



## A Simple and Effective Resume Format

The best format for a resume is a simple outline based on key sections with bullet points. Don't make it a graphics arts show or a novel. This is the meat of the subject, and there are a lot of points to cover, as follows:

- **Separate the Cover Letter:** Do NOT incorporate a cover letter in your resume file. Make it a separate file (.doc). Frankly, no one reads them anyway and many times the cover letter is a copy/paste that doesn't apply to the job. Save yourself some effort and don't write a cover letter at all. If you are compelled to send a cover letter, keep it short (one paragraph maximum and it should address key points in the job description).
- **No Pictures:** HR folks get freaked out when you include a picture in your resume given the possibility that it opens the door to discrimination. It is illegal to discriminate on the basis of age, race or sex. A picture in your resume will only make the employer/ recruiter very uncomfortable. It isn't necessary. Leave it out. That said, employers want to see that you don't look like a hot mess. It can wait for the interview. Dress appropriately.
- **Include your email and phone numbers.** This one seems obvious. But, we often receive resumes with no email or contact phone numbers in the resume. No one is going to mail you a letter.
- **Include your address.** Also obvious. But, we have received resumes with no home address. The job location should be provided in the job description. If you are worried that the reader will exclude you on the basis of your current location, then state in your resume that you are willing to relocate and perhaps prefer the location of the job. If you are not willing to move for the job, then why are you applying?
- **Short Version of Contents:** Summary, Work Experience, Education/Certifications
- **Summary Statement:** You can start your resume with a summary statement about your career experience. Keep it short and relevant to the job. Certainly, it should NOT comprise the entire first page of your resume. Recruiters will tend to skip down to read about your work history (e.g. employers and roles).
- **Objective Statement:** Most objective statements are focused on a specific job or role, which may not be the focus of your current application. In order to avoid confusion/ exclusion, leave it out.
- **Order of Contents - Education:** If you're fresh out of college, start with Education. If not, end with Education.
- **Order of Contents – Experience or Work History:** Sometimes, often enough to comment, we see work history in reverse order. List your *most recent* work experience first, descending in time.
- **Fill in the Time Gaps:** First, don't send a resume that hasn't been updated for a few years. It suggests that you are either unemployed or too lazy to update it. Second, everyone understands that you might have been unemployed between jobs. Don't leave big gaps, if you can explain them. Month/year is fine.
- **Short Version of Experience:** Company name, start and end dates, location, job title, company information, and bullet points related to your responsibilities and accomplishments.



- **Experience – Company Info:** This suggestion is unique to most resumes. Add a sentence or two to describe the business of your former/current employer. It provides context and the reader likely doesn't have an encyclopedic knowledge of every company/division in the world. It's really helpful.
- **Experience – Text vs Bullet Points:** No one wants to read a paragraph about your job experience. Provide important information in concise bullet points. Ideally, you should include 6 points, but not more than 12 points. Remember, the reader is qualifying you for an interview. Don't make it a challenge to read.
- **Experience – Relevant Bullet Points:** Experience bullet points should accomplish three missions. First, they should describe YOUR JOB. Describe the functions or processes. If you managed people, how many? If you managed a facility or facilities, how many? If you managed a budget, how much? If you earned revenue, how much? If your scope was global, what countries? Second, they should demonstrate what you ACCOMPLISHED in the role. How did you impact operational performance, revenue, costs, and margin? Everyone loves numbers, so add them, but be ready to back them up if asked. Third, describe other RELEVANT ASPECTS of the job, like programs and procedures, IT systems used, and certifications. These are all qualifiers.
- **Education/ Certifications:** It seems to be common knowledge at this point that you should NOT include dates for education because we do NOT decimate on the basis of age. It is important to list educational accomplishments, such as degrees and certifications in order of the highest level, such as a bachelor's or master's degree. Education is a sensitive subject because many employers will exclude candidates based on it.
- **Other/ Hobbies:** No one really needs to know that you scuba dive or like to read books. Delete this section.
- **Organizations:** It might be worthwhile to list organizations that are relevant to your profession, such as professional organizations (CSCMP, WERC, IWLA, IATA, etc. etc.), as well as charitable causes, with the possible exception of religious organizations. We (employers) do NOT discriminate on the basis of religion either.
- **References – Provided on Request.** If we need them, we'll ask. You don't need to add a disclaimer.
- **Include your relocation options.** NO ONE includes this section in their resume. But, it's a good idea. Relocation is a major hurdle in the recruitment process because candidates typically don't like to relocate and employers prefer to avoid relocation expenses (and the time lost in moving). Therefore, recruiters tend to give priority to candidates in the area of the job's location. Given this reality, it is appropriate to include your relocation options in your resume, such as a city, state, region, or country. If you are willing to move anywhere, then state it. "Virtual" is an option, such as for sales jobs. It typically implies travel and/or work at home.
- **Do NOT include salary info.** We receive resumes with salary listed for each job. Why would you do this? Salary is a point of negotiation. A good recruiter will talk with you about compensation to make sure that you're in the ball park. Recruiters are typically paid a success fee as a percent of your base compensation. An internal recruiter (HR) will ask about your salary history to qualify you and find the bottom of your range for an offer. It's poker . . . don't show you hand right away. Ask about the salary range, commissions, bonuses and benefits.
- **Include travel preference.** NO ONE includes this section in their resume. But, it's another good idea. Many jobs require travel, which might conflict with your interests or other commitments. It's fair to state the percent of travel that is acceptable to you, which is likely stated in the job description, as well as the geographic scope.