



RESUME BEST PRACTICES

Creating an effective resume is essential to securing an interview. An employer will analyze it quickly to decide whether to interview you. Consider the following resume tips to create an organized and professional document that highlights your skills, represents you well and grabs the employer's attention.

FORMATTING SUGGESTIONS

Appearance is the key to a good resume. If upon first glance, it appears wordy, cluttered, and hard to read, it will probably not be read. Additionally, there is no one single format for resumes, although the following tips should be helpful:

- Avoid using a resume template as they are difficult to edit.
- Limit to two pages.
- Leave equal margins, 0.5" minimum to 1" maximum.
- Make sure you have **no** typographical errors or misspelled words.
- Use *italics*, **bold**, CAPITALIZATION, and underlining, but don't overdo it.
- Select a layout that makes the resume easy to read and highlights important content. Format should be internally consistent.
- Bulleted descriptions are often preferred as they make statements easier to read.
- Your name should be font size 18-22 and the body of your resume should be in font size 11-12.
- Be sure that all information on your resume is correct.
- Have the resume reviewed and proofread.

RESUME OUTLINE

NAME

- Place name at the top - large and bold.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Include address (if posting in a public forum, can include just City, State or no address at all), phone number with area code, and email address (hyperlink). This should be smaller than your name.
- Add LinkedIn address (personalize the URL and hyperlink).

OBJECTIVE OR PROFILE/PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY (OPTIONAL)

- An objective is where you state your goals for employment. The most effective objective is one that is specific about the position and type of employer desired.
- Consider adding a Profile or Professional Summary instead of an Objective. Objective statements reiterate what you are applying for whereas Profile statements highlight your skills and experiences and show the employer who you are and what you can offer them. Essentially they contain a few sentences explaining your strengths and how your previous career skills translate to the position you are seeking. Think "elevator pitch."

EDUCATION

- Include all post high school education. No need to list high school.
- The information should be presented in reverse chronological order (starting with the most current). Include names of institutions, locations, degrees awarded, dates of graduation, (dates attended, if appropriate), and college major and minor.
- GPAs and class rank are optional and if you choose to include them, do not round.

LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, OR ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- Include any licenses, certifications or trainings of interest to an employer.
- If this is a requirement for the job, it could go into the Education section as well.

EXPERIENCE

- Include paid or unpaid, full- or part-time jobs, as well as volunteer experience, externships, internships, and significant or relevant class/leadership projects.
- In addition to places of employment and titles, be sure to include City, ST and dates of employment – month/year.
- List positions in reverse chronological order.
- How to write experience descriptions:
 - Descriptions should begin with action verbs.
 - Use sentence fragments with no subjects.
 - Do not include personal pronouns.
 - Be sure to use keywords from the position description within your resume.
 - Highlight achievements versus duties when possible.
 - Write present position descriptions in present tense and past in past tense.
- Use the real estate on your document wisely. Prioritize the order of sections based on your goals. They can have different headers beyond Veterinary Experience, such as Small Animal Experience, Large Animal, Lab Animal, and/or Research.
- Less related experiences can fall under Other, Related or Additional Experience where you can add descriptions or leave off.

LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES & INVOLVEMENT, COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INTERESTS

- Leadership positions are important to list. You can list them like your experiences (Organization and Title) with descriptions or without descriptions.
- Think about including serious, ongoing hobbies or interests that provide insight into your non-academic side and show you are well-rounded.
- In an interview, the employer may ask you about your interests to build rapport.
- Interests may include published poet, avid fly fisherman, marathon runner, etc.

AWARDS/HONORS SECTION

- Keep them relevant and if the name of the scholarship or award/honor doesn't describe why it's applicable, explain it or leave it out.
- Often this section is omitted as it's not very meaningful to employers or applicable to the position.

REFERENCE PAGE

- Include References in a separate document.
- List only employers, faculty or other relevant people whom you have specifically asked – NOT personal friends or relatives.
- Don't include "References Available Upon Request" at the bottom of your resume.
- Include their Name, Title, Company, City, ST, phone number, and email address.

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE BULLETS FOR A RESUME

In general, you should include a description under each position listed on your resume to describe your specific responsibilities and accomplishments. The guidance below focuses on developing effective bullets for your “Experience” section, but these principles can also be applied to additional sections of your resume.

MAKE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELEVANT TO YOUR AUDIENCE

- The “Experience” section needs to be focused on illustrating to the employer that you have the specific functional skills and expertise to help them solve their needs or accomplish their mission. It is intended to show the value you will add to the practice or organization.

BEGIN BULLETS WITH STRONG ACTION VERBS

- Bullets ought to be designed for maximum impact on the reader and should be consistent in focus.
- Descriptions for current positions are written with present tense verbs whereas descriptions for prior positions are written with past tense verbs. Completed tasks at a current job are also written in the past tense.
- Emphasize accomplishments and achievements rather than duties when possible.

BE SPECIFIC

- Avoid any descriptions beginning with generic statements such as “Responsible for” or “Duties included.”
- Think about the skills required at the job that you want. Indicate where you have demonstrated these skills throughout your experiences. Be concise; always think about what is relevant and what message each item is communicating.
- Avoid simply reporting, “Assisted veterinarian with patient visits.” Instead, tell the reader what activities that “assisting” specifically entailed.

QUANTIFY WHEN POSSIBLE

- Doing so can provide a context and scope for the skill involved. The quantifiable effect you had on a practice will differentiate you from others who may have held the same type of job.
- You can provide context for your accomplishments by using amounts (e.g., budget size, number of people you managed/number of surgeries performed, etc.).

ACCOMPLISHMENT MEMORY JOGGERS

If you have trouble developing content for your bullet points, use the following memory joggers to help you recall your accomplishments:

Did you identify any problems or challenges? Did you resolve or minimize any problems?

Did you improve employee relations or boost morale?

Did you introduce a technical innovation that was adopted?

Did you reduce costs, waste, time or effort?

Did you create any original works: reports, brochures, newsletters, guides, manuals, proposals, contracts, marketing strategies?

Did you facilitate or improve communication among employees, with clients, or with the community?

Did you develop or design a new program, plan, service, product, process, project, system method, strategy, etc.?

Did you make any recommendations that saved money, made money, increased efficiency or productivity?

Did you reduce liability by suggesting safety improvement, improved security, etc.?

Did you collaborate with others? Were you a contributing team member?

Did you train, present or impart knowledge to management, staff, and/or technicians?

Did you target a need for a product, service, plan, program, system, method, procedure, or technique?

Did you improve (redesign, streamline or reorganize), administer or implement any projects, plans, programs, processes, services, products, etc.?