

COLLEGE *of* VISUAL ARTS

How to Prepare an Effective Resume for a Student Job

1. Resume Essentials

Before you write, take time to do a self-assessment on paper. Outline your skills and abilities as well as your work experience and extracurricular activities. This will make it easier to prepare a thorough resume.

2. The Content of Your Resume

All of your contact information should go at the top of your resume and should include your name, address, telephone, CVA e-mail address.

- Avoid nicknames.
- Use the address you will be using while attending CVA.
- Use a current telephone number and include the area code. If you have an answering machine, record a neutral greeting.
- Add your CVA e-mail address.
- Include your web site address only if the web page reflects your professional ambitions.

Objective or Summary

An objective tells potential employers the sort of work you're hoping to do.

- Be specific about the job you want. For example: To obtain an entry-level position within a financial institution requiring strong analytical and organizational skills.
- Tailor your objective to each employer you target/every job you seek.

Education

New graduates without a lot of work experience should list their educational information first.

- Your most recent educational information is listed first. Your high school or previous college, areas of interest while in school.
- Add your grade point average (GPA) if it is higher than 3.0.
- Mention academic honors.

Work Experience

Briefly give the employer an overview of work that has taught you skills. Use action words (see back page for a list of action words) to describe your job duties. Include your work experience in reverse chronological order—that is, put your last job first and work backward to your first, relevant job. Include:

- Title of position,
- Name of organization
- Location of work (town, state)
- Dates of employment
- Describe your work responsibilities with emphasis on specific skills and achievements.

Other information

You may want to add:

- Key or special skills or competencies,
- Leadership experience in volunteer organizations,
- Participation in sports.

References

Ask people if they are willing to serve as references before you give their names to a potential employer. References can be professional, personal, educational or any combination.

3. Resume Checkup

Take the following steps to ensure quality:

Content:

- Run a spell check on your computer before anyone sees your resume.
- Get a friend (an English major would do nicely) to do a grammar review.
- Ask another friend to proofread. The more people who see your resume, the more likely that misspelled words and awkward phrases will be seen (and corrected).

Design:

These tips will make your resume easier to read and/or scan into an employer's data base.

- Use white or off-white paper.
- Use 8-1/2- x 11-inch paper.
- Print on one side of the paper.
- Use a font size of 10 to 14 points.
- Use non-decorative typefaces.
- Choose one typeface and stick to it.
- Avoid italics, script, and underlined words.
- Do not use horizontal or vertical lines, graphics, or shading.
- Do not fold or staple your resume.
- If you must mail your resume, put it in a large envelope.

Adapted from: JobWeb.com

Seven Tips for Effective Resume Writing

- Pay attention to detail—Don't cut corners by, for instance, not proofreading the cover letter, failing to include information the hiring manager asked for, or beginning the cover letter "Dear Sir or Madam" when the hiring manager's name is on the company web site. Take the time to make sure the correspondence and information sent is correct and error-free.
- Do the basics—Proofread for spelling, grammar, and tone, and make sure you have followed the instructions of the employer. Firing off an e-mail is a convenient method of communication. However, don't let the sloppy nature and informality of e-mail correspondence seep into your communications—whether it's e-mailed or written—with potential employers.
- Construct an effective resume—Organize your information in a logical fashion and keep descriptions clear and to the point. Include as much work experience as possible, even if it obviously doesn't relate to the job you are seeking. Also, use a simple, easy-to-read font.
- Customize their response—Address the hiring manager directly, and include the name of the company and the position for which it is hiring in your cover letter/e-mail response.
- Make it easy for the hiring manager—Use your name and the word "resume" in your e-mail header so it's easy to identify. If the employer asks for information—such as references or writing samples—provide it.
- Focus on what you bring to the employer, not what you want from the job—This is an opportunity for you to market yourself and stand out from the other candidates. What can you do to make the hiring manager's life easier? What can you do to help the company?
- Be professional— If you don't have e-mail, set up a free account through Yahoo! and Hotmail. Provide the recruiter with a cell phone number if your voice mail/answering machine doesn't pick up when you are online. Also, it's a good idea to ditch the cute e-mail address or voice mail/answering machine messages in favor of something that sounds professional.

Sources: Newsday and Job Choices. Adapted from JobWeb.com

Four Key Elements to Include in Your Resume

Four main themes you should always include in your resume, no matter where you're applying, are volunteerism, association memberships, computer proficiency, and knowledge of other languages.

1. Volunteerism

No matter where you're applying or what you plan to study in college, potential employers want to know you're a well-rounded member of society. Listing your participation in a program such as Habitat for Humanity or your weekly work at a local soup kitchen can definitely add some pizzazz to a resume short of work experience.

2. Association Memberships

It's also an added bonus for younger high school students to list any associations they've belonged to, such as:

- National Honor Society (NHS)
- National Art Honor Society (NAHS)
- DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America; association of marketing students)

Juniors and seniors probably have more experience in this area, but never underestimate participation in group roles. This includes any other club participation at school or in your community.

3. Computer Proficiency

Let's face it, technology is everywhere. Knowledge of computers will most likely be a requirement for just about any job. List any and all experience you have with computers, naming the actual program names you're familiar with (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Photoshop, etc.)

4. Other Languages

The world is getting smaller and smaller, especially in the job market. Knowing a second or third language can put you at an advantage in qualifying for a job and will certainly separate you from other candidates.

Resume Resources

Several job search engines have resume-building pages on their websites that will give you step-by-step guidelines to writing a resume; they also include sample resumes for various disciplines. Some popular sites to check out include:

- Monster Jobs, www.monster.com
- Yahoo! HotJobs, www.hotjobs.yahoo.com
- JobSniper, www.jobsniper.com
- CareerBuilder, www.careerbuilder.com
- MSN Careers, www.careers.msn.com
- JobWeb, www.jobweb.com

“While these devices are free, they also offer resume-writing services you can order for a fee. It's always best to learn on your own, however, because knowing how to write a resume properly is a valuable tool you'll have for a lifetime.”

Adapted from: CollegeBoard.com

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Action Words

Use action words to describe your experience and accomplishments. Here are some action words to use:

- * achieved
- * acquired
- * adapted
- * addressed
- * administered
- * analyzed
- * anticipated
- * assembled
- * assisted
- * audited
- * budgeted
- * calculated
- * centralized
- * changed
- * collaborated
- * composed
- * condensed
- * conducted
- * constructed
- * contracted
- * converted
- * coordinated
- * created
- * cultivated
- * demonstrated
- * designed
- * developed
- * devised
- * discovered
- * doubled
- * drafted
- * edited
- * eliminated
- * enforced
- * established
- * evaluated
- * expanded
- * explained
- * forecasted
- * formed
- * founded
- * generated
- * guided
- * hired
- * implemented
- * improved
- * informed
- * insured
- * interpreted
- * interviewed
- * launched
- * maintained
- * managed
- * marketed
- * minimized
- * motivated
- * negotiated
- * obtained
- * operated
- * organized
- * originated
- * oversaw
- * performed
- * planned
- * prevented
- * produced
- * programmed
- * promoted
- * provided
- * publicized
- * published
- * recruited
- * reorganized
- * reported
- * researched
- * resolved
- * reviewed
- * selected
- * separated
- * set up
- * simplified
- * solved
- * surveyed
- * staffed
- * supervise
- * taught
- * tested
- * trained
- * used

Adapted from:
JobWeb.com