Blackhawk Technical College

Resume Writing for the Nursing Graduate

Includes application tips.

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The nursing resume is a practical document. The employer looks for **specific keywords** in the resume to determine if the applicant is qualified for the position. The key to writing an effective resume is to use the terminology written in the job description. The nursing resume has to lead into qualifications. The key to identifying keywords = job descriptions.
The resume must convey how you will benefit the employer.

FORMAT AND LAYOUT

Make sure the format and layout convey the most important points. The resume needs to look organized. It should flow and tell a story of your education, employment life and skill set. Be consistent with your font, grammar and punctuation. Keep the white space balanced and maintain your margins. Use reverse chronological order when listing employment and education history. If the job is in the past, use past tense verbs.

1. Stick to standard or system fonts such as Arial, Georgia, Impact, Courier, Lucinda, Palatino, Tahoma, Trebuchet, Verdana, Sans Serif (these are Optimal Resume selected fonts)
2. Use .RTF or .DOC file types which are the most generic. Avoid PDF, DOCX, WPD, WPS or HTML unless specified.
3. Standard bullets are fine. Special characters can be problematic if the resume is reviewed with an Applicant Tracking System.
4. Graphics of any kind, or JPG, PNG, BMP images should not be used.
5. Borders, shading or symbols should be avoided.

RESUME SECTION HEADINGS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Tip: Check your email for professionalism.

GOALS/CAREER OBJECTIVE

Registered Nurse (RN)

PROFILE/SUMMARY STATEMENT

> *Writing the Summary Statement*
> **T**o stand out from the other resumes, list your relevant experiences and things that you were involved with in your community and on the previous job, then write a summary statement of what you achieved and how you would bring this same kind of commitment to the new job. Use words in your summary statement that are proactive and show involvement with that particular job. The employer would also assume that you would bring the same kind of attitude to the new job if they hired you. The nurse has to show that they will be committed to the career.

SKILLS

Skills section headings: Technical Skills, Computer Skills, Skills Summary, Skills/Strengths, Related Skills, Skills and Competencies, Special Skills, Skills and Abilities, Skills Qualifications.

EDUCATION

List your current educational achievements. Include degrees, honors, and high GPA's, college name, date of graduation and the degree.

LICENSE/CERTIFICATIONS

A nurse's resume will include licenses, certifications.

WORK EXPERIENCE

This is the part of your resume that will highlight your previous experience as an employee Include any participation in organizations (as a student and in the community), and anything that will highlight your leadership skills, employment dates, awards and recognitions as well as any other accomplishments that will show above average work. **Be specific.**
Detail your experience as an employee in whatever job capacity that you have worked, emphasizing **how** you carried out that

job. Use specific terms. **Check your word usage**. Never use the wrong medical terminology. Your resume should show quality and your commitment to quality**.** Model your language after that used in the job posting.

All Work Experience is Helpful

If you have little nursing experience:

1. A list of your nursing clinical hours is acceptable.
2. Healthcare volunteer hours can also be listed as experience.
3. Customer service work history will be very helpful in the new career. On the business side, healthcare organizations look at patients and their families as customers. Customer service is high on the list of priorities.

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING AND APPLICATION COMPLETION

Sell it…don't tell it (this strategy impacts every aspect of your resume.) Clearly articulate the value of the product (YOU).

Tell it Strategy: Provide care to patients-monitoring vital signs, bathing and tube feeding patients, record status.

Sell it Strategy: On a combined medical/oncology unit, provide high level of care to patients–monitoring vital signs, bathing and tube-feeding patients, communicating patient status to the nursing team, and delivering end –of–life care with empathy and compassion. Effectively prioritized care during periods of staff shortages, dealing appropriately with patient concerns and complex medical issues. Recognized for ability to identify significant changes in status based on observation, intuition, and patient interaction   from JIST Works Resume 4

OPTIMIZING YOUR RESUME FOR SCANNING AND TRACKING SYSTEMS
APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM (ATS)

The ATS programs use a variety of filters and screeners, sometimes called "contextual parsers", to help sort and categorize resumes. Applications and/or resumes are collected in a database and scanned for keywords. No matches and you go to the reject file. You will also get kicked out if the computer can't read your application because of a formatting mistake.

The ATS Filters

The first stage screen is filtering on:
1. Location/contact info (the scanner is looking for commutable distance)
2. Career level (student, entry, experienced)
3. Education level
4. Occupational area
5. Other filters could be language proficiency, GPA, and current employment status

Second stage screen is filtering for keywords. The words and phrases set in the filters to find you. The employer will enter a keyword or a string of keywords that apply to the job being recruited for, and these coupled with the filters will produce a field of "hits". Keywords are not action words (aka action verbs) and are almost always nouns. They usually refer to things like:
1. A technical skill, job terminology or specialization
2. Title, type of position, role or department
3. A certification, tool used, specific experience

Example:
('Registered Nurse or RN.') and ('flu vaccination' or 'h1n1' or 'flu shot vaccination')

When it comes to ATS keyword screening **the skills** section of your resume and the skills listed on your application are the **most important.**

Keywords=job descriptions

Review job descriptions. Make a list of the skills required. Look for terms, jargon and buzz words that are industry and job specific. These need to be in your skills section(s) and work experience. Below is an example. Keywords are highlighted in yellow.

