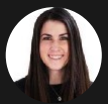


The Definitive Guide to Resumes: Everything Wikipedia Didn't Tell You



Lauren Holliday

Follow



Aug 28, 2015 · 16 min read

Here's my chronological resume template.

. . .

109,000,000.

That's the number of Google results for the search query "resume examples."

I remember when I began creating my resume for the first time. It was overwhelming. With so many options, how did I know which was the right one to choose? And with so little experience, how did I design a resume that landed me interviews for paid jobs?

Before long I was paralyzed from all of my "resume examples," and I decided I needed outside help so I packed up my research and scheduled an appointment at University of Central Florida's Career Center.

There, I met a brilliant lady, Kathleen Rancourt, who I still remember to this day because she taught me how to snag a job.

Kathleen provided me with examples of everything from resume samples to cover letter examples and reference list templates, but for this post's sake I will tell you ONLY about her resume secrets.

Once she gave me the samples, I scampered back to my dorm room, where I concocted my best go at my resume.

Woo, it was a mess.

Fortunately, I had a follow-up appointment in which Kathleen was able to better understand my experience and help me customize my resume according to my work experiences, skills and accomplishments.

Wouldn't it be nice if we all had a Kathleen to help us maneuver our way to the top of the resume pile?

I thought you would say yes, so here I created this blog post to guide you through all of the horrible, okay and absolutely AMAZING resume examples on the web.

Here we go.

Everyday I'm Optimizin' — Resume Optimization

Six seconds.

According to [TheLadders](#), an online job-matching service, recruiters spend an average of six seconds reviewing an individual resume.

In this study, TheLadders used “eye-tracking” software to see which parts of resumes hiring managers focused on in those six seconds.



<http://thesherwoodgroup.com/business-education/redesign-your-resume-for-a-recruiters-6-second-attention-span/#.VeCNh9NViko>

Recruiters spent 80% of their time on the following:

- Name
- Current title and company
- Previous title and company
- Previous position start and end dates
- Current position start and end dates
- Education

Why Company?

Recruiters are interested in the company name because it's all about the brand. It's unfortunate but true so if you have any big names to flaunt, make sure you do so at the beginning of your resume.

Why Title?

Hiring managers want to see if your most recent title in the same ballpark as the job for which you are being considered.

PS: Recruiters don't even open your cover letter.

. . .

Takeaway: The top of your resume gets the most eye-traction so make sure it's optimized.

Resume Formats

Writing the perfect resume is tough because everyone has a different vision of “perfect.” So instead of focusing on perfect, let's shift over to format.

One of the most important decisions job seekers will make is how to organize their resumes' content.

The Chronological Resume

I am sure the type of resume most of you are most familiar with is the **chronological** resume. It's the type that employers tend to prefer because it offers an easy-to-follow path of your work experience.

But just because this is most popular resume type does not mean it is the right format for you.

“A **chronological** résumé is a good option if you are pursuing a position in a field in which you have a solid and consistent record of progress. Using this format, however, can be **detrimental** to your job search efforts if your most recent work experience does not relate to the job for which you are applying.”

Here's when not to use a **chronological** resume:

- When you have experience in only one field and are applying for a job in different industry

- When you are an entry-level job seeker and have little to no work experience
- When you have been a job hopper, holding most of your jobs for less than one year
- When your employment history has large gaps

Don't worry if you fall into one of these categories — simply use a different resume format.

Here are your Plan Bs.

The Functional Resume

This type of resume centers around your skill set, experiences and achievements rather than the former jobs you've worked.

The functional resume makes no mention of your former roles and dates of employment. If it does so then it does so vaguely.

Here is when you should consider a functional resume:

- When you are an entry-level job seeker and have little to no work experience
- When you are reentering the workforce after a long gap in employment
- When you've held numerous jobs yet those jobs do not show your professional growth.

Note: While I do read that recruiters view functional resumes suspiciously, I use a functional resume, and it's landed me A LOT of interviews.

