

RESUME TIPS

A resume is a reflection of you and how you performed in your past jobs, which predict how you might perform in a future job. So put some time and effort into it! Following are some industry specific tips that we at LeaderStat feel are the most important for our potential and current employees. We are quite willing to help you assemble an effective, professional resume.

RESUME STRUCTURE

Prioritize your resume. If your education is your strongest selling point, that should be at the top of your resume, otherwise it should follow your work experience. An objective is generally a good thing to include - two to three sentences summarizing your employment and career goals will suffice.

Style. Can't decide whether to use a chronological style resume or a functional one? Choose the chronological format if you're staying in the same field (especially if you've been upwardly-mobile). Choose a functional format if you're changing fields, because a skills-oriented format shows off your transferable skills better and takes the focus off your old job titles.

RESUME LAYOUT

1. Contact Info and Objective. Put your name and contact information at the top of the resume. Be simple in the design, a centered list will work best. Don't hide it in the Header of a Word document. Follow this with your career objective, if you have a well-designed and concise objective. Otherwise leave the objective out and just dive into the Experience section (or Education if you are listing that first).

2. Job Experience. The work experience can either be in the traditional chronological order, with your current job listed first, or in a functional format that lists your skills and job accomplishments and then summarizes the actual places worked. Unless you are switching fields mid-career, stick to the chronological approach.

Each company you've worked for should have it's own section. List the company's name, the city and state where you worked, and the dates you were with the company. Follow this with your job title. Below the title, summarize your accomplishments and responsibilities for that position. If you were promoted, list each position separately but keep them grouped under the same company heading, and include the dates you held each position.

3. Education. List the full type of degree earned, where it was earned from, the location of that institution, and the year you graduated. Include any honors, if relevant. Don't list high school or education that is not relevant to your career. If you are working towards a degree, list that along with your expected graduation date.

4. Affiliations. If you are a member of career-related organizations, list those and how long you've been a member, plus any position you may have within the organization.

5. Licensure. List your licenses and for what state(s) they are applicable. ("Licensed NHA in OH and PA".)

RESUME CONTENT

Length. The days of the one-page resume are long gone, so don't limit your experience because of page length. But don't overdue it, either. Generally, you should have about one page on your resume for every ten years of job experience.

Basics. Be sure to include at least the fundamentals of each job. This would include the years of employment ("1999 to 2004", for example), the name of the company, the city and state where the company was located, your job title, and your job duties and accomplishments. If you held several jobs within one company, list them, in chronological order, under one company heading.

PAR. Fill your resume with "PAR" statements. PAR stands for Problem-Action-Results. In other words, first you state the problem that existed in your workplace, then you describe what YOU did about it, and finally you point out the beneficial results. Here's an example: "Transformed a disorganized, inefficient facility into a smooth-running operation by totally redesigning the layout; this saved the company \$250,000." Employers love numbers, so quantify any accomplishments when possible.

Dates. How far back should you go in your work history? Far enough but not too far. Include only what's relevant to the job you're searching for. Employers don't need to know that you worked at the mall when you were sixteen when you have 35 years of experience in health care.

Gaps. What if you have gaps in your work experience? If you were doing anything valuable (though unpaid) during those so-called gaps, you could just insert that into the work history section of your resume to fill the hole. For example: "1997 to 1999 Cared for critically ill parent" or "1993-95 Maternity leave and family management" or "Full-time Student".

Titles. What if your job title doesn't reflect your actual level of responsibility? When you list it on the resume, either replace it with a more appropriate job title (say "Office Manager" instead of "Administrative Assistant" if that's more realistic) or use their job title and your fairer one together "Administrative Assistant (Office Manager)".

Age. If you're older and want to avoid age discrimination, remember that you don't have to present your entire work history! You can simply label that part of your resume "Recent Work History" or "Relevant Work History" and then describe only the last 10 or 15 years of your experience. If something really important belongs in the distant past, here's what to do: at the end of your work history, add a paragraph headed "Prior Relevant Experience" and simply refer to that ancient job without mentioning dates.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Don't include hobbies on a resume. It's rare that it's relevant to the job for which your applying, so best to leave it out. Also, do not include personal information such as marital status, how many children you have, your age, that sort of thing. Employers are not allowed to ask, so you shouldn't reveal it.

Try to spell things out, even industry terms. Use "Long Term Care" instead of "LTC", for instance, and use "and" in place of "&". This makes your resume much easier to read.

Use spell-check, and then hand your resume to a friend to proof read. It really can make all the difference.