



## How to Write a Powerful Resume

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### Why do I need a resume?

A powerful resume does two things:

1. Tells prospective employers what you can do for them
2. Proves you can do it better than anyone else

A powerful resume will bring results. The phone will ring. Interviews will be set. Opportunities will be presented.

A powerful resume makes an immediate positive impact on its reader. It must, since the average recruiter will spend no more than one-minute to decide whether or not to read on or stick it in the file of *lost* resumes. Your resume may be one of 300 others. Most often, you do not have a second time to present yourself. Be as specific and as direct as possible about what you can do for them.

If your resume is a strong, accomplishment-driven example of your experience, it can open doors and lead you to great opportunities. If your resume is poorly written or boring, it won't bring you the desired results.

### When preparing your winning resume remember to include the following:

#### Header

Don't forget your contact information. List your full name, address, phone number(s), and Email address. And above all, be absolutely sure it's correct and up-to-date at all times. If you need to update anything, make corrections in advance of your submission. Do not hand-write corrections or updates under any circumstances!

#### Summary or Career Objective

It would be wise to stay away from objectives as they can limit your scope of opportunities. Instead, work at developing a summary of your experience. Your summary should be no more than one or two sentences. It is most effective to customize the summary to suit the demands of a specific opportunity. Be sure to match your skills, experience and education to their needs. Keep in mind to be honest at all times.

## **Education**

List your most recent education first and work backward. List your degree, major, minor, dates of attendance, name of school. Also list your GPA if it is a 3.0 or higher. Include high school information only if you have no college or university credit.

If you are applying to a position that specifically requires a certain degree or are a recent graduate with little (or no) work experience, it would be best to list your education immediately after your summary. Otherwise, education can be listed after work experience on your resume.

## **Work Experience**

List your experience, chronologically, with your most recent job first. Include the employer's name, city and state, along with dates of employment. List your job title. Outline your job duties and accomplishments in concise descriptions.

Remember to:

- Highlight your most important job responsibilities
- Use action phrases (see attached list)
- Incorporate tangible results when listing your accomplishments. Quantify your achievements with percentages or numbers like “increased customer enrollment by 30 percent” or “managed three-person project team”
- Use bullets to draw attention to your achievements
- Keep tenses appropriate! For current position, use present tense such as, “Answer phones.” For previous positions, use past tense, for example, “Answered phones.”
- **Do Not Be Repetitive ~ it can be boring and turn off the reader.**

## **Skills & Expertise**

Be sure to list your technical and computer skills. List programming languages, software programs and operating systems you've used as well as certifications you have earned. Also be sure to highlight “soft skills” like foreign languages.

It's a good idea to include memberships in professional organizations. It shows you're serious about your career.

We recommend that you not list your hobbies or include personal information, such as marital status, number of children, etc. By doing so, you may be subjecting yourself to your prospective employer's judgment.

## **References**

You don't need to waste valuable space on references. Most employers will ask for them later. However, if you need to fill an empty space at the bottom of your page, go ahead and put “Excellent references are available upon request.” **Prepare a separate sheet listing three to five professional references.** Hold onto this information until you are asked to provide them.

## **Some Resume Disasters to Stay Away From...**

**Never lie** about job titles, dates of employment, and awards. Don't inflate statistics or percentages when speaking of accomplishments. Don't falsify college or grad school degrees. Background checks are commonplace in this market. Honesty is always the best policy!

**Inconsistencies**, job-hopping or changes in your career may raise red flags about your ability to maintain stability within an organization. Although we highly recommend that you present your resume in chronological form, if you have inconsistencies in your work history, it may be in your best interest to group these positions by category (a functional resume). List the category, for example "Customer Service" and then present the related work experience. Then list the next category "Sales" with its related job information. Keep in mind that some recruiters and potential employers tend to view functional resumes as red flags!

**Keep your resume to one or two pages in length.** If you ramble on and on about yourself for three or four pages, or use wordy paragraphs to describe your responsibilities in a job, your resume may be passed over. Be concise. Break up the information with bullets to highlight special accomplishments or responsibilities that are specific to the position for which you are applying. Be brief but powerful!

**Never use the pronoun "I"** when writing your resume. Resumes should be written in the third person. Rather than "I was responsible for the day-to-day accounting functions of a busy manufacturing plant," try, "Managed day-to-day accounting functions for \$2M manufacturing plant."