The Combination Resume

The combination resume is a hybrid of the chronological resume and the functional resume. It begins by describing your functional skills and related qualifications, and it ends with a reverse-chronological employment history.

Here is when you should consider a combination resume:

- You are changing careers and need to point out your skills, which relate to the current position you are applying for

- You have had little to no luck with the chronological resume when applying to jobs
- You are applying to a job for which you have little to no experience to showcase on your resume

• • •

Fact: More than 90% of employers are now placing resumes directly into searchable databases and an equal percentage of employers prefer to receive resumes by email.

• • •

This means it is an ABSOLUTE MUST to have:

- A formatted “print” resume in document form, which you can send as an attachment in an email to the employer
- A text-based (ASCII text) e-resume stripped of most formatting and pasted directly into the same e-mail message sent to the employer (can also be pasted into application/resume submission forms on online job boards).

Make sure to read the recruiter’s instructions. They may suggest submitting a particular file type.

Here’s the high-level bullet points about which file types work with which delivery methods.

- ***Text (ASCII) resume*** removes all formatting, allowing the resume to appear the same in all email systems, also allowing for easy pasting into employer resume databases.
- ***PDF*** resumes are very compatible and consistent in appearance across platforms, but may cause employers headaches when they try to paste them into their database.
- **Online Resume** makes your resume available around the clock, and it’s easy to expand into an online portfolio.

. . .

Takeaways:

- *There is no one right resume format*
- *You may need to make more than one resume during your job hunt*
- *Pay attention to the type of format the job description says to submit*

. . .

The Header

Line 1: Name (28 pt font)

Obviously, I think we all know that the first thing on your resume is your name. Your name is the most important piece of information on your resume because it is how a recruiter is going to remember you. It should stand out and be easy to read.

Your name should be the largest thing on your resume. I would use the same regular font style throughout your resume. The only thing that is different about the heading font is that it is a couple sizes larger than the rest.

Line 2: Mailing Address (12 pt font)

Recruiters look at the candidate's mailing address to see if relocation or commuting costs will arise during salary negotiation.

My friend used her grandparents' address when she was applying for jobs in New York when she lived in Florida. Try to do the same if you are applying to jobs outside of your state.

Line 3: Mobile Number | Email Address | Short LinkedIn URL (12 pt font)

This is pretty self-explanatory.

Important Note: I really didn't think I needed to reiterate what I am about to say, but from some of the resumes I've received it seems many young professionals do not know

this email tidbit... **Make sure you list a PROFESSIONAL email address.**

Keep it simple and boring. Stick with:

- lastname.firstname@gmail.com
- firstname.lastname@gmail.com
- firstinitial.lastname@gmail.com

You really want to avoid including numbers and old-school email providers, such as aol.com, especially if you are applying for a trendy Internet marketing position.

Line 4: Personal Website URL | Any Additional Online Portfolio Link

Lastly, I highly recommend including a link to your professional online website.

Your website should include an about page, portfolio of work, contact information, a blog if you write and links to social media profiles, assuming you have cleaned up your digital footprint.

On this line, I also include a link to my writing portfolio, which is hosted on pressfolios.com.

To add the Objective or to not add the Objective... That is the question

This section is going to be short because I do not believe you should include an objective on your resume.

Not to mention, there probably won't be much room since you're only supposed to have a one-page resume.

I am only including this chapter for those of you gung-ho on adding an objective statement to your resume. If you are going to add something to this section then let me recommend you inputting a **personal brand statement**.

Here are two good resources for developing a good personal brand or mission statement.

- Write a Creative Non-Fiction About Yourself
- Practice 4 Different Ways of Introducing Yourself

The Takeaways:

- *The Objective Statement is outdated. I suggest removing it from your resume.*
- *If you MUST keep something in its place, then I recommend writing a personal brand statement.*

Your Skills

The skills section is not required on your resume, but I recommend adding it.

If you are deciding between an objective statement or a skills' section then without a doubt go with listing your skills.

