

Writing Your Resume

Sometimes you plan on looking for a new job. Other times, your changing work situation can suddenly force you to find new work. I had been at the same job for four years. Then, out of the blue, our supervisors told us to expect layoffs in the months ahead. The next week they asked us to work overtime as much as possible because there was so much work. And then again we were told to expect layoffs. My pay had not changed in over two years. The work was becoming pretty easy for me, almost boring. As much as I enjoyed my relationships with my co-workers, the unpredictability of management, the poor compensation and my decreased satisfaction in the work itself pushed me to a decision: it was time to move on. One of the first tasks in my job change plan was to work on my resume.

Maybe you have never written a resume before. Or, maybe the last time you looked at your resume was several years ago. This module will guide in building your first resume or help you freshen up your current resume. When you've completed this module you will have a resume that communicates to employers the things they are most interested in learning about you.

Objectives

1. Describe the value of a resume and its role in the job search process.
2. Identify your employment goals.
3. Assemble the necessary information.
4. Select a resume format, giving rationale for choice.
5. Build your resume based on the information you have assembled.
6. Produce your resume.

The Role of the Resume in Your Job Search

Focus Questions:

Why is it important to have a resume?
How are resumes used?

Who needs a resume?

- You do not need a resume if you do not intend to work.
- You do not need a resume if you are a day laborer. You know where to go to get picked up for work cleaning or landscaping for a day.
- You might not need a resume if you are currently working in a very stable job that you intend to keep for a long, long time.

But, if you want to work, or if you want to change jobs at some point to advance yourself or to get more satisfying work, then a resume is a tool you should build

for yourself. Even for people who hope to climb a career ladder with their current employer, the resume-writing **process** can be a valuable exercise.

Before we jump into the resume-writing process, though, we have to get one thing completely clear...

Resumes don't get jobs. People get jobs.

I was just finishing my degree in teaching English as a second language. When I saw that the state conference for English as a Second Language teachers included a job faire, I decided to attend the conference. I spent hours typing up and revising my resume and carried several copies of it in a folder. I went to the conference ready to impress decision-makers and get a job! Well, the job faire turned out to be nothing more than a few bulletin boards with job announcements pinned up on them. If there were any decision-makers present who were connected to those job announcements, I couldn't see them. My resume has no one to talk to! I came home from the conference having 'struck out' in the job search department.

Looking back on that event, I see how distorted my expectations were. I had the idea that my paperwork could get a job for me. True, the paperwork is important. But the irony of the event is this: I spent three days surrounded by many decision-makers during the conference, yet at the end I still did not know any of them. I had spent time posting my resume on the job faire bulletin boards instead of talking to people. I left the conference still knowing no one but the handful of my classmates who had attended. At that point in my job search, the most strategic thing I could have done at the conference would have been to meet people. Anybody there could have provided me useful information about different kinds of schools, the challenges schools face, the hiring preferences of various types of schools. And almost anyone there who was not herself a decision-maker could have introduced me to a decision-maker! I had thought my paperwork could get me a job. It took me a few years to learn that jobs come through people, not paper.

So what does a resume really do for you?

To answer that question, let's step down the job search path. As we go you will see the role a well-done resume can play.

1. Research and personal reflection guide you to seek work in a particular industry or particular kind of position.
2. Your research, networking, and informational interviews lead you to send your resume with a cover letter to particular employers.
3. An employer is enticed enough by your **cover letter** that she turns the page to read your resume.
4. An employer learns enough about you from a summary of your goals, skills and personal qualities (**resume**) that she wants to interview you.

5. You and an employer have a significant conversation to determine the overlap between your goals, skills and personal qualities and the needs of the employer (**interview**).
6. The employer offers you a job.
7. You accept the job!

This training module will focus on *step 4*, preparing your resume. **The resume is your advertisement. You must design your resume with this goal in mind: to get the employer to interview you.** The brief cover letter is an advertisement for your resume. Occasionally someone will get an interview without a resume, but almost never will someone get a job offer without an interview. (The interview process is outlined in *Career Garden Module #4, Interviews*.)

Comprehension Questions:

1. **T F Writing a good resume is the most important part of a job search.**
2. **Choose the sentence that best states the role of a resume in your job search.**
 - A. A resume summarizes your work history.
 - B. A resume can be circulated among employees at a business.
 - C. A resume is an advertisement to help you get an interview.
 - D. A resume indicates your strengths as an employee.

