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A Guide to Résumé Writing



A Guide to Resume Writing

Whether you are writing your very first resume or updating your credentials to launch a new job search, the following is valuable advice submitted by the professionals at the National Resume Writers Association. Check out the list of 10 Resume Writing Suggestions and 5 Essential Questions to get you on your way.

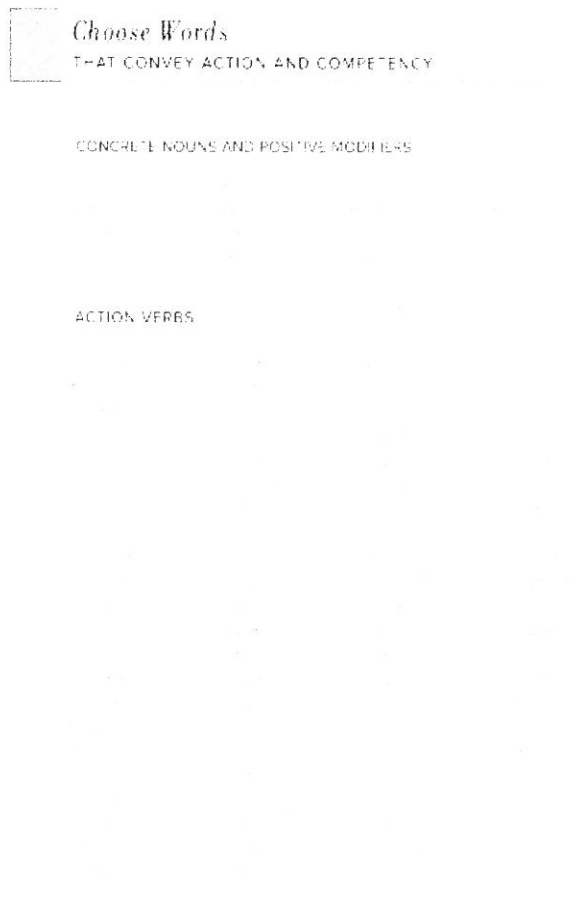
10 Resume Writing Suggestions

1. There is no universal resume format. There are only guidelines. The resume writing example below is intended for that purpose.
2. Actively sell your qualifications by focusing on accomplishments and results rather than routine job descriptions.
3. Final hiring decisions are rarely based on resumes alone; however, the resume should be a concise, factual and positive listing of your education, experience and accomplishments.
4. Make sure the information you provide (throughout the resume) is relevant to prospective employers, supports your candidacy and focuses on skills and experience needed to do the job.
5. Be conscious of the continuity of your history. The reader will be looking for reasons to eliminate as many resumes as possible. Writing resumes with gaps of unaccountable time often reach the circular file.
6. Weigh your choice of words. Select strong action verbs, concrete nouns and positive modifiers for emphasis. See our list of high-impact words below. Use concise phrases and clauses rather than complete sentences.
7. Try your resume out on someone who knows you and who will be objective in his or her opinion.
8. Keep a separate list of references and make them available only on request.
9. Always send a cover letter on matching paper with specific references to the company's needs and your qualifications for the job. A personal letter is always best, so make an effort to get the name and title of the individual making the hiring decision.
10. Remember, your resume is only a door opener to get a personal interview. You should carefully frame your resume as a platform for your interview, setting the stage for the discussion. Your resume should help you control the interview agenda, and your resume is also your final word that others may see after your interview is over.

Resume Writing

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The Five Questions Your Resume Must Answer

Your reader will ask five questions of your resume...Make sure you have the answers! Answering the following five questions in a fully persuasive way will greatly increase your odds of developing

a winning resume. The questions are the crucial elements of the resume writing formula. Answering them will not only give you the material you need for building a strong resume but will also prepare you for networking and interviewing. Use the resume writing examples below as a point of reference.

1. What position do you want to target?

The resume should be built around your job target. Today, written objectives are rarely used. This will help a prospective employer immediately see how you are qualified for the position. Placing a target title at the top of the resume will make it clear to the reader what type of position a candidate is seeking.

2. Why are you qualified?

This is the summary or "Professional Profile" section. This area is used to outline your skills and credentials that qualify you for the job. If this section is done properly, it will persuade a hiring manager that the rest of your resume is worth reading.

3. Where did you gain your experience?

The reader needs to know the names of your employers, the city and state where each is located, the dates of each position, and what your responsibilities were in each job. Ideally, your job descriptions should include lots of active verbs and focus on keywords and functional skills that are most relevant to your job target.

4. How well have you done?

Listing accomplishments and special projects shows by example that you have contributed uniquely to the bottom line in each of your positions. The best accomplishments are those that demonstrate quantifiable results or your willingness to "go the extra mile." Did you save your company money, were you promoted, or perhaps selected to participate in / manage a key program or project?

5. What education and / or training have you participated in that would benefit the employer?

Include only education that relates to your target position. If you have specialized certifications be sure to put those on the resume along with computer experience.

Providing answers to these questions will ensure that you are communicating your value to potential employers and greatly increase your odds of landing interviews. Further, the process will make you more comfortable when speaking to a hiring manager about your qualifications.