your references unless they are really serious about hiring you.
- **Use an eye pleasing font** (Times New Roman is the most popular and best received by employers)
- **Text size is important** – 12 pt. size is standard for general content. Headers/titles can be larger.
- **1 page is standard length.** A list of quality references should be no longer than 1 page.
- **Look at the big picture** - Information should be balanced on the page to be visually pleasing.
- **Check for errors** - correct any spelling errors, text out of alignment, grammatical issues or other mistakes.



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Tip Sheet - Cover Letters

Everyone should have a Cover Letter that meets the Employer's expectations!

By following these tips, you are well on your way to having a professional and effective Cover Letter.

- **Attend the Resume & Cover Letter Workshop:** Learn to write an effective Cover Letter to compliment your Resume, and introduces you to that potential employer.
- **Work with a Career Development Facilitator:** We will provide you with individualized assistance in developing a Cover Letter, which most effectively reflects your skills, and supports your desire bottom line.

Overall Presentation

- **Use an eye pleasing font** - (Times New Roman is the most popular and best received by employers)
- **Text size is important** - 12 pt. size is standard for general content. Headers/titles can be larger.
- **Look at the big picture** - Information should be balanced on the page to be visually pleasing.
- **Formatting** - Should be consistent throughout, both the Cover Letter and Resume.
- **Check for errors** - Correct spelling, page alignment and grammatical errors.
- **Review the Cover Letter** - Does it effectively convey your skills and experiences to the employer.
- **Quality counts** -Using quality paper stock it tells the employer that you have chosen to go the extra mile.

Contact Information

- **Correct-** Be sure that yours' and the Employer's contact information is correct.
- **Business Contact-** If you know the person's name, address the letter to them, otherwise Dear Sir, or Ms. or To Whom it May Concern: will also work.
- **Voice Mail** -The voicemail be appropriate and leaves a good impression on the potential employer.
- **E-mail address.** Should also be professional and leave the employer with a good impression

Content

- **New Formatting:** All information should be aligned on the left hand side on page, no need to indent paragraphs.
 - **1st Paragraph** - Identify what documents are being submitted, what position, you are applying for and where you found the job listing.
 - **2nd Paragraph-** Identify your skills and compare them to those the skills required by the employer.
 - **3rd. Paragraph.** Tie the letter all together in this paragraph and make a final sale's pitch to the employer that you are the right person for this job.
 - **Use Industry Language** - Use similar language as used in the job advertisement and language pertinent to the industry, when describing your skills. (Paragraph #2)
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