Why? Two reasons:

1. Bullet points are easier to digest.
2. You can easily quantify your skills and qualifications.

Types of skills

1. **Job-related:** These are skills relevant to the job you are applying for.

Top 25 in-demand hard skills:

- Social media marketing
- Mobile dev
- Cloud & Distributed Computing
- Perl/Python/Ruby
- Statistical Analysis & data mining
- User interface design

- Digital & online marketing
- Recruiting
- Biz dev/relationship management
- Retail payment & information systems
- Business Intelligence
- Data engineering & data warehousing
- Web programming
- Algorithm Design — this sounds cool
- Database Management & software
- Computer graphics and animation
- C/C++
- Middleware & integration software
- Java Development
- Software QA & User Testing
- PR & Communications — Would love to do this one. I'm super good at outreach
- Software Engineering Management
- Information Security
- Strategy & Strategic Planning
- Storage Systems and Management

2. Transferable: Skills that you can use in different roles and positions are transferable skills because you “transfer” them from one position to another. A good amount of transferable skills will also be known as “soft skills.”

Top 10 transferable skills:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Time management
- Problem-solving
- Organization
- Learning
- Computer/Technology
- Listening
- Creativity
- Leadership

Quantify

To quantify your skills is to put a number to your achievements.

For example, in my skills' section, I quantify how good I am at social media by adding the following bullet point:

- Top 5% of Elance for social media marketing

• • •

Don't worry if you do not have any quantifiable skills. Simply find an online test or certification to take. This won't take a significant amount of time, and gives employers an actual number to associate with your skills.

I suggest Smarterer.com, or if you're into marketing, [HubSpot's Inbound Marketing Certification](#).

• • •

Customize

You should have a few different resumes so you can quickly and effectively apply to jobs online or send a resume to a contact at the drop of a hat.

For instance, I have three resumes.

- Writing resume
- Social media resume
- Marketing resume

A good thing to do is copy and paste each job description you want into a Word doc then highlight the skills repeated throughout it. Add these repeated skills (that you have) into your skills section.

Length

The overwhelming opinion appears to be: Keep your skills' section short and sweet.

Include anywhere between 8–15 of your strongest and most sought-after skills.

How many you add depends upon your experience, capabilities and the given job description.

Good Bullet Points vs. Bad Bullet Points

Cliches = bad.

Mini, colorful stories = good.

According to Liz Ryan, CEO of AskLizRyan.com, on CBSNews.com, [your skills section] should be done in teeny-tiny mini-stories. ***Instead of saying strong communication skills, say you built the company's newsletter from scratch.*** That fits within a bullet point and it says a lot about you. And the phrase built from scratch is ***colloquial***, so employers like that because it says you're comfortable in your skin.

The formula

A fantastic bullet point tells the recruiter what you ***already did***.

Bad Skill Examples

- Results oriented professional
- Excellent communication skills
- Proven track record of success
- Bottom line-oriented
- Self-motivated
- Team player
- Strong negotiation skills

Bad to Better

- Financially savvy > Spent four days tracking down a financial leak
- Work well under pressure > Kept calm during daily coverage of earthquake crisis
- Excellent working with customers > Saved our biggest client who was ready to leave

Must-Have Skills

According to Forbes, below are the six most desired skills that employers hope to see on candidates' resumes.

1. Ability to work in a team structure
2. Ability to Verbally Communicate with Persons Inside and Outside the Organization
3. Ability to Make Decisions and Solve Problems
4. Ability to Obtain and Process Information
5. Ability to Plan, Organize and Prioritize Work
6. Ability to Analyze Quantitative Data

• • •

Amazing Resource List of Skills By Skill Type

. . .

Discover your skills

Listing your skills can often leave you coming up with nothing. This is only because it requires a lot of reflecting on former experiences.

In order to make this process easier for you, I am going to walk you through the steps of finding your best qualities and skillsets.