Answers:

1-F, 2-C. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Assembling Information About You

Focus Questions:

What information should I consider including in my resume?
What is the advantage of collecting all possible information in one place?

Before you begin trying to make your resume “look good,” you have some work to do. Most resumes contain information about your work and educational experience, for example. One of your first tasks, here at the beginning, is to assemble the information you may include in your resume. At this point, the task is to have the information collected, ready to use if you choose. Later on you will decide which pieces of information to include in your resume. Remember, too, that you may write different resumes when applying for different positions. It is helpful to think of your personal information as building blocks – and you might assemble these blocks differently when applying for different jobs. The assembled information can also be useful in completing job applications which may ask for information different from what you put on your resume.

These are common sections of a resume. You are going to assemble information related to each of these areas:

- ✓ Contact Information
- ✓ Work Experience
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Accomplishments
- ✓ Personal Information
- ✓ References

If you have access to a computer, you may enter these sets of information into files that you can copy and paste from when you are ready to assemble your resume. Or, you may use the forms provided or create your own.

Comprehension Question:

3. Why is it a good idea to assemble information before attempting to structure it in a resume format?

- A. It puts information you need for different versions of your resume and for job applications at your fingertips.
- B. It makes you “look good” to potential employers.
- C. The assembled information may be interesting.
- D. The building blocks of success are good work experiences.

Answer: 3-A. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Contact Information

Obviously your resume must include your name. It also includes means for an employer to contact you: address, phone, email.

Name: You’ll make decisions later about how you want to present your name on the resume – first, last; first, middle, last; first, middle initial, last; nickname (“Bob”) or legal name (“Robert”).

Address: If you typically collect your mail at a post office box, include that address, as well as your street address.

Phone Numbers: Remember, you will want an employer reading your resume to be able to contact you as easily as possible. Record all the phone numbers you can easily respond to: home number, cell phone number if you have one, work number. If you currently have no phone, identify someone who will allow you to receive messages at their phone number. This should be a person who will reliably pass on messages.

Email Addresses: If you have an email address, write it down. If you have more than one email address, you will want to select one of them to use for your job search. The email address you use should be professional and not overly personal. For example, an email address sweetiecakes@hotmail.com might seem unprofessional (unless, perhaps, you were applying for a job in a bakery). If you use email regularly but your only email address is of a more personal

nature, think about registering a more professional-sounding email address to use in your job search.

If you don't have an email address, you might consider getting one. Including an email address on your resume accomplishes two things for you: 1) it gives an employer another means of contacting you, and 2) it shows that you have a minimum level of computer skills. This is a plus for most jobs. You can get a free email address at these web sites: www.yahoo.com, www.hotmail.com, www.gmail.com. Email and the Internet can open up new avenues for you during your job search, on the job, and in your personal life. However, if you place an email address on your resume but then forget to check your email, you send a negative signal to potential employers who try to contact you by email.

Use the form on the next page (or a word processor on your computer) to collect your own contact information. Later on you will use the same page for compiling the contact information of those who might serve as references for you.

Comprehension Question:

4. T F It is counterproductive to put an email address on your resume if you don't have the habit of checking your email regularly.

Answer: 4-T. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Contact Information Worksheet

1. Self

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Message Phone _____

Email Address _____

Email Address _____

2. Potential References

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Name _____

Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Contacted ___ Willing to write reference letter? ___

Work Experience

Use the *Work Experience Worksheet* or a word processor to record details of your work experience. Not all work experience is paid work experience. Some volunteer positions you have had may demonstrate valuable work skills that you can apply to a future paid position. Be as inclusive as possible, even if you think a job was not important – especially if you have a limited work history or if you might be changing careers. List any military experience. Here's what you should include:

Dates of Employment: Include the dates that you started and ended the job. Usually the year is enough. And, if you have had gaps in your employment, listing the year instead of the month and the year can smooth over any holes. Here's an example listing job dates with the months and year:

9/02 – 2/03: *Sales Clerk*, Fashions For You
1/04 – 12/05: *Floor Manager*, Great Styles

Here's the same information, now only including the year:

2002-2003: *Sales Clerk*, Fashions For You
2004-2005: *Floor Manager*, Great Styles

You can see how listing the start and end dates in this way fills in an almost year gap in employment. Your work history will look much stronger on a resume this way. However, sometimes you will need to complete a job application requesting dates that include the month. On the *Work Experience Worksheet* note the month and year of employment dates. Then you will have the details handy for those occasions when you need to provide them.

