Resumes

The resume is a marketing tool, which acts as a door opener and allows an employer to assess your qualifications quickly in the prescreening process before interviews. Most resumes are initially read for 15 seconds or less (3-5 seconds if unsolicited). A resume help the readers form mental pictures of you and your activities as they look for key words and phrases. Among 10s, 100s, or 1000s of resumes, the employer needs to ascertain the benefits you are offering them, based on your past accomplishments. Document the results you achieved by including numbers, e.g., supervised 50 volunteers; reduced waste material by 30%; managed $100,000 project, coming in on budget and 1 week ahead of schedule.

If your resumes seem to be taking you down a path similar to your last job(s) and you want to change direction that is quite easily accomplished. You probably have explained your past jobs in terms of the duties and responsibilities that characterized that work. You need to interpret or reframe those experiences to meet the demands of the new work you would like to have.

The resume is a more concise presentation of credentials than a curriculum vitae which is prepared for a teaching/research position in a university or for inclusion in an application package for graduate school.

Focus
- It is important to tailor your qualifications to the position for which you are applying. Before starting a draft of your resume, take a moment to consider some of the following items;
- Job title or type of work
- (Focus your strengths and related examples to this target market. Prepare additional sheets for other jobs)
- Describe your oral and written communication skills (e.g., excellent, good, etc.) Include your ability to listen. Give examples of when you demonstrated those skills.
- Describe your interpersonal skills. Give an example.
- Rate your ability to plan and organize. Give an example.
- Describe a situation where you had to solve a problem. What was the outcome? What does this tell an employer about your critical thinking/analytical/problem-solving capabilities?
- Discuss aspects of your creativity (e.g., generating ideas, design, etc).
- Would you consider yourself flexible or adaptable? How would you convince an employer?
- Provide an example of your initiative or self-motivation skills.
- Provide an example of your leadership skills.
- Provide an example of your time management skills.
- Did you ever do more than was required of you by your job description or supervisor? Describe.
- Name 3 mistakes you made recently and discuss what you learned from them.
- Discuss your computer knowledge and experience.
- List your achievements, which form a good basis for the job.
- Discuss your level of comfort with the risk-taking required.
- Add your other strengths as required by the job.

Style and Appearance
The first impression of your resume should be favorable for both your electronic and paper versions: well-organized material, easy-to-read font, correct grammar and spelling, up-to-date information. Your paper copies should be printed on good quality paper and have no handwritten corrections or white out.

One to two pages of information should be sufficient to present your credentials clearly and concisely for the position. Only in rare cases would you need to go to three pages, but then all three pages must contain essential information needed by an employer to judge your qualifications. You may get only one chance for

that interview. Write in point form and double check that all pertinent key words are there. You want to make it easy for both a human reader and the computer to find the information they are looking for. Prepare a completely positive document to present your skills. Don't be shy! However, the resume must be an honest evaluation. Don't lie. The misrepresentation will come back to haunt you—if not in the interview, then on the job.

There is no one right resume. Create a document that sells your strengths. Since employers are looking for the best value for their hiring dollar, you should market what makes you different from your classmates or anyone else wanting an interview for that job.

Many of your strengths are revealed through both your content and style of writing, e.g., enthusiasm, confidence, reliability, and communication skills.

Major Sections of a Resume

NAME, ADDRESS (ES), TELEPHONE NUMBERS (VOICE/FAX), E-MAIL, URL
No other personal information is required. If you will be leaving a local address while your resume is in circulation, note when (e.g., until April 20, 20xx). If you will not be personally answering your phone during business hours, list a number where an employer can leave a message for you. Decide what headings you will use if you need to state two addresses, e.g., one "local" or "present" and the other perhaps "home" or "permanent" if applying in that community or "alternate" for applications further afield. If you include the URL for your web pages, make sure the pages are in professional, business-like condition. Your site can include your resume and examples of your work.

JOB OBJECTIVE or CAREER GOAL
For co-op, summer, internship, and part-time jobs: a job objective is not essential but highly recommended to give the employer an idea of what you want to do. For on going (permanent) or contract jobs: a focused statement is essential. "Career Goal" tends to refer to a desired position that has a longer-term association, while "Job Objective" can refer to an interim or more temporary type of job. State your goal or objective in terms of what you can do for an employer. You may want to prepare two or more resumes to tailor qualifications if you are seeking different types of jobs.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
This section will provide a concise overview of your qualifications as they relate to your Job Objective or Career Goal. Here is where you want the employer to recognize and become interested in the competitive advantage you bring to the position. State the value you are offering. Include the key words that would be used in a computer search of a database. This is the most difficult section of your resume to write. Include three to seven points, using nouns and adjectives, not action verbs. Draw upon your work experience, volunteer and/or extracurricular activities. First statement summarizes the experience you have related to your job objective; One year experience in graphic design. Second statement describes your working knowledge of the various components or aspects of the position; budgeting, report writing, and program planning. Third statement outlines the various skills you possess to do the work effectively; problem-solving, communication, and time management. Fourth statement may refer to any academic background you have that complements your practical experience; machine design, resource assessment, marketing. Fifth statement lists your personal characteristics and attitudes as required on the job; reliable, able to work under pressure, creative).