1. **Conduct a brain dump:** Open a notebook or a Google Doc and just “dump” all of your achievements from:

- School
- Work (professional or other)
- Volunteer work

2. In addition to your achievements, “**dump**” (in the same doc) all of the computer programs or machines/special equipment you use all of the time.

For example:

- Microsoft Office
- POS systems if you’re a restaurant server

3. **Reflect on these items.** Go through these achievements, and begin writing or typing which skills you used to achieve the items on your list.

4. **Create a spreadsheet of your skills.** Open a Google or an Excel Spreadsheet, and label the columns as follows:

- Action Verb
- Skill (Noun)

- Metric

A) **Begin with the “Skill” column.** Get skill ideas from [here](#) and [here](#). Now, list all of your skills in this column. Try to list 10 at the very minimum.

B) **Next, add the action.** Each skill requires you to type an action verb in column 1. Here is an [exhaustive list of action verbs from A-Z](#).

C) **Lastly, vividly quantify each skill.** Think money, time and amounts. Here are some examples:

- Managed a content budget of \$100,000
- Write and edit 10000+ word career guides in a two-week period
- Top 5% of Elance for social media marketing

Finally, remove as many words as possible, keeping it short and sweet.

. . .

IMPORTANT: Do not rush through this if you want the best skills’ section possible. The reflection process takes time, and it will make your life easier when it is time to apply to jobs.

Work Experience

A [2013 report by High Fliers Research](#) concluded that college graduates without work experience have little chance of getting a job. (*Duh!*)

Whether or not they admit it, prior work experience is the most important thing to employers, and so you want to ensure you write this section effectively.

The Experience Framework

Your work experience can be divided into sections based on either:

- Your skills (Functional resume) or

- Dates you were employed (Chronological resume)

Of course, the most typical way to order your experience is by the latter — chronologically — listing your latest position at the top.

What to Include:

You should make each of your previous positions easily stand out to employers. Make sure each job includes:

- *Job Title*
- *Company name*
- *Dates of employment* (Month Year-Month Year)
- *City, State*

• • •

***NOTE:** At the end of this guide I'll tell you how to format your entire resume. For the time being, just focus on writing down good content.*

• • •

Bullet Points

The most important part of each work experience are the three to five bullet points you type for each job.

You want to make sure your bullet points are nice and beefy — not fluffy. Again, as I mentioned in the skills' chapter, you want to **quantify** your achievements.

Refer back to that chapter if you need a refresher on metrics.

Here are a few bullet point tips:

- Begin each bullet with an action verb
- Use words, such as utilize, design, organize, create, provide, discover, collaborate
- Use a maximum of three to four bullet points per description
- Make sure your verbs match tenses — for example, you do not want to use “begin” for your first bullet point and then “used” for your second
- Do NOT include periods at the end of each bullet point

Volunteer Work

We are sure that the majority of you may have little to no work experience. Don't feel bad! We all had little to no experience when we started too.

A great way to gain bullet points on your resume and pieces in your portfolio is by volunteering for a non-profit organization.

Where should I volunteer?

You're probably wondering where to volunteer. Which non-profits will look best on your resume? It is not about where you volunteer so much, but rather *what you do* during your time there.

Volunteer at cool events that will give you great experience. This not only looks good, but it also helps you meet more like-minded people. Additionally, it gives you opportunities to learn more.

I would volunteer for short-term, high return events, such as GiveCamp or StartUp Weekend.

At GiveCamp Orlando, I only had to dedicate one-weekend or 54 hours as a project manager for a non-profit, which had submitted a proposal to get their website done for free.

For a minimal time investment, I was able to:

- Gain project manager experience
- Give back to the community

- Add a website to my portfolio
- Meet cool people, who were smarter than me, and get more business cards

Education

YAY! We've made it to nearly the end of your resume — the education section, which is the easiest one to complete because it has the least content and it is the least important.

What to Include:

- University name
- Degree type and major
- Estimated Graduation Date (Month Year)
- Location

So what if you're like me and dropped out of college?