Company Information: You should list the company's name, address and phone number, even though all of this information may not be included on your resume. Still, you might need it in order to fill out a job application form.

Supervisor's Name and Phone Number: This person may end up being one of your references. Also, many application forms require this information.

Job Title and Responsibilities: Make sure that your job title is specific. Accurately and comprehensively listing all of your responsibilities now will help you when you are constructing your resume. Remember, this is your chance to toot your own horn! For example, *Management of A/R and A/P Accounts* is much more punchy than simply stating *Accounting*. Be accurate and thorough, but be honest.

Education

Including the name of the pre-school you attended is probably not necessary on your resume. What is the earliest point in your educational career that you should show on your resume? Most career counselors agree that your resume should include at least minimal information about high school, unless you have attended various colleges and have advanced degrees. In that case, your college studies will be adequate on your resume. You can make further decisions later on in the resume development process. For now, the point is to collect the information into one convenient place. The less work experience you have, the more important your educational information will be. If you have just finished high school or college, be sure to emphasize the classes and student activities that demonstrate your skills.

For each institution you have attended record the following information. You may wish to use the forms supplied, printing additional forms if needed, or word process the information on a computer.

1. School Name
2. Location: In most cases, recording the city and state of the school is adequate.
3. Dates Attended: What month/year did you begin this school? What month/year did you stop attending this school?
4. Date Graduated
5. Degree Completed: High School Diploma, Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Science, etc.
6. Major, Minor: If your program had any special emphases, these should be noted here.
7. Grade Point Average (GPA): If grades were issued, what GPA did you earn at this school? Only consider putting it on your resume if it is very high. Still, it is useful to have in mind in case you are asked in an application or interview.
8. Highlights: Were there particular courses in which you did especially well? Which events demonstrated particular personal or academic strengths?
9. Student Activities: Note any clubs, student government, athletics or other extra-curricular activities you participated in during your enrollment at this school.
10. Contributions/Achievements/Awards: Note any special recognition you were given.

Education Worksheet

School Name:		
Location:		
Dates Attended:		Date Graduated:
Degree Completed:	GPA:	
Major:	Minor:	
Highlights:		
Student Activities:		
Contributions/Achievements/Awards:		

School Name:		
Location:		
Dates Attended:		Date Graduated:
Degree Completed:	GPA:	
Major:	Minor:	
Highlights:		
Student Activities:		
Contributions/Achievements/Awards:		

School Name:		
Location:		
Dates Attended:		Date Graduated:
Degree Completed:	GPA:	
Major:	Minor:	
Highlights:		
Student Activities:		
Contributions/Achievements/Awards:		

Comprehension Questions:

5. List experience as an unpaid volunteer...

- A. if the volunteer work demonstrates valuable skills.
- B. if you have limited paid work experience.
- C. if the volunteer work is somehow related to the industry you'd like to work in.
- D. if any of the above is true.

6. T F The less work experience you have, the more important your educational information will be on your resume.

Answers:

5-D, 6-T. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Skills & Accomplishments

Skills are the particular abilities you have (e.g., “accounting skills”).

Accomplishments are specific achievements that your skills and personal qualities have enabled you to attain (e.g., “For fiscal year 2003, was able to close the company’s books on January 2”). Your skills and accomplishments combined form the strongest content of your resume. You will want to use this information to let your prospective employer know that you are the right person for the job. So, it is critical that you reflect on all your different responsibilities and activities from your various job-related experiences. You will tailor-fit your resume for each job you apply for by choosing which skills and accomplishments to highlight. Also, just creating this list may help you decide what kinds of jobs are qualified for. You might learn something new about yourself!

Here are a few tips to consider when you are working on this list:

Tip: Use numbers whenever possible to describe your achievements and responsibilities. Providing such details can amplify your image. Also, quantifications will create a stronger impression in the reader’s mind. Take a look at these two examples:

Managed staff meetings and conferences.

Managed weekly meetings for a staff of 15; coordinated yearly conferences with 20 local and national speakers and 300 attendees.

Which example do you think makes the greatest impact?

Skills & Accomplishments Worksheet

Skills

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Accomplishments

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

Tip: Use ‘power words’ to convey your skills and accomplishments. Try to choose concrete and precise verbs, action words: they will show what you can **do**. When putting together your resume, you want to make sure that you are fulfilling the needs of your prospective employer. How can you do this? Pay close attention to the language used in the job ad or announcement. When you send in your resume, you will be literally, ‘answering’ to the desired skills and qualifications that the employer is seeking.

