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University Writing Center

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Preparing a Resume

Things to Remember

- Indicate what you can do for the employer rather than indicating your long-term goals and aspirations.
- Emphasize your achievements, capabilities, activities you initiated, and profits or sales that increased due to your work, rather than describing your jobs in terms of your duties.
- Select an appropriate format. For most positions, a clean, uncluttered look is best; be sure to use a high quality printer and high quality paper. A less traditional approach may be appropriate for those seeking positions in advertising, marketing, design, or other creative fields.
- Do not give references on the resume (employers may request references if he or she wishes, there is no need to provide information that may be superfluous). Also, you should not supply reasons for gaps in your employment history, as this will only call attention to the gaps.
- Do not mention salary, (past or desired). Do not refer to personal details such as age, height, weight, marital status, or hobbies, unless this information clearly supports your suitability for the position.

Choosing a Format

Many word processing programs now provide resume templates, which can help you format your resume quickly; however, don't be afraid to alter them to meet your personal needs and make sure that the templates don't tempt you to include unnecessary or inappropriate information. For example, Microsoft Word "wizards" automatically set up the subheadings "Interests" and "Tips," which may be inappropriate.

Two main approaches may be used when formatting resumes—the **chronological** approach and the **functional** approach. Both are discussed below. Choose the one that best suits your needs and emphasizes your skills.

Chronological Approach

In the chronological approach, employment history is ordered by date, starting with the most recent job. Be sure to list your experience before your education, unless you have recently graduated from school and, as a result, have little work experience. Highlight either dates of employment or job titles by listing them on the right hand side of the page. (See the example attached to this handout).

Functional Approach

In the functional approach, achievements and skills are grouped according to functions (management, administration, marketing, writing, etc.). This helps you group your key strengths, which can play down gaps or frequent job changes in your employment history and can emphasize your abilities rather than your job titles when trying to change fields. (See the example attached to this handout).

JOHN DOE

OBJECTIVE

A sales management position in which administrative experience in addition to strong writing and computer skills can be used to maximize sales and profitability for one or more product lines

EXPERIENCE

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Date is highlighted } | 1997- | National Sales Manager, <i>Arbor Shore</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increased sales from \$50 million to \$100 million.■ Doubled sales per representative from \$5 million to \$10 million.■ Suggested new products that increased earnings by 23%. |
| | 1994-1997 | District Sales Manager, <i>Fergusen and Bardewell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increased regional sales from \$25 million to \$350 million.■ Managed 250 sales representatives in 10 Western states.■ Implemented training course for new recruits — speeding profitability. |
| Title is highlighted } | Sales Representative | 1991-1997, <i>Duffy Vinneyards</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tripled division revenues for each sales associate.■ Expanded sales to include mass market accounts.■ Expanded sales team from 50 to 100 representatives. |

EDUCATION

- | | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| EDUCATION IS LISTED AFTER EXPERIENCE } | 1971-1975 | Southridge University, Southridge, SC <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ B.A., Business Administration and Computer Science.■ Graduated <i>summa cum laude</i>. |
|--|-----------|---|

Functional Approach

555 N. Main St. Phone (317) 555-5555
Apt. 5 Fax (317) 555-5555
Smalltown, IN 47555 E-mail me@company.com

Jane Doe

Objective A sales management position in which administrative experience in addition to strong writing and computer skills can be used to maximize sales and profitability for one or more product lines

Abilities are emphasized }

Achievements Administrative Experience

...
...

Marketing Experience

...
...

Editorial Experience

...
...

Education 1971-1975, Southridge State University, Southridge, SC
B.A., Business Administration and Computer Science.

Summary of Qualifications Company, Southridge, SC
Administrator

...
...

Company, Southridge, SC
Account Executive

...
...

Company, Southridge, SC
Copy Writer

...