I suggest leaving education off of your resume. As a college dropout, this is what I've done. Only two hiring managers ever asked about why it wasn't there.

• • •

NOTE: Do NOT add your entire education history all the way back to elementary school. Include your most recent degree, and that's it.

• • •

Additional Sections: To include or NOT to include...

The following resume sections are optional or for job seekers with little to no relevant work experience.

Coursework

The coursework section is specifically for people currently enrolled in school or ripe grads with little to no relevant work experience.

Formatting If you are going to include your coursework then I highly suggest you do so in your education section. Simply add bullet points under your education information, and list your relevant courses.

Only include highly relevant classes. Research which classes are the best to list or ask a career counselor at your university.

Awards & Clubs

If you won a award(s) or are a member of a professional club then include it without a doubt.

Simply change the skills section to “Skills, Honors & Clubs” and add bullet points as needed. Just make sure that the skills are grouped with the skills; honors with the honors; and clubs with the clubs.

References

While some job seekers add references to their resume, it is not the proper way to format a resume.

Hiring managers will ask for references after they conduct an interview; therefore, only include your references in one of two cases:

- You have a lot of white space on the first page of your resume
- The job posting asks for you to include references.

NOTE: Even if the recruiter asks for references with your application, I recommend including a separate PDF with this information.

What Does an “Attractive” Resume Look Like?

Woohoo! The difficult work — crafting the content — is done, but do not stop reading yet because we still have to design and format your resume.

An unattractive resume, which is not properly formatted, will hold you back from hearing back as much as a resume with bad content will.

While some job seekers (mostly designers, marketers and creatives) build unique resumes to stand out and show off their skills, these types of resumes are not for

everyone.

Here's a chronological resume template.

Here's my functional resume template, which you can feel free to copy.

. . .

FOR THOSE IN CREATIVE FIELDS ONLY (Skip if you're in a non-creative profession)

If you are in a creative profession then it is a good idea to develop a creative resume and a boring, black-and-white resume.

If This Then That

- If you are applying to a job through a job board, attach your “boring” resume. Only attach your “creative” one if it allows you to upload more files.
- If you you are emailing the hiring manager directly, I would attach your creative resume.

Creative Resume How-to

There are many different ways to efficiently and effectively present your resume in a gorgeous fashion.

Beginners

For those in creative industries but who are not designers, I recommend building your resume in something like [Sumry](#) or [Branded.me](#).

These easy-to-navigate yet beautiful tools allow wannabe designers to build gorgeous, evergreen resumes.

You could also barter or outsource your resume design to a design student, using [freelanship](#).

Intermediate

Do you know what a vector is? Do you enjoy customizing vectors in Illustrator or how about PSDs in Photoshop?

If you answered yes, then download a free or paid custom resume template. You can find creative templates in PSD or EPS files on places like [Mighty Deals](#) and [GraphicRiver](#).

Advanced

If you're a designer then I don't have to tell you what to do... I'm sure you'll think of something!

• • •

freelanship



<http://freelanship.com>

Freelanships are simply project-based work experiences.

These are different than traditional internships because they are focused on deliverables instead of time frames.

They can be virtual or in-office.

Freelanships are focused on the experience obtained and nothing else.

We don't care if it's an uncool small business looking to hire a marketing freelancer or Facebook.

All that matters is if the experience or project is valuable.

Published in **Startups, Wanderlust, and Life Hacking**

GET STORIES BY EMAIL



FOLLOW US ON MEDIUM




FOLLOW US ON TWITTER



Sign up for Top 10 Stories

By The Startup

Get smarter at building your thing. Subscribe to receive The Startup's top 10 most read stories — delivered straight into your inbox, twice a month. [Take a look.](#)

 Get this newsletter

Emails will be sent to Denise@denisecorey.com.
[Not you?](#)

Careers

Career Advice

Resume

Job Hunting

 Medium

[About](#) [Write](#) [Help](#) [Legal](#)

Get the Medium app

