

Résumé Writing Styles

Your Best Fit

Career Foundations: Item 6

It is important to look at the different styles that can be used when developing your résumé material.

Bells and whistles: This means that the writer includes detail in the résumé based on the type chosen (reverse chronological, functional, or combination; see Career Foundations: Item 5 for more information); however, there are no formatting limitations such as font type, boldface, italics, and underlining. The only restrictions are good taste and ease of reading. Therefore, this style is suited for a résumé that will be printed and sent through the mail or handed to someone personally.

Plain vanilla: This style looks much like the bells and whistles style; however, it does not have the creative formatting techniques such as italics, special fonts, or underlining. The purpose of changing your bells and whistles résumé into a plain vanilla one is so it can be easily emailed or scanned and not lose original formatting or, worse, have its content garbled due to spacing problems caused by tabs dropping out, etc.

Key word or scannable: This is appropriate for scanning into a computer. You should use scannable characters. The résumé scanning system's OCR software must be able to “read” the text on your paper résumé. The following guidelines will help you create a scanner-friendly document:

- ◆ Use only the most common and clear fonts such as Times, Times New Roman, Palatino, Garamond, Arial, and Helvetica, because these are usually scanner-friendly (OCR will recognize the characters properly).
- ◆ Develop your text in font sizes of 10, 11, 12, 13, or 14 points — no smaller and no larger.
- ◆ Do not use italics.
- ◆ Do not underline words or phrases.
- ◆ Do not use bold (unless you know for sure that the scanning system accepts bold type).
- ◆ Substitute straight quotes for curly quotes.

Résumé Sections:

Most résumé discussions focus on three basic sections; heading, education, and work experience.

Heading: Includes your name, address, phone number, and email address. Students sometimes find it useful to list both current and permanent addresses so they can always be reached. Include your email address on your résumé.

Note:

What about including the URL for a personal Webpage? If you have a Webpage, don't automatically list it in the heading. Consider whether you want it to be seen by a potential employer.

Career Objective: A clear and concise statement of the type of job you are seeking and the benefits the company will gain by hiring you. Be original, and avoid phrases such as “wish to gain experience” or “desire for advancement”. Mention the specific position or career area in which you are interested. Stress the benefits you will bring to the company, not how the company can benefit you.

Personal/Professional Summary: Instead of stating a career objective, you can include a personal or professional summary. This section is often easier to write and may say more about you than a typical career objective statement. This section focuses on what you have accomplished and what technical or personal traits you have to offer. Reflect on your past positions and your accomplishments to create a personal or professional summary.

Education: How prominently you wish to display your education and how detailed you choose to be depends on how long it has been since you were in school. Recent graduates, who will spotlight their education, should include grade point average, honors, and campus activities. If you have been in the workforce for a while, you may merely include your degree, school, and year of graduation



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