

EA Résumé Guide

While Canadian résumés come in many different formats, they all share some common standards. An effective resume is essentially a marketing document wherein you are the product.

Studies show that employers spend no more than 20 seconds glancing over each résumé they receive. Your résumé should present a well-organized profile of your qualifications, work experience, education, achievements and overall career objectives. What's more, it's vital that the information you present be visually appealing, consistently formatted, and error-free.

Keep it Short

Keep the résumé short. In Canada, most people have a résumé that is two pages long. Keep it to one page if you have recently graduated out of school or do not have a lot of experience.

Tailor Your Résumé for Each Job

Career experts recommend that you customize your résumé for each job, especially at the beginning of your résumé. General or generic résumés do not work in today's labour market.

For some jobs, you can change a few sentences to focus on certain skills and accomplishments. For others, you may need a completely new résumé.

Use Social Media

Many employers cross-reference your résumé with your online presence. [LinkedIn](#) is a popular business-related social networking site. When you update your résumé, make sure to update your LinkedIn profile too.

Employers may also look for you on other social media tools, such as [Face book](#), [Twitter](#) and blogs. First impressions are important - if you don't want a potential employer to see something, don't make it publically accessible or put it online at all.

Formatting Hints

Format is critical. Your résumé should be organized, neat, clear, and consistent in formatting (e.g., font and bullets).

If you are applying for a job which requires that you have attention to detail, then you need to demonstrate this with your résumé.

Use **headings** to organize the information in your résumé. Common résumé headings are:

- Objective/ Profile
- Highlights of Qualifications/Core Competencies
- Professional Experience /Relevant experience
- Professional Development
- Community Involvement

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Community Involvement

You should include your volunteer experience in the section on work experience. It is important to talk about what you have done. It does not matter if it was paid or unpaid work.

Use Keywords

It is important to use keywords in your résumé. Employers do not read every word on each résumé. Keywords describe skills and qualifications. You might see them in the job posting that you are answering and on related companies' websites.

Enhance your résumé by using as many keywords as you can. But, do not make up experiences, just to use keywords.

Accomplishment Based Statements

An accomplishment is the action taken and the direct result that came from it. Accomplishments do not need to be earth-shattering; they may be as simple as an event or achievement which highlights a sense of pride. Be honest when describing your accomplishments, provide specific examples and whenever possible, quantify them by using numbers (i.e. # of hours saved, amount of money raised).

C – Provides the **CONTEXT** in regards to your past employment experience that would like to transfer to the current position

A – What was the **ACTION** that you took? How did you do in response to the problem or issue? What skills did you use?

R – What were **the RESULTS** you obtained? What was the benefit of your actions? They can be qualitative (e.g., improved staff morale) or quantitative (increased event participation by 50%)

For more information about Accomplishment Based Statements and some examples please click on the following links:

http://www.success.uwo.ca/careers/resumes_cvs_letters/resumes/accomplishment_statements.html

<http://www.avidcareerist.com/2011/07/07/5-basic-types-of-resume-accomplishment-statements/>

Look It Over

Review your résumé before you submit it to potential employment opportunities. Make sure the company names, job titles and dates are accurate.

Print out your résumé to see how it looks when printed.

You may wish to save your résumé in PDF so that formatting will be consistent and employers will be able to open the document without difficulty.

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There are three different résumé types being used today: reverse chronological, functional and combination (hybrid). Each résumé format brings to the table its own set of advantages and disadvantages.

Reverse Chronological Resume Format

A chronological résumé lists your job employment and experience in time sequence starting with the most recent one first. This format works best for people with work experience and a steady job history. Recruiters/potential employers tend to prefer a chronological résumé for its ease of reading and efficiency in providing past work experience.

Advantages

- Easy to read and understand
- Emphasize the companies you have worked for and the job position held (especially when the company is well-known)
- Describes your job duties, responsibilities and achievements
- Highlights your strengths when seeking a career in the same field

Disadvantages

- Clearly reflects any employment gaps as work experience is listed in reverse chronological order
- Job hopping is easily figured out by potential employers
- Details of unrelated positions may be more than desired

To see an example of a Reverse Chronological Résumé please click on the following link:

<http://employmentguide.com.au/Resume/how-to-write-a-resume-reverse-chronological-resume.html>

Functional Resume Format

A functional résumé highlights your skills and accomplishments with less emphasis on specific dates. This format works best when you want to have a diverse scope of work experiences that may be unrelated to one another or apply for a position, in which your type of experience is not relevant but your skills and capabilities are. For fresh graduates, a functional résumé helps to highlight what you know, not where you have worked.

Advantages

- Emphasises the skills and accomplishments that are more relevant to the job you are applying for
- Covers gaps in work history
- Shows your strengths and capabilities
- Eliminates repetitive job duties
- Allows for flexibility
- Highlights volunteer and training experience

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Disadvantages

- More difficult to read
- Career growth is not clear
- Does not highlight the names of the companies for which you have worked in

To see an example of a Functional Résumé format please click on the following link:

<http://employmentguide.com.au/Resume/how-to-write-a-resume-functional-skills-resume.html>

Combination Resume Format (Hybrid)

A combination résumé, also known as a hybrid résumé, puts together the chronological résumé and functional résumé. It maps out your qualifications, skills, accomplishments and work experiences. This format works best for people who have amassed several years of work experience under their belt and looking for a career change. A combination résumé can be arranged either to emphasize on skills set or work history, whichever is most appropriate for your career objective.

Advantages

- Reflects the skills you have accumulated in your career
- Highlights key successes while showing when and where they occurred, so as not to appear as a disguise
- Target your resume to fit specific job requirements while displaying your track of work experience

Disadvantages

- May downplay your work experiences
- May become too lengthy
- May contain redundant or irrelevant information

To see an example of a Combination (Hybrid) Résumé format please click on the following link:

<http://employmentguide.com.au/Resume/how-to-write-a-resume-reverse-chronological-functional-resume.html>

Adapted from:

http://www.settlement.org/sys/faqs_detail.asp?faq_id=4001064

<http://www.canadavisa.com/canada-resume-guide.html>

http://success.uwo.ca/careers/resumes_cvs_letters/resumes/accomplishment_statements.html

<http://www.adecco-asia.com/singapore/Careerstart/ChoosingRightResume.html>