Tip: Highlight the benefits of your skills. Remember, employers are concerned with the bottom line. For example, as an office administrator, you may be highly organized. The real benefit of this skill is a reduction in time spent tracking files, letters etc., and your skill may also have reduced the need for additional office staff.

Record your skills and accomplishments on the supplied worksheet (or in your computer). Later on you can select which to include on your resume.

For Further Study

If you would like more thorough guidance in identifying skills and accomplishments, see the *Career Garden Module #2, Career Goal Setting*.

Personal Information

Focus Questions:

What information should I leave off of my resume?
How do I decide whether to include a piece of personal information?

The personal information section of your resume is a handy location to state anything that may be valuable for an employer to know, but is not directly related to any other element of your resume. In the table below, see notes of what information should not be included in your resume and what information you might consider including in your resume. If you *might* include it in your resume, write it down. You can decide later if an item should go on your resume or not.

Information Item	Include in Resume?	Comment
Marital status	No	An employer can't legally ask you about marital status. It is almost never considered relevant to your qualifications to work.
Religious affiliation	No	Only if you were applying to work for a religious organization, you might consider including this information in your resume.

Height, weight hair color...	<i>No</i>	The rare exception would be for actors or models, for whom these are job-related qualities.
Special interest associations	<i>Sometimes</i>	If these demonstrate something of value to the job, then you might include them. For example, if you held a leadership position in a club, this might suggest that you have some organizational or leadership skills. Remember too, that any association can be perceived as a plus or a minus. For example, one employer might see Sierra Club membership as a sign of your responsibility and environmental awareness, while another employer might suspect that you are a ‘trouble-making tree-hugger’.
Hobbies	<i>Sometimes</i>	Include them if they are job-related or demonstrate a desirable quality. For example, I volunteer to train families in snow camping (winter backpacking). I might include this on my resume as it could suggest leadership skills or the ability to relate to children. These would be desirable if I were pursuing jobs involving children. I might also include this hobby on my resume because it is something unusual that might make me memorable among the stacks of resumes an employer is reading.
Languages	<i>Probably</i>	If you speak languages besides English, this is worth including, as more and more of our communities are becoming multi-cultural and multi-lingual.

Comprehension Question:

7. Which list of items represents the “safest” personal information to provide on your resume for most kinds of jobs?

- A. Special interest associations, hobbies, language ability
- B. Height, weight, special interest associations
- C. Marital status, hair color, religious affiliation
- D. Language ability, sexual orientation, religious affiliation

Answer:

7-A. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Personal Information Worksheet

Hobby	Include in Resume?	Rationale
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	

Special Interest Associations	Include in Resume?	Rationale
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No	
	Yes Maybe No o	
	Yes Maybe No	

Language	Understand	Speak	Read	Write
English	Fluent	Fluent	Fluent	Fluent

Other Personal Info to Consider Including in Resume:

References

References are those people who know you from previous work or schooling, and can offer an employer a positive account of your skills and personal qualities. Almost never, career counselors agree, will you put the names and contact information of your references on your resume. But, since you are collecting information for your job search, put some thought into this now.

Use the *Contact Information Worksheet* (page 9) to record names and contact information for people who might serve as references. At another pointing in your job search process, you will ask them for letters of recommendation and for referrals for informational interviews.

Employment Objective

Focus Question:

How do I write a one-line statement that tells employers whether my abilities match their needs?

Your objective will target your resume and make your career direction absolutely clear. You don't want your employer to guess at or be confused about your goals. When you write your objective, you need to answer these questions: *How can I demonstrate that I am the best candidate? What does the employer really want? What special abilities would this person have?* An excellent objective should respond to these questions.

Your objective should be an attention-grabber. How can you do this? Make sure that you are targeting your objective to the employer's needs. Compare these two objective statements:

Objective: To secure a stable sales position.

Objective: Sales marketing position utilizing my national marketing, direct sales and supervisory experience with opportunity for high income potential.

Which objective speaks louder? They both may come from the same job goal, but the second objective carries the power to interest an employer.

A Format for Writing Your Employment Objective

You can use this as a format for writing your objective:

OBJECTIVE: An **X** position in an organization where **Y** and **Z** would be needed (or, in an organization seeking **Y** and **Z**).

X is the name of the position you are applying for. **Y** and **Z** are the most compelling qualities, abilities or achievements that will really make you stand out above the crowd of applicants. Your previous research to find out what is most important to the employer will provide the information to fill in **Y** and **Z**.

