

## Resume Basics - Win Sheffield

Your resume serves two purposes: It provides the basic facts about your career and it is your personal brochure. Your goal in creating your resume is to inspire the reader to want to meet you. Within the requirement of providing the basic facts of your dates of work, where you have worked and your education, your goal is to include examples of your skills and characteristics that draw the readers' interest so they pick up the phone and call you.

### **Content**

#### **Header**

- Put name, address, and phone number at the top of the page. Make your name larger and/or bold. If you have a 2nd page, repeat your name at the top.

#### **Experience**

- This is the main body of your resume. It lists your experience in reverse chronological order. Each section contains the name of the organization you were working for, your position and the dates you were there. For each section, include a succinct 2-3 line description of your responsibilities. Below this, as bullets, include examples of accomplishments that you want to highlight.
- In listing your accomplishments, think in terms of **C**ircumstance you were in, **A**ctions you took, the **R**esults for the organization and the **S**cale of that result and the **S**cope (size of the place) where you did it (**CARSS**)
- Effective examples focus on what you did that made a difference, contributing to organizational goals. Good examples also demonstrate traits such as organization, leadership, confidence, and independence. Cite numbers to convey size and/or scale of the project, budget, and staff supervised.
- One bullet might look like this:

#### **Keller, Button & Co**

2002 – 2006

*Director of Marketing, for a \$5B leader in software / processing solutions for financial services, higher education, and public sector; managed an assistant, a \$500,000 annual budget and worked extensively with CEO.*

- Repositioned products in the educational sector to be the provider of choice for public university administrative systems, resulting in 15% market growth and recognition in software sector.
- Coordinated with customer service staff to implement major retooling of database capabilities, satisfying client need and attracting new insurance industry clients.

#### **Education & Honors**

- Your education follows the 'Experience' section, unless you have recently completed school, in which case you may choose to lead with your education. Include marketable and/or relevant education. For example, include classes that have been most important in your education and are most relevant to the type of work you seek; you don't usually need to provide an extensive list of courses. You may also include honors in this section.

#### **Other Interests**

- Include personal information to highlight your skills not included elsewhere and to generate interest. Omit age, marital and health status. If you are a US citizen or hold a permanent resident visa, include this if readers might have reason to think otherwise. Generally, it is a good idea to exclude data about salary expectations, religious or political affiliations.
- References are usually omitted. Employers assume that they are available. You should line up at least 3 (for recent graduates, include 1 or 2 who are non-academic) so they can be available when requested.

### **Functional resumes**

A functional resume focuses on skills sets and achievements, rather than specific jobs. Examples from your work history support the listed skills. If you choose to use a functional resume, you will also want to include a chronology to avoid the inevitable questions and suspicion that you are hiding something. Instead of a functional resume, if you are seeking to take focus away from your length of experience, you can include prior experience by creating a heading of 'Work before yyyy.' In this way you can highlight accomplishments relevant to your current direction and avoid the specific dates of that experience.

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### Style

- Be honest and accurate, and not overly modest. You do not have to include everything, but do not mislead. Under no circumstances include anything that is not true; dishonesty on your resume leads quickly to dismissal.
- Proofread to eliminate all spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. Misspelled words and incorrect grammar allow the reader to form a negative impression. Use the same grammatical style throughout.
- Use short phrases, simple, strong language (see below for action verbs) that show your accomplishments. Avoid jargon, even industry-specific jargon. Consider words such as use, instead of utilize.
- Avoid repeating words or phrases.
- Leave out unnecessary words, sentences, and phrases such as "Duties included / Hired to / Project involved." Don't use "I"; it is assumed.
- Avoid stilted or confusing language. Ask yourself, "Would I talk like that?"
- Avoid self-flattering terms such as "highly motivated, outstanding, team player, or excellent, Hard worker, Quick learner, Professional, Team player, Strong Background or Outstanding in . . . , produce work that is on time and under budget, Innovative, Highly Motivated, and Excellent Communicator." These will not distinguish you. Describe your accomplishments effectively and let readers decide for themselves that you are well qualified.
- Convey through the style and content of your resume an understanding of your audience's needs, priorities, hiring criteria, and vocabulary.
- Ask (only) a couple of folks: what sort of job would this resume get me?

### Format

- Stick to 1 page with only a few years experience; generally, use 2 pages if you have more experience.
- Make the page easy to read and graphically pleasing. Do not obsess about this. Use a font that is easy to read and not too small. Leave sufficient white space.
- Select a format that suits your qualifications. Don't automatically follow someone else's, which may not suit what you have to say.
- Use underline and bold to emphasize your credentials as long as the resume remains readable.

### Action Verbs

Accelerated	Budgeted	Coordinated	Enabled	Identified	Maintained	Prioritized	Repositioned	Summarized
Achieved	Built	Corresponded	Encouraged	Illustrated	Managed	Processed	Repaired	Supervised
Acted	Calculated	Counseled	Engineered	Implemented	Mediated	Produced	Represented	Supported
Adapted	Catalogued	Created	Enlisted	Improved	Moderated	Programmed	Researched	Surveyed
Addressed	Chaired	Critiqued	Established	Increased	Monitored	Projected	Resolved	Systematized
Administered	Clarified	Customized	Evaluated	Influenced	Motivated	Promoted	Reviewed	Systemized
Advised	Classified	Delegated	Examined	Informed	Negotiated	Proposed	Revised	Tabulated
Allocated	Coached	Demonstrated	Executed	Initiated	Operated	Proved	Revitalized	Taught
Analyzed	Co-authored	Designed	Expanded	Innovated	Ordered	Provided	Scheduled	Trained
Appraised	Collaborated	Designed	Expedited	Inspected	Organized	Publicized	Screened	Transformed
Approved	Collected	Developed	Explained	Inspired	Originated	Purchased	Set goals	Translated
Arbitrated	Communicated	Devised	Extracted	Instituted	Overcame	Recommended	Set up	Upgraded
Arranged	Compiled	Diagnosed	Facilitated	Instructed	Overhauled	Reconciled	Shaped	Validated
Assembled	Completed	Directed	Facilitated	Integrated	Oversaw	Recorded	Solved	Verified
Assessed	Computed	Discovered	Familiarized	Interpreted	Participated	Recruited	Spearheaded	Wrote
Assigned	Conceived	Dispatched	Fashioned	Interviewed	Performed	Reduced	Specified	
Assisted	Conceptualized	Doubled	Filed	Introduced	Persuaded	Referred	Spoke	
Attained	Conducted	Drafted	Formulated	Invented	Pinpointed	Rehabilitated	Stimulated	
Audited	Consolidated	Educated	Founded	Investigated	Pioneered	Reinforced	Streamlined	
Authored	Contracted	Effected	Generated	Launched	Planned	Remodeled	Strengthened	
Balanced	Convinced	Eliminated	Guided	Lectured	Prepared	Reorganized	Structured	