JOB SUMMARY: Cares for and treats patients in medical office, as directed by Physician, by performing the following duties.
ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Rooms and collects patient assessment data. Administers injections and medications. Performs other patient care procedures as directed and according to established criteria. Assists provider during treatment, testing, and examinations. Performs EKG's, simple lab tests and collects venous blood specimens. Maintains timely flow of patients. Provides patient and family education. Documents patient care and related information. Responds to incoming phone calls. Performs telephone triaging of patients. Follows up on patient care as needed. Reviews and maintains charts. Participates in QA & I. May be required to work alternate shifts and weekends. Performs other duties as assigned.
AGE OF PATIENT POPULATION: All ages depending on patient specification and/or specialty**.**
EDUCATION, TRAINING, & EXPERIENCE: Associate's degree (A. A.) or equivalent from two-year college or technical school; or six months to one year related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.
CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE: Graduate of an accredited nursing program. Possession of a current Wisconsin and/or Illinois RN license. CPR certified.
Computer Skills: To perform this job successfully, an individual should have knowledge of Database software and Word Processing software.
Other Qualifications: May be required to travel to other clinical sites.

Online Applications

Read the directions before filling out the application! The process varies from employer to employer. Do not cut and paste from your resume to answer questions.

***Model your language* after that used in the job posting**.

Use the comment section to highlight your skills or to add quotes from your references. Complete all fields. This includes the ones that are optional.

When asked, attach your resume. For online applications, make sure you have created a resume in a simple form, with no extra graphic elements or font styles.

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PROFILE SUMMARY

Registered Nurse: Critical Care / Medical / Oncology

Dedicated hardworking nurse with 7 years of diverse healthcare experience and recent nursing education/RN Certification. Recognized by supervisors, peers and faculty for team orientation, high level critical thinking skill and commitment to patients. *Hospital and clinic experience includes:*

- Monitoring vital signs
- Caring for ventilated patients
- Patient assessment
- Educating patient and family
- Maintaining patient charts
- Using cardiac monitors

- Administering EKG's and x-rays
- Initiating oxygen therapy
- Administering injection and medications
- Collecting venous blood specimens
- Assisting with exams and treatment

EDUCATION

Associate Degree in Nursing/ Wisconsin RN License   May 2013

Blackhawk Technical College **(NLNAC Accredited)**,   Janesville, WI

GPA: 3.5

LICENSE/CERTIFICATIONS

Registered Nurse License #113209-30

CPR Certified

Medical Assistant	2006
Nursing Assistant	2004
Blackhawk Technical College	Janesville, WI

EXPERIENCE

Medical Assistant   2006-present

St. Mary's Hospital and Clinic   Janesville, WI

Serve a diverse population, beginning with triage and covering full range of urgent and ongoing care. Work cooperatively with physicians and other members of the healthcare team. Provide extensive patient education.

- Took on added responsibilities: taking X-rays and EKGs, performing lab work, calling in medication renewals, and arranging consultation with specialists.
- Selected to train new employees, identifying and filling in knowledge gaps to build overall staff capability.

Patient Care Assistant (CNA)   2004-2006

Mercy Healthcare   Janesville, WI

Assisted nurses with care of critically ill patients on a critical special care unit.

- Monitored cardiac monitors, interpreted rhythms, and notified nursing staff of changes in rhythm, oxygen saturation, respiratory rate and blood pressure.
- Input physician orders into computer, answered phones and page physicians.

Fluent in Spanish

Computer Software skills- Word Processing and Database Entry

Cover Letter Content and Layout
Use your personal letterhead at the top of your cover letter or a standard business letter format

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STUDENT A. NAME
1234 Street Name ☐City, State Zip Code ☐sname@gmail.com ☐Phone Number

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Month Day, Year

Contact Person
Title Company/Organization Name
Street Address City
State and Zip Code

Dear Mr. *or* Ms. (Contact's Last Name)*:

First paragraph: Why you are writing In your initial paragraph, state the reason for your letter. You are applying in response to a specific opening. State the position and indicate how you learned of it. If you found out from someone currently working there, be sure to mention their name (with their permission, of course).

Second paragraph: What you have to offer Indicate why you are interested in the position or organization. Do your research! Above all, indicate what you can do for the employer. This is known as an employer-focused letter. If all of your paragraphs begin with "I...", then you have written a self-focused letter. Change your wording! If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique qualifications. You may refer to your enclosed resume, but try not to repeat the same information that the reader will find there. This is your chance to expand that information and really shine.

Third paragraph: What happens next? In the closing paragraph, indicate your desire for a personal interview. Close with a statement that will encourage a response. Ask the employer to contact you if they desire additional information. Give the person your phone number (make sure this is somewhere you can be reached during the day, or that has voice mail) and thank them for their time. [If you use your personal letterhead at the top of the letter, you may simply refer the person to your phone number above rather than stating it here.]

Sincerely,

Signature here

Typed Name
Enclosure

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*If you do not know the name of the specific contact, refer to websites or business directories and/or contact the business directly to find out to whom you should direct your correspondence