Using this model, you can see how it is possible to write a different objective for each job you are applying for. Here are some examples of objectives for various career fields:

- Senior staff position with a bank that offers the opportunity to use my expertise in commercial real estate lending and strategic management.
- An entry-level position in the hospitality industry where a background in advertising and public relations would be needed.
- A position teaching English as a second language where a special ability to motivate and communicate effectively with students would be needed.

Other Formats for the Employment Objective

You might consider including any of these elements in your objective statement.

- Level of position (entry-level, senior, etc.)
- Industry
- Sector (public, non-profit, for-profit)
- Environment (size or other quality)
- Skills you have

You will want to include two or three of these elements. There are advantages to including more, if you include them because they are **high priorities for you**. The more you concisely communicate to an employer in your goal statement, the more quickly the employer can decide if you are worth considering. But this is a double-edged sword. If your employment objective statement is overly specific, employers might make quick decisions to exclude you from positions that you would seriously consider.

Remember the employer's perspective. You should show the needs you would meet and the problems you would solve for the employer. If your objective statement does not show the employer your potential value to her organization, she may not read any further.

Here are some more examples of employment objective statements:

Specific Position Emphasis

- An internship, co-op, or part-time position in the field of accounting.
- Programmer or Programmer/Analyst.
- A position as an auditor for a public accounting firm.
- A mathematics teaching position in a junior high school. Interested in coaching softball and basketball.
- A consumer goods sales position.

Industry/Environment Emphasis

- A position in a financial institution; especially interested in banking, auditing, and investments.
- Electrical engineering position in a manufacturing industry.
- A counseling position in a community mental health facility.

Skills/Experience Emphasis

- An internship, co-op, or part-time position which would allow me to use my web page design skills.
- A position allowing me to incorporate my experience in promotions and customer relations.
- A position integrating skills in copy-writing, editing, and reporting.
- A position employing skills in training and development, public affairs, and program development.

Not all career counselors agree that an employment objective should be included on the resume. Try to find out if there is a standard practice in your target industry for including or excluding it. Even if you ultimately leave objective off of your resume, the exercise of formulating an employment objective can help you clarify your direction and strengthen your vocabulary for the interview.

Comprehension Question:

8. Which of these is the strongest goal statement?

- A. A well-paying, flexible job where I can hone my organizational skills and advance.
- B. An entry-level accounting job in a non-profit organization needing my excellent bookkeeping, organization and teamwork skills.
- C. A position in retail sales at Big 5 Sporting Goods in El Cerrito, California.
- D. A position using my skills in writing, public speaking, training, web development, grant-writing, human resource management and supervision.

Answer:

8-B. See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Organizing the Resume

Focus Questions:

What are my options for organizing information in my resume?
What advantages will each format give me?

Now that you have selected what parts of your personal information to include on your resume, it is time to shape it. Two basic formats are used for resumes: chronological and functional. Which one you choose depends mostly on the kind of work experience you have had. It is also possible to combine these two formats. But first, let's see what these structures look like and how they work.

The Chronological Resume

This is the most conventional resume format. While you will include an *Objective* and *Summary of Qualifications*, the *Work Experience* section will be the resume's focus. You will list each of your jobs in reverse chronological order (with the most current position first). Each of the job headings should include a few sentences or phrases that outline your achievements and responsibilities. This structure is primarily used when you are staying in the same profession. It is recommended that the chronological resume always have an *Objective* or *Summary*, to focus the reader.

Pros: A chronological resume is the structure to use if you are staying in the same profession. It will be easy for the reader to see all of the names of the companies you have worked for and understand what you did in each job. Also, the timeline is built in to the format. The disadvantage is that it is much more difficult to highlight what you do best. This format is rarely appropriate for someone making a career change.

Cons: With this format, it is not as easy to highlight all of your skills. While your summary section can take care of some of this, the reader will have to take a closer look at each of your job entries in order to know what you can do. And given the competitive nature of the job market, time may not permit this. Also, this format is not a wise choice if you are planning to change your career.

See a sample chronological resume on page 24.

The Functional Resume

A functional resume highlights your job skills, experience and responsibilities, and may or may not include the actual company names and positions. It is mainly a summary of your qualifications and a listing of your responsibilities without including specific dates. It helps the reader see clearly what you can do for them, rather than having to read through the job descriptions to find out.