SKILLS SUMMARY (in place of Job Objective and Summary of Qualifications sections)
This section is essential for resumes without a Job Objective and Summary of Qualifications and appears immediately after your Name and Address. Include three to six points outlining your most relevant strengths for the type of work you are looking for. Describe your competitive advantage—the value you offer. Draw upon your work experience, volunteer and/or extracurricular activities in terms of duration, scope, accomplishments, etc. If you lack relevant experience, emphasize those skills you have developed in terms of interpersonal, organizational, supervisory, etc. Indicate formal or professional training/education. List relevant areas of expertise. Draw upon your personal characteristics that are valuable for the position you are seeking; enthusiastic, flexible, and attentive to detail.

EDUCATION
For students in postsecondary education, first year through six months prior to graduation: state Candidate for, Degree, Discipline (major/minor), University, and Year beginning program; Candidate for Honours Bachelor of Mathematics, Computer Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Coulmbia, Sept. 19___ - present. Secondary school listing: it usually is not necessary to include your secondary school after your first year of a postsecondary program unless it is a prestigious institution or the entry will add valuable information when the reader considers you for an interview.

Relevant Courses
A sub heading of the Education section. Choose six to ten courses related to your Job Objective where you have not utilized this knowledge yet in a work environment. Do not include course numbers. If the name of the course as listed in the Calendar does not adequately convey the information you wish, elaborate to show the relevance. Prioritize the list, or arrange by themes, to avoid a random assortment of names. Place in columns for easy reading.

Project/Thesis
A sub heading of Education. Any relevant project, report, thesis, etc. that you have prepared can be referred to by its title in quotation marks (if the title is sufficiently clear enough to give the reader a feeling for scope), or by using a group of words to show its significance or relevance to the employer.

COMPUTER PROFICIENCY
List both your theoretical and working knowledge. Categorize an extensive background in columns with headings such as Hardware, Operating Systems, Software, and Languages.

WORK EXPERIENCE
The Chronological style of resume is the most widely accepted format for outlining work experience. This type of resume lists your work experience in date order, with the most recent work experience first.
.
LABORATORY SKILLS, SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTATION, CERTIFICATION
Present an overview of qualifications relating to your Job Objective. If dates are added, list in reverse chronological order.

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS
State name of award, name of institution award received from, and date. Include important awards from both university and high school in reverse chronological order. Explain the meaning of the recognition if the reader would not understand its significance.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
List those with some relevance to the jobs to which you are applying.

PUBLICATIONS

List in bibliographic form only those publications that the reader of your resume would be interested in. Include the work, which has been published, has been submitted for publication, and is in progress. Include also the papers you presented as a guest speaker. If your list is lengthy, include only those relevant to your Job Objective by stating the heading as Selected Publications.

LANGUAGES

Include those for which you are fluent or have a working knowledge (other than English). Indicate if you can speak and/or write the language.

ACTIVITIES/INTERESTS

Volunteer work can be included in different ways, depending on the message you want to give. Include volunteer work in this section if you are demonstrating the breadth of your leisure-time activities. If you wish to highlight or emphasize these activities, create a separate heading, e.g., Volunteer Activities, Volunteer Experience, and Community Service. In this section you can either list the organizations, or you can add to the listing more detail about your contributions, beginning each point with an action verb. You can include your Volunteer Experience before Work Experience in your resume if it would be to your advantage. If your volunteer activities are as important as your paid work experience, add your information to your Work Experience section, with a volunteer notation, e.g., Assistant to Director (volunteer). In listings for activities, state role (e.g., Member, President), name of organization, dates. Organize in reverse chronological order. State if any positions were elected or appointed. At the bottom of the section include interests such as physical fitness, hobbies, sports or leisure activities. Generally, employers are interested in how you spend your time outside of academics and work, e.g., independent/team activities, as well as your well-roundedness because of the transferability to the work you are applying for. However, when in doubt about including this section, leave it off the resume.REFERENCES and PORTFOLIO

A reference notation such as Available on Request is becoming optional. Add the name of a reference if that person is well known by the employer who may be more inclined to interview you because of its presence. Without reference names on your resume, you will be able to meet with the perspective employer to sell yourself rather than trusting that one of your references would do the job better than you could. Also, your references will not be bothered with unnecessary phone calls. Ask the person you would like to use as a reference for permission to do so, and check out what that individual will say about you if contacted by a prospective employer. Do they see your strengths and weaknesses as you see them? It is important to discuss what that person's response might be to potentially embarrassing questions. A bad reference is a job offer killer! Choose someone who has seen your work in as similar a situation as possible to the job for which you are applying. You do not necessarily need to use your immediate supervisor. Give your references a copy of the relevant resume(s) for the type(s) of jobs you are applying to.

Good luck in preparing your resume!!