

The Writing Center @ KUMC

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Writing a Resume

Everyone struggles with resumes, working and reworking them dozens of times. And when you've never written one before, trying to craft a good resume feels impossible. Resumes are hard to write for two primary reasons. First, the design is subjective. What one person likes, another hates. Second, one type of resume might be right at one stage of your career but not at another. A career changes as you do.

Before You Write:

Research your possible employers before you write even one word. Find out as much as possible about them and the job you're interested in. This info will determine your focus, and focus determines design, presentation, and content. Resumes are as much about the employer as about you. Reading the job posting as carefully as you can is the perfect starting place for updating your resume.

Resume Format:

What do employers/recruiters want to see? How do you decide what to include or exclude? The short answer: it depends on your career goals as well as the employer's goals. Use both to decide which format to choose. There are 3 common resume types:

Chronological	Functional	Combined
Most common	Grouping makes skills appear stronger	Begins with functional summary of qualifications, skills
Easy to read	Emphasizes what you can do, rather than where	Gives short chronological work history, education
Not preferred if you have employment gaps	Good for recent graduates	Good for careers with gaps
Not for someone switching careers	Not as popular with employers	If done well, looks impressive

Whichever format you choose, try to make your resume easy to read at a glance. At the same time, make your resume stand up to close scrutiny. Careful organization and design will ensure your resume is ready for any kind of reader.

Designing Your Resume:

You can always look for models, but first try experimenting with sections. How do you draw your audience's attention to the right places and make things easy to read?

Step 1. Brainstorm:

List all your skills to help you generate content, skills such as: Admission and assessment, charting, interviewing of patients, troubleshooting, etc.

List action words and check off those that apply to you, words such as: Assist, Educate, Perform, Record, Verify, Collaborate, etc. Match these action verbs to each of the skills you listed.

Step 2. Organize:

Now organize sections and think about how to arrange them. Using a three-level system organizes your material well. For example:

- L1 Work Experience
- L2 Job Title + Employer/Organization + location + dates
- L3 Details listed in bullets (This is where your brainstorming will pay off. Build your bullets around the skills and action words you have already listed out.)

Step 3. Consider other headings:

A common approach is to have an "Objective Statement," "Career Goal," or "Career Summary," usually at the top of your resume. You will need to decide whether to include this step or not. Some people who hire say they hate objectives on resumes. Others say they can't tell what an applicant wants without an objective. If you decide to include it, the Writing Center suggests simply summing up your experience to give the reader a basic idea of who you are. Avoid self-inflation. Avoid excessive adjectives. Just state facts.

After the "Objective Statement" or the "Career Summary," you will want to include headings like "Education," "Clinical Experience," "Employment," "Leadership Experience," "Research," etc. After listing these, there are many other headings to consider:

- Community Service
- Internships
- Language Proficiency
- Memberships in Organizations
- Presentations and Publications
- Specialization
- Technical Training
- Licensures and Certifications
- Volunteer Work

To Sum Up:

Writing a resume is not a one-size-fits-all process. It should be tailored to specific targets. It takes time, effort, research, choices, and positive thinking. Visit the Writing Center to brainstorm, create, and edit. Make your job hunt as effective as possible by first crafting a good resume. Once you have a resume you like, you'll be able to use it for networking, interviewing, and landing a job.