Pros: A functional resume is a good choice for you if you have hopped around many different jobs, have large gaps in your employment history, want to change your career, have just finished school, or are re-entering the workforce after a long absence.

Cons: A functional resume can be more difficult to write than a chronological resume because you have to both summarize all of your experience and make sure your summary has a logical ‘flow’. Another disadvantage is that it is hard for the employer to know exactly what you did in which job, which may be a problem for some conservative interviewers.

The next page shows a sample chronological resume. After that appears a sample functional resume. This job-seeker has such strong qualifications that he looks promising in both formats.

Comprehension Question:

9. Choose the most accurate statement:

- A. A chronological resume is advantageous if you have little experience in the field you are applying for.
- B. A functional resume is advantageous if you are new to the industry you are applying for and you lack the skills necessary to succeed.
- C. A functional resume is advantageous if you have skills required for a kind of job, but you have not worked in a similar job before or in the targeted industry.
- D. A chronological-functional combination resume is advantageous for those who aren't sure what skills to highlight.

Answer:

9-C. See *Discussion of Quiz*, pages 34-36.

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Sample
Chronological
Resume

OBJECTIVE

Marketing Division Manager where my experience and recruiting ability can be effectively utilized for increased profitability.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- * More than 15 years Sales Management experience
- * Expert internet advertising banner ads, E-mail, search engines, blogs
- * Fluent in Spanish and Russian, can understand Chinese
- * Proficient Windows Platform: 98, 2000, XP, MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, PageMaker
- * Proficient Macintosh Platform: OS, MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Quark
- * Published author: 20 magazine articles and 3 books. See website for complete list.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sales and Marketing Manager **1998 to present**
California WhamJets, Yorktown, CA

Successfully developed niche in emerging Chinese market for WhamJet Widgets. Recruited and built dynamic 35-member sales and marketing team. Sales increased from \$1.5 million to \$25 million. Write quarterly and yearly forecasts. Present reports to Board of Directors and annual Stockholders meeting. Oversee online marketing operations. Developed and implemented time-saving techniques that reduced manufacturing time of WhamJet Widgets by 22%. Hands-on approach to product manufacturing. Interface with IT team.

Assistant Sales Manager **1985 - 1998**
WIKI Widgets, Los Angeles, CA

Managed activities of 22-member sales and customer service team. Online advertising campaigns won three successive *Look At Me* awards. Sales volume increased from \$1.5 million to \$7 million. Created award-winning sales manuals now used company-wide. Recruited. Maintained turnover below 15%, lowest in the company.

Department Manager **1990 - 1998**
Frisbee Electronics, Los Angeles, CA

Directed activities of 12-member sales team. Department turnover rate lowest in company. Successfully implemented sales incentive programs that boosted sales volume by 19%. Developed customer service program that reduced complaints by 22% and increased positive perception of company by 33%. Twice awarded Manager of the Year.

EDUCATION

Masters of Management, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA. Cum laude.
Bachelor of Science, University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA. Honors.

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Sample
Functional
Resume

OBJECTIVE

Marketing Division Manager where my experience and recruiting ability can be effectively utilized for increased profitability.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- * More than 15 years Sales Management experience
- * Expert internet advertising banner ads, E-mail, search engines, blogs
- * Fluent in Spanish and Russian, can understand Chinese
- * Proficient Windows Platform: 98, 2000, XP, MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, PageMaker
- * Proficient Macintosh Platform: OS, MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Quark
- * Published author: 20 magazine articles and 3 books. See website for complete list

SALES

Successfully developed niche in emerging Chinese market for WhamJet Widgets. Online advertising campaigns won three successive Look At Me awards. Created award-winning sales manuals now used company-wide. Recruited and built dynamic sales team. Sales increased from \$1.5 million to \$25 million.

MANAGEMENT

Directed activities of 35-member sales and customer service team. Maintained turnover below 15%, lowest in the company.

FINANCIAL

Wrote quarterly and yearly forecasts. Presented reports to Board of Directors and annual Stockholders meeting.

PRODUCTION

Developed and implemented time-saving techniques that reduced manufacturing of WhamJet Widgets by 22%. Hands-on approach to product manufacturing. Interfaced with IT team.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Sales Manager*, 7 years
California WhamJets, Yorktown, CA
- Assistant Sales Manager*, 13 years
WIKI Widgets, Los Angeles, CA
- Department Manager*, 8 years
Frisbees Electronics, Los Angeles, CA

EDUCATION

Masters of Management, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA, Magna Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science, University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA. Honors.

