RESUME TIPS

Your résumé or application is usually the first impression you make on an employer. Because it's used to determine whether or not an employer will interview you, you should take great care in putting together your résumé. It should clearly state your skills and experience. It should also be easy to read and easy to scan.

General Guidelines

- Be concise. Keep the length to one page if you have a four-year degree and minimal job experience. For advanced degrees and extensive work experience, a two-page résumé is acceptable.
- Edit ruthlessly. Diligently go over your résumé for grammatical errors and typos. Both of these suggest a lack of attention to detail.

Visual Appeal

- Use a font that's easy to read, like 12-point Arial. Avoid unusual typefaces.
- Limit your use of italics and underlines.
- Avoid text boxes, graphics and tables. They can make it difficult for an employer to open your résumé if they're using different word processing software.

Organization

How you organize your résumé is extremely important. When an employer needs a specific piece of information, it should be easy to find. A common format that works well:

- Name and Contact Info
- Career Objective
- Education
- Experience
- Activities/Honors/Awards

Name and Contact Info

- For your name and contact info, use a font that's bold and slightly larger than the font you use in the rest of your document.
- Use an email address that's straightforward and sounds professional. Avoid emails that include nicknames or don't use some form of your name.
- Use your current mailing address, telephone number and make sure your voicemail sounds professional, uses your name and states that you'll return phone calls as soon as possible.

Career Objective

Career objectives aren't required, but they give you the opportunity to tailor your résumé to a specific job and company. This shows an employer you've thought about a specific position with their company and that you aren't just mailing your résumé out to every potential employer.

Sample Career Objective:
I am seeking a position as a <insert position> in a growing, environmentally conscious company, where the contribution of my leadership, creativity and passion for project management will enrich the experiences of employees and customers alike.

Education

- Use the name of the institute with your highest level of education. Include your school/college/university name, as well as its city and state.

- Certificate/Degree earned and graduation date, including month and year. If you haven't graduated, include your expected degree and probable date of graduation.
- List academic minors, if applicable.
- If you are a recent graduate, give your overall grade point average and its relative scale. For example: 3.5/4.0. Also give the grade point average for your major.

Experience

- As detailed in the general guidelines, keep the length of this concise. One page if you have a four-year degree and minimal job experience. For advanced degrees and extensive work experience, a two-page résumé is acceptable. Ideally we are looking for any relevant experience within the last 10 years.
- For each job, list your job title, company name, company location and the dates you were employed.
- List your most recent experience first.
- Include all paid and unpaid jobs that are pertinent to your objective.
- Describe the daily functions and major successes you had in each position. Employers are looking for motivation, passion, leadership, responsibility and the ability to work on a team.
- Use action words, such as "led," "directed," "created," "managed," and "consulted."
- Include accomplishments that are specific and measurable. Facts and figures help define your achievements.

Activities, Honors and Awards

- Extracurricular activities, community positions and professional/civic awards help raise your image with employers. List all of the awards and honors you've received along with the dates. For civic activities and memberships, list the responsibilities of your position.

Proofread and Edit

- Read your résumé aloud to catch any grammatical mistakes or typos.
- Have a few detail-oriented friends check your résumé. Ask them whether or not they'd hire you. (They have to be brutally honest and you have to accept that honesty.) If they wouldn't, ask them why and change your résumé accordingly.

References

- References should be listed on a separate page and be readily available upon request.