

# Resume Writing QuickRef Guide

## Education/Coursework/Certifications/Licenses/Professional Development

- List current degree/major and any postsecondary degrees obtained in **reverse chronological order/ most recent first**.
- Appropriately name degree and major (i.e. “Associate of Applied Science in Nursing” not Associate Degree in Nursing or AAS Nursing.)
- Emphasize **degree** by placing it in bold before school name and location (city, state).
- List only the **month and year** of graduation (do not put “expected” or include entire dates of attendance).
- Include GPA if **3.0 or higher**.
- If applicable, show what **percentage of schooling you financed**.
- List relevant coursework – up to six - that directly relate to the job you seek next.

## Skills

- Include **computer skills** and name the software programs in which are you proficient. FYI - MS Office is a suite that includes Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher, Outlook, and FrontPage etc.
- Include **language skills**, if applicable (non-native English speaker should not include English since this is assumed).

## Work Experience

- Separate work experience into Relevant and Other Work Experience, if applicable.
- List experience in **reverse chronological order (most recent first)**.
- Emphasize full and part time jobs, paid or unpaid internships, volunteer work, related to the job you want next.
- Include your **job title, organization, location** (city, state).
- Include the **year** (no abbreviations) of employment.
- Use **strong action verbs** (supervised, oversaw, designed, etc.) to describe responsibilities and accomplishments. Avoid passive phrases such as “responsible for” and “duties included”.
- List accomplishments with **bullets** instead of writing them in paragraph form.
- Provide **specific/quantifying information** (numbers, dollars, percentages) where possible.
- FYI - When writing numbers, 10 and over are numerical, nine and under are written out as words.
- Use appropriate **verb tense**. Use past tense action verbs (usually end in –ed) to describe all past experiences; use present tense action verbs for your current position (depending on spelling, ends in a vowel or any consonant excepts –s. If it ends in –ing it is not a verb; it is a participle.
- Emphasize **skills/experience** that support claims made in your summary.

## Honors/Awards/Activities/Leadership Experience/Volunteer Experience/Community Service

- Provide names of organizations (professional, community, campus) you’ve been involved with.
- Indicate positions or offices held and/or recognitions or awards from organizations.
- List dates of involvement or award received.
- FYI – do not include high school activities/awards unless you are in high school, you just graduated, or you have no work experience. Only include those things that support the job you want next.

## Options for Additional Sections

- Professional Memberships (list dates)
- Course Projects (include project, course, date completed)
- Research
- Publications
- Presentations

For electronic submission of your resume, employers often prefer certain formats (word, plain text, PDF). A staff member can help you save different versions of your resume.

## References

- Obtain three to five references from individuals familiar with your academic, leadership, teamwork and/or work habits. Do not use family or friends.
- Include a separate reference page that has a heading/contact information that is identical to your resume. References should be centered on the page.
- Omit the line “References available upon request” from your resume, as that goes without saying and takes up valuable space!

# A QuickRef Guide to RESUME WRITING

Use this QuickRef Guide to make sure you have covered the basics for developing your resume. A resume is a marketing tool and often the most critical item in determining whether or not you will receive an interview. Keep in mind that certain career fields will dictate resume requirements, and you may need several versions of your resume if you are looking for different types of jobs!

The staff at The Career Centers will **critique your resume** with you. It is to your advantage to **schedule an appointment** before having your resume critiqued. Use this guide as a checklist!

## Appearance/Format

- Use an **appropriate format** for your skills and experiences. While most employers prefer a chronological resume, sometimes it is better for you to deviate from that formula based on your circumstances.
- Keep margins even – no smaller than ½” and no larger than 1”.
- Use bold, italics, capitalization, and spacing to produce a **visually attractive, easy-to-read** document.
- Treat all sections **consistently** (i.e. all section heading are centered, bold, in all caps).
- Use only one easy-to-read **font style** (Arial or Times).
- Use an appropriate **font size** (no smaller than 10 pt. for body, no larger than 16 pt. for your name).
- Arrange sections so that the most important information is listed first (top to bottom, left to right).
- Keep the length of your resume appropriate to your experience level. One page is typical for those less experienced in their field, two pages maximum, even if you were the CEO!
- Do not staple** your two page resume, and make sure your name and page number are on any additional pages.
- Print your resume on good quality (bond) paper; white or off-white is preferred (and best for scanning).
- Have your resume **proofread** by one or two people who have expertise in writing resumes or who make hiring decisions within your career field (i.e. a Career Centers staff member, faculty advisor, company Human Resources representative).

## Keywords

- Use **keywords related to your career field**. Keywords can be nouns or phrases that highlight your distinctive technical and professional areas of expertise and can include industry-related jargon (i.e. Curriculum Development would be a good keyword for a teacher). Keywords should not be vague or over-used phrases (i.e. Multi-tasker).

## Grammar/Spelling

- PROOFREAD** carefully so that your resume contains **NO typos or misspellings**. Do not rely on spell check!
- Use language that is **descriptive, clear, and organized**.
- Avoid personal pronouns** such as “I” and “My”, abbreviations, and complete sentences.
- Utilize **capitalization and punctuation** consistently.

## Heading/Contact Info

- Put your **name in the largest size font** (up to 16 pt.), in bold, at the top of your resume.
- Use a **current address** where you can be reached.
- Include a **current phone number** where a message can be left (with a professional outgoing message).
- Include a professional-sounding **email address** that you check regularly. Your [first.last@acad.tri-c.edu](mailto:first.last@acad.tri-c.edu) email is recommended.
- Include the URL of your (LinkedIn) website, if you have one AND content is appropriate for viewing.

## Summary

A **summary** describes what type of work you seek and possibly the industry or type of organization in which you want to work. Generally they contain three to five statements **highlighting areas of expertise, special skills possessed for the job, examples of leadership, or personal strengths – the VALUE you offer to an employer.**

- Be clear and concise.
- Support your summary claims throughout the rest of your resume.
- Tailor it to the specific type of job you seek next.

Your resume should contain **honest and accurate information** and be free of personal data such as age, marital status, height/weight, and photos.