TIP SHEET: Quick Facts You Need to Know

What is a Resume

A resume is a document that provides the reader with information about your relevant skills, qualifications and experience.

Quick Facts

- The average recruiter will spend 6.25 seconds the first time they look at your resume.
- Employers value the skills that you developed regardless of where. This includes skills developed in school, volunteering, extra-curricular activities and in paid employment.
- People who apply with resumes that are tailored to the job posting have a higher change of being contacted for an interview.

General Guidelines – Resume Format

- Resumes can be one to two pages max.
- Use basic common language font such as Times New Roman or Arial. Do not use graphics – this eliminates technical problems with scanning your resume or with employers receiving them on potentially incompatible programs or printers.
- Italics, underlining, shading, and sometimes bolding can be a problem as these do not always look the same on other operating systems and/or printers.
- Create a 'reader-friendly' document that uses white space effectively and forward your document to the employer as a PDF unless they specify otherwise.
- Research employer requirements and highlight your qualifications that match requirements.
- Proofread your resume for grammatical and spelling errors.
- Be consistent with formatting. For example, if you bold the name of the organization in one section, you need to do it everywhere.
- You can choose in which order to put the resume sectiosn based on what is most important to you readers.

Contact Information

- Include mailing address, telephone number with voicemail, professional email address.
- You might want to make your name a few font sizes larger than other information so that it stands out.
- Ensure you have control of and access to all email and phone numbers used.
- Use between two and four lines for contact information.

Profile/Skills Summary/Highlights of Qualifications

- The purpose of this section is to highlight your top three to five qualifications to the employer.

- If you include this section, use a bullet format and highlight only the skills and/or qualifications that are relevant to the position you are applying for and substantiate with brief explanation of the experiences that helped you build that skill or quality.

Education
- Include dates attended, program, area of study, institution.
- Include relevant courses if related to job posting.

Academic Projects (Optional)
- Add any academic projects that demonstrate key skills/qualifications.
- Include project name, name of course and calendar year.

Experience (paid, unpaid, volunteer)
- Include paid and unpaid or volunteer experience.
- You can separate the sections into "Work Experience" and "Volunteer Experience," or you can call the sections "Relevant Experience" and "Other Experience," or simply "Experience" which could include both paid and unpaid.
- Order your experiences in reverse chronological order within each section
- Begin each point with an action verb.
- Within the experience descriptions, place the most relevant and important tasks or accomplishments first.

Awards/ Extracurricular Activities/Professional Memberships
- Include any awards during high school, university or as part of a paid job or volunteer experience.
- Include university and high school activites such as class representative, club membership, leadership roles. Include a brief description of accomplishments and results if possible.
- Include any professional memberships, role, duties and any accomplishments.

References
- Do not include your references on your resume.
- When a potential employer is interested in making an offer, they will ask for your references.