Preparing Your Resume

Focus Questions:

What information goes on my resume?
How do I best communicate that information?

You have assembled all of the information for your resume, and you have a hunch about which organization of the resume (chronological or functional) will serve you better. It is time to start building. It is important to remember that not everything you have noted will go into your resume. A resume is a sales pitch, not an autobiography. Your prospective employer doesn't want to know everything about you; she only wants to know that you are the one out of 200 people to do the job. And an employer may have to thumb through a stack of two hundred or more resumes to fill only one position. That means she may only spend less than one minute looking at your resume. Note that your resume will be scanned and not read. It is a combination of careful content choice and savvy skills that will make your resume shine among all of the others.

One Resume for All Positions vs. One Resume for Each Position?

Some people have enviously called me a renaissance person: I have skills in many different areas. Over the years I have held various positions in a wide-range of environments, including working as a paralegal, a veterinarian's assistant, a Russian-language translator for a small art gallery and as an English as a Second Language teacher. While this has led me through some very interesting career paths, I have to be careful when I construct my resume. Though I am always building off of the same pool of knowledge, skills, accomplishments and experiences, I have to make sure that my resume is specifically targeted to the job I am currently interested in. Nothing is a greater turn-off to an employer than an unfocused resume. If your resume includes unrelated job skills, there is a very good chance that the employer will immediately assume that you are not qualified for the job that you want. In my case, I have to dramatically alter my resume depending on my job search. For many, it is possible to use basically the same resume while only changing the *Objective Statement*.

What to Include

So now it is time to outline all of the sections of your resume and the order in which they should appear. Before we take a look at that, here are some hard and fast *don'ts* for your resume. Following these rules will ensure your resume a professional polish:

- **Don't** put the word "Resume" at the top of the resume.
- **Don't** include salary information.

- **Don't** list full addresses of former employers.
- **Don't** give reasons for leaving jobs.
- **Don't** include a "Personal" section, or personal statistics (except in special cases).
- **Don't** list names of supervisors.
- **Don't** list references.

As we stated previously, your resume is your sales pitch. And with this pitch, you only have 30 seconds to make your lasting impression. So the top third of your resume is the most important. The following information is listed in the order in which you should construct your resume.

1. Your name and contact information
2. Objective
3. Summary of Qualifications
4. Professional Experience
5. Education
6. Hobbies/Interests

Your Name and Contact Information

Your name should be very easy to read: use a large, bold font (Arial, Garamond, or Times New Roman are good choices). You might write your name in all capital letters and/or center it on the page. Your contact information should also be very easy to read. Note: You may not want to include your work number as a contact if your current employer is unaware of your job search. There are many books that include vast collections of resumes. While it can be a good idea to copy some formatting ideas, it is never helpful to copy someone else's resume.

Objective

Before reading a single word on your resume, an employer begins to make judgments about you based on the general appearance and feel of your resume. Your first chance to give the employer real information about you is here in the *Employment Objective Statement*. Your objective must indicate the need you can meet for the employer. Follow the suggestions given previously on pages 19-21 for writing a concise and compelling statement.

Summary of Qualifications

This is the juiciest part of your resume. Your prospective employer will only be scanning your resume and probably won't read all of the description related to your professional experience. This section will paint a quick and clear picture of your most important qualities, achievements and abilities. In the summary you can include professional characteristics (such as highly organized, fast-learner, ability to easily multi-task, exceptional interpersonal skills, etc.) that could make you stand out from the crowd and land you an interview. That, after all, is the primary purpose of your resume.

Here are some of the most common ingredients of a well-written *Summary*. Of course, you would not use all these ingredients in one Summary. Choose the ones that highlight you best. You can fill in these statements with information from your *Skills and Achievements Worksheet*.

- A short phrase describing your profession
- Followed by a statement of broad or specialized expertise
- Followed by two or three additional statements related to any of the following:
 - breadth or depth of skills
 - unique mix of skills
 - range of environments in which you have experience
 - a special or well-documented accomplishment
 - a history of awards, promotions, or superior performance commendations
- One or more professional or appropriate personal characteristics

If you are a young person new to the job market, your Summary will be based more on ability than experience.

As was the case with your Objective, you can customize the Summary with the skills/experience required for the position you're applying for. For example, if applying to a large organization your Summary would be something like this:

Summary: A public relations and communications expert. Able to research and write clear and persuasive copy for speeches, press releases, and marketing materials. Confident spokesperson for a large organization with many facets.

