

## Creating a Resume – Writing and Content

Now that you know a little about overall formatting, let's get down to actually *writing* the resume. What should you include? What should you leave off (and what *can* you leave off)? How do you write an objective? All of that will be answered here, in a few short sections.

### A Few More Quick Tips:

#### Your resume should be:

- Neat and easy to read
  - Use consistent formats for headings, positions, and subheadings
- Current
  - Update your address, phone number and email as necessary and update your content to reflect promotions at work or your graduation
- Free of spelling and grammar errors.

#### Your resume should not include (ever):

- Information like your age, sex, race, religion, height, or weight
  - This information can be used in a discriminatory fashion and is ALWAYS best left out
- A picture of you
- Your nickname
- A silly or suggestive email address.
  - `yourname@gmail.com` is far more professional than `tromboneplayer59@yahoo.com` or `sexygirl2011@gmail.com`. Also, employers cannot pre-judge you for your activities if you do not include them – in your e-mail or otherwise.

#### Design Tips (more formatting):

- Use white or off-white **resume quality paper**. This can be found at Office Depot, Wal-Mart, and other large office supply stores
- Use 8-1/2x11-inch paper.
- Print on only one side of the paper.
- Use a font-size of 10-12 points.
- **Do not include** graphs, pictures, scripted fonts, or shading.

### Basic Guidelines (Remember These!):

- **Be prepared to rewrite.** You cannot write an effective resume in a few minutes. Have your resume critiqued by a career counselor until no more revisions are needed.
- **Do not use a pre-made template.** If you are using a pre-made resume then so are a thousand other people, and *your resume doesn't stand a chance* of making a lasting impression.

- **Your writing must be free of spelling and grammar errors.** One spelling error will get your resume thrown in the garbage. Errors are signs of someone who is careless.
- **A one-page resume is sufficient.** Your resume should not include every job you've held or extracurricular activity you've participated in; instead, select those that are *relevant to the job to which you are applying*.
- **Custom-design your resume for each position.** Highlight different skills and work experience as it relates to each position you consider.
- **Accentuate the positive.** Highlight your accomplishments rather than simply listing your duties for each entry on your resume.
- **Use action verbs to describe your experience.** Don't just say you did it, prove you did it!

## Content – What am I going to say?

### 1. Contact Information (located at the top of your resume in a header)

- Use a permanent address. If you are graduating soon or moving, use your parents' address.
- Include your area code with your phone number.

### 2. Objective

*An objective statement tells employers the kind of work you are hoping to do.*

- Be specific in your description.
  - Example: "To obtain an entry-level position within a financial institution requiring strong analytical and organizational skills."
- Tailor your objective to every job you seek. **Do not write one broad objective** to cover all the jobs you apply for!

### 3. Education

**New graduates without a lot of work experience should list their education first.**

- Your most recent educational information is listed first.
- **Do not list** your high school information.
- Include your degree (A.S., B.S., B.A.), major, institution attended, and minor.
- Include your GPA only if it is higher than 3.0.

▪ Example:

**Bachelor of Science in Biology** with a minor in Chemistry      Expected: May  
2011

Francis Marion University, Florence, SC

Major GPA: 3.8/4.0

## 4. Work Experience

Include work experience where you learned skills that are relevant to the job you are applying for.

- List your work experience in reverse chronological order (that is, put your most recent job first and work backward to your first relevant job).
- Highlight the title of your position first. Follow your position with the name of your employer, the location of your work (city, state), and dates of employment.
  - Example:  
**Server**, Applebee's                      *Florence, SC*                      January 2006-May 2007
    - Acquired dinner and drink orders.
    - Maintained customer satisfaction throughout the dining experience.
    - Reconciled sales, cash, and revenue amounts.
- Remember to **use action verbs** in your description and be sure your verbs are in the correct tense. If you currently hold the job verbs should be in present tense, if you no longer hold the job the verbs will be in past tense.

## 5. Other Information

- Include experience that highlights skills related to the position. You want to include relevant volunteer work, leadership positions in clubs or other organizations, or participation in athletics.
- Some other possibilities:
  - Have you organized a fund-raising event?
  - Have you given speeches or performed any other public speaking?
  - Have you campaigned for an office?

## 6. References

- Do not list references on your resume.
- **Always** ask people before you list them as a reference.

## IV. Resume Checkup

- Run a spell check on your computer and ask a friend to proofread your resume.
- Schedule a resume critique with the Office of Career Development.
- Post your resume at [www.collegecentral.com/fmarion](http://www.collegecentral.com/fmarion) for more advice from counselors.
  - College Central Network is an online resume posting service provided to students and alumni of FMU. Approved employers will have access to your resume through this site.
  - The Career Development professional will check for spelling, punctuation, and formatting problems. Once your resume is *free of errors* it can be posted to the site for employers to view.