

RESUME START-UP GUIDE

A resume is a brief, concise document that presents you to a prospective employer. It markets your skills, accomplishments and experiences for employment, admission to graduate school, and consideration for a scholarship or fellowship. There is no single model of a resume that is appropriate for all people in all circumstances. There are a number of styles and formats that you can consider before selecting the one that best fits you. It's a good idea to always have an up-to-date version ready so that fewer edits need to be made when a position you are interested in becomes available.

An employer will usually spend **15-30 seconds** reviewing your resume — make your time count! The content and format of your resume must be clear, concise, and marketed to the needs of the prospective employer. The resume is usually your first introduction to the employer and will motivate them to contact you. The resume will get you the interview; the interview is what will get you the job. This Resume Start-Up Guide is a great place to start creating or recreating your resume. Take time to complete this document and brainstorm about your experiences.

WARNING! WARNING! Putting together an effective resume is hard work!

But don't let that stop you! When you accept the right job offer, you'll say it was worth it!

Begin by concentrating on the job you're going after. What does the employer want? Need? What are the requirements? Once you have figured that out, then ask yourself, "What qualities, experience, education/training do I have that matches what the employer is looking for?" That's what you want to put in your resume. You want to stand out from the hundreds of resumes that employers receive. Do you know what makes you stand out? You are an individual, unique in your own way.

STEPS TO CREATING AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

1. Analyze the available job opening, the company, the industry- What do they want? Need?
2. Look at yourself and determine what you're good at, what do you have to offer the employer, what have you done, what makes you unique?
3. Gather the information you need to complete this start up sheet.
4. Type the information in a Word document and find a layout/design that is consistent and easy to read. There are resume samples included in this guide or on the Career Services website for your reference.
5. Proof your resume over and over again. Ask others to look over it, not only for errors but also for things you might have omitted. Make sure some of these people know you well so they can spot those things. Parents, siblings, friends, can all help you with this.
6. Remember, you're going to get advice from many different people and some may be conflicting. The resume is yours! It's a reflection of who you are and what you have to offer. You are the ultimate decision maker as to what goes in it. After all, if you don't know yourself best, then who does?
7. Resume looking good? Be sure to have it reviewed in Career Services.
8. Make any revisions necessary.
9. Before applying online, save your resume as a PDF or follow the employer's directions for file type. If sharing at a career fair or interview, print your finished product on resume paper.

HEADING

Name: Use your name as you would sign your name. (Usually without middle name or initial).

Address (Optional): List your complete address and write out all words unless restricted by space. The state name is always abbreviated (MN, SD, IA) according to postal standards. Put the city and state on the same line with a comma between them.

Telephone Number: Always include it because very few employers write to you to invite you for an interview. Including the area code is important whether you live in the area or not. Do not use your employer's telephone number on your resume.

E-mail: Be sure that your email address is professional. Do not use your pet name or a "cute" name. Save that email for your family and friends. You can use your SMSU email address (firstname.lastname@my.smsu.edu) if you'd like.

First and Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

JOB OBJECTIVE

Also called "Position Desired," "Objective," and "Career Goal," and all are optional. Write one or two sentences about the kind of position you want and what you can contribute to the company in return for such a job. These can appear at the top of a resume, as a headline attention grabber. Focus the objective on what you can do for the company and avoid mention of what you want in return.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

You may decide to use a Summary of Qualifications section at the top of your resume. This section is also optional. Be sure to summarize the type of experience, skills, and personality traits most applicable to your career objectives. The summary may be arranged in either paragraph or bullet form and should entice the reader to continue reading the rest of the resume. For example:

Profit-oriented manager with strong record of improving:

- Financial Performance: Improved delinquency rates by as much as 45%, capturing more than \$1.5 million in "lost" revenue over career.
- Employee Productivity: Identified and capitalized on team members' strengths to accommodate a 3-fold increase in work volume without need for additional staff.
- Customer Relations: Advocated for a customer-focused orientation; frequently negotiated pay-out plans to maintain marginal customers in a salable position.

EDUCATION

If you are recently out of school, your educational credentials will appear near the beginning of your resume. As you gain experience, your academic credentials become less important and gradually slip towards the end of your resume. The exception to this is in certain professions where academic qualifications dominate a person's career – medicine, for example. Education is listed in reverse chronological order with the highest degree first. Once you've attended college, you no longer list your high school. (Ask about exceptions). It is acceptable to abbreviate educational degrees: B.S., B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.