**Proof your resume before it goes anywhere!** Your resume is a valuable tool only if you treat it like one. If it is presented to a company with typographical errors and chocolate fingerprint smudges, you are presenting a personal image that few prospective employers will look upon favorably. It's a good idea to have another person proof read your resume. Another set of eyes will often pick up an error that you have missed.

## ACTION WORDS!

It is important to incorporate active or strong language in your resume. It grabs the reader's attention. Be sure to use words that accurately describe your duties and use a variety of action words rather than repeatedly using the same one.

### A

Accomplished  
Achieved  
Acted  
Adapted  
Addressed  
Administrated  
Advised  
Aided  
Analyzed  
Applied  
Approved  
Assembled  
Assigned  
Assisted  
Attended

### B

Balanced  
Broadened  
Budgeted  
Built

### C

Calculated  
Catalogued  
Challenged  
Checked  
Communicated  
Compiled  
Conducted  
Contributed  
Coordinated  
Corrected  
Created

### D

Decided  
Delivered  
Demonstrated  
Designed  
Developed  
Devised  
Directed  
Distributed

### E-F

Edited  
Eliminated  
Enhanced  
Established  
Evaluated  
Exhibited  
Facilitated  
Filed  
Founded

### G

Gained  
Generated  
Guided

### H

Headed  
Helped  
Hired

### I

Identified  
Implemented  
Improved  
Increased  
Informed  
Initiated  
Innovated  
Installed  
Instituted  
Interviewed  
Instructed

### J – M

Joined  
Judged  
Launched  
Led  
Lightened  
Located  
Maintained  
Managed  
Marketed  
Merged  
Met  
Minimized  
Monitored  
Motivated

### N – O

Named  
Negotiated  
Observed  
Obtained  
Operated  
Orchestrated  
Originated  
Organized  
Overhauled  
Oversaw

### P

Participated  
Performed  
Planned  
Prepared  
Presented

### P (cont'd.)

Prioritized  
Produced  
Projected  
Provided  
Purchased  
Pursued

### Q – R

Qualified  
Quantified  
Recommended  
Remedied  
Reorganized  
Represented  
Researched  
Resolved  
Revamped  
Reviewed  
Revised  
Rewarded

### S

Scheduled  
Secured  
Selected  
Solicited  
Solved  
Specialized  
Streamlined  
Studied  
Suggested  
Summarized  
Supervised  
Supported

### T-W

Tabulated  
Targeted  
Trained  
Transformed  
Translated  
Transmitted  
Typed  
Updated  
Upgraded  
Used  
Utilized  
Validated  
Verified  
Welcomed  
Worked  
Wrote

**Kathleen Connor**  
*1234 Main Street*  
*Portland, ME 04101*  
*H: 207-773-3333 C: 207-650-1234*  
[katyc@yahoo.com](mailto:katyc@yahoo.com)

### ***Summary***

Administrative Assistant with over 13 years of experience working in demanding, high level corporate positions offering extensive computer knowledge, strong people skills, precise attention to detail, and polished business etiquette.

### ***Work Experience***

**X-Cel CORPORATION**, Portland, ME 12/96 to Present

#### **Administrative Assistant to the President**

International sales company headquartered in Portland with offices throughout Europe and Southeast Asia.

- Responsible for providing administrative support to the President, as well as to other high level executives within the organization
- Organize and facilitate corporate events, national board meetings and executive conferences
- Coordinate extensive travel itineraries and maintain detailed expense reports
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality at all times
- Supervised corporate-wide computer software transition project from Access to customized database

**AXE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.**, Portland, ME 4/89 to 12/96

#### **Administrative Assistant – Human Resources**

Leader in the telecommunications industry with over 300 branches nationwide.

- Consulted with managers regarding recruitment, hiring, employee relations and other related issues
- Edited, co-wrote, and formatted biweekly company newsletter
- Developed and maintained the HR section of company web site
- Produced monthly computer-generated employment reports for the corporate office
- Provided assistance in interpretation and application of company policies and procedures
- Performed wide range of administrative and organizational activities

### ***Skills and Languages***

- ❖ Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, PeopleSoft
- ❖ Proven communications and writing skills
- ❖ Multilingual ~ Fluent French and Spanish

### ***Education***

#### **University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME**

Currently working toward BS with an emphasis in Human Resources Management

Anticipated graduation May 2007

#### **Andover College, Portland, ME**

Associates Degree - Computer Sciences

May 1989 G.P.A. 3.1

### ***References***

Available upon request