If you were applying to a small firm, you would change your summary:

Summary: A public relations and communications expert. Able to handle all preparation and delivery of speeches, press releases, appearances, and marketing materials. Confident spokesperson for any size organization.

Professional Experience

When people think of writing a resume, this is usually the section that comes to mind. As we have learned though, without strong Objective and Summary statements, this section might never be read. Only if your Objective and Summary have captured the attention of the employer, will she then take another look at your resume and read your work history. Still, you need to apply careful attention to this section: you want to make sure that your prospective employer is convinced you are the perfect fit for their position.

Take a look at your *Work Experience Worksheet*. For each of your jobs, you will need to write a small description. When writing about your work experience, you should use sizzling verbs: it is best to write in the past tense and exclude the word “I”. Also, you need to prioritize the data in your description: put the most important and most relevant information first. You may re-order the description for different job applications to emphasize different aspects of your skills and experience:

Maintained records control, filing, office supply purchasing and equipment maintenance. Managed front office functions to support the President, Vice President and staff of 20 Sales Representatives.

Managed front office functions to support the President, Vice President and staff of 20 Sales Representatives. Maintained records control, filing, office supply purchasing and equipment maintenance

The first emphasizes the core skills for records control, etc. The second emphasizes support of key staff. You should emphasize whatever you think is the priority of the job you are applying for.

Education

Your educational experience is usually listed last on your resume. If you are a recent high school or college graduate with little work experience, you may list your educational experience prior to your work experience. In this case, you might also want to highlight specific classes you attended that show learned skills that you can apply to your desired field.

Hobbies and Interests

As we mentioned earlier, only include this section if your hobbies illustrate a set of skills or an achievement that is applicable to the job. This information should be at the end of your resume.

First Impressions

Focus Question:

When I format and print my resume, what should I do to make the best impression possible?

You have the content, you have the structure: now it is time to dress up your resume. You want to make sure that your resume stands out from the crowd, but this is not achieved with fluorescent or scented paper. Overall, you want to make sure that your resume is easy to read quickly or scan. Include plenty of

white space. There are certain ‘rules of thumb’ to follow in order to make sure your resume expresses that eye-catching professional appeal.

Formatting: Make sure that you use italics, capital letters, boldface, underlining and bullets in a consistent way. For example, if you use 14-point bold Times New Roman for one job title, all of your job titles should be formatted this way. Make sure you use 11 or 12-point font for most of the text. Make it easy for your reader to read what you have written! Don’t use any overly scripted fonts: be conservative.

Spelling and Typos: There should not be any! This is why it is important to have someone else proofread your resume after you are done. Nothing speaks louder than a misspelled word or a typo on a resume. Your reader will toss you to the bottom of the pile.

Clear Focus: A resume should be targeted to your goal, to the ideal next step in your career.

Concise Writing: Make sure that your writing is clear and to the point. Use short sentences with precise word choices. Exclude repetition. Try not to have more than six lines of writing in any one writing ‘block’ (summary, skill section, accomplishment statement, job description, etc.).

Try to keep your resume to **one page**. Shorter is usually better! Look to others in your profession to see if there is an established agreement about resume length in your field.

Paper: Your resume should look great! Use the highest quality paper you can afford. At the very least, the paper should be white or off white without any wrinkles or dirt. Only use 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper.

Comprehension Question:

10. Many of the best resumes are...

- A. one page long.
- B. two pages long.
- C. three or four pages long.
- D. fifteen pages or longer.

Answer:

10-A See *Discussion of Quiz* on pages 34-36.

Getting Help

Once you feel like you have finally (sigh!) finished the job of writing your resume, find someone else to read it. Never send out your resume before another set of eyes has seen it. If you have followed all of the steps outlined in this

module, you will have spent an enormous amount of time working on your resume. Because of this, it would be easy to miss small typos. Also, you want to make sure that what you have written clearly communicates your goal. Ideally, you will find someone who works in your desired field to review your resume. (This could be a great networking opportunity!) Whether your reviewer is Human Resources Vice President of a major employer, a classmate or a roommate, you can benefit from another person's reading.

Here's what to do: Provide your reviewer a copy of your resume and a copy of the *Resume Review Worksheet*. Ask the reviewer to read your resume while considering the criteria given in the worksheet (as well as her own knowledge, especially if she works in your target field). Ask the reviewer to make notes on the resume and/or the *Worksheet*.

The reviewer's notes might correct mistakes, suggest alternatives or acknowledge strengths in