Degree earned (B.A. or B.S.) and Major _____

Degree granting Institution's Name, City and State: _____

Minor(s) or Concentration(s) in _____

Graduation Month and Year: _____ GPA (3.0 or higher) _____

Specialized Courses: _____

Projects: _____

EXPERIENCE

Experience can include paid or unpaid (volunteer); part-time or full-time or internship experiences. List each most recent experience first. Work in reverse chronological order. Add other experiences as appropriate.

Job Titles or Role: The purpose of a job title is to provide a generic identification that will be understood by as many employers as possible. Use a name that is commonly used for the position such as Administrative Assistant instead of Secretary and Accountant Level II. Be sure that whatever title you use, it is not misleading.

Organization Name: The organization name should be included but not the street address or telephone. The city and state are helpful. It is okay to abbreviate words like Corporations (Corp.), Company (Co.), Limited (Ltd.), or Division (Div.) as long as you're consistent.

Experience Dates: Resume readers are often leery of resumes without dates. You can increase your odds of getting a response by including them in one form or another. Try to include months and years with each experience or consistently use months (numbers, spelled out, or abbreviated) and years or just years. If a position is current, list "Present" as the final date. (ex. May 2016-Present)

Description of Responsibilities: This is the body of the resume. It includes your responsibilities and what purpose they served, your special achievements and other contributions in this position. This is one key area that sets a great resume apart from the rest.

Use of Keywords: Organizations use screening and tracking systems to handle applications so it's important that you include keywords that are found in the job description and/or advertising for a position that you're interested in. The screener (person or computer) searches for keywords that describe the position and the professional skills needed.

Position Title: _____

Organization Name: _____ City, State: _____

Dates of Employment/Experience: _____ - _____

Description of Responsibilities: _____

Accomplishments: _____

Position Title: _____

Organization Name: _____ City, State: _____

Dates of Employment/Experience: _____ - _____

Description of Responsibilities: _____

Accomplishments: _____

Position Title: _____

Organization Name: _____ City, State: _____

Dates of Employment/Experience: _____ - _____

Description of Responsibilities: _____

Accomplishments: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As an intern, entry-level, or career-changing applicant, both your scholastic achievements and your campus involvement have increased importance. List your position on the school newspaper or student government, memberships in clubs, recognition for scholastic achievement, and role with athletics. Your accomplishments and extracurricular activities tell an employer about your skills, abilities, motivations and interests. This is a great section to demonstrate your leadership abilities and initiative to employers.

Professional Affiliations: This shows your dedication to your career. Membership is also important for networking so if you're not a member of your industry's professional associations, give serious consideration to joining. Ask Career Services about references to any religious, political, protected status, or personal information.

Languages: Having another language can give you an edge in the job market today. If you are fluent in a foreign language list it, but if you're not fluent, you can still mention it. Examples: Fluent in French; Read German; Read and write Serbo-Croatian; Understand Spanish.

Read through the following checklist and circle as many "yes" responses as you can. Then, come back and fill in the specifics in the notes sections. Don't worry about vocabulary or phrasing now, you can tackle this first then clean up phrasing and vocabulary later. If you find that you don't have much in the way of additional information, do some brainstorming around finding ways to gain additional experience. The additional experience is great for building your resume.

Yes No Language Abilities

Yes No Honors/Awards/Scholarships

Yes No Technology Skills

Yes No Conferences Attended

Yes No College Activities

Yes No Study or Travel Abroad

Yes No Leadership Positions (Clubs, Athletics, etc.)

Yes No Professional Memberships

Yes No Volunteer/Community Activities

Yes No Professional Development

Notes about Additional Information (*specific activities/skills*):

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

After you've completed the Resume Start-Up section, it's time to type out your experiences and start formatting. Here are some possible headings for your resume sections. These are just some ideas to get you started. This list is not exhaustive.

Possible Headings for Resume Sections

Objective

Career Objective

Career Focus

Summary

Profile

Qualifications

Highlights of Qualifications

Skills

Technical Skills

Education

Educational Background

Teaching Experience

Student Teaching

Practicum Experience

Internship Experience

Experience

Related Experience

Work Experience

Significant Projects

Related Projects



CAREER SERVICES

A member of Minnesota State system. ADA Accessible.
Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer.

CONTACTUS

LOCATION/PHONE:

SMSU Career Services
Bellows Academic 156
1501 State Street
Marshall, MN 56258
507-537-6221

WEB/EMAIL:

www.SMSU.edu/go/CareerServices
Careers@SMSU.edu

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday
8:00am-12:00pm; 1:00pm-4:30pm

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Follow SMSU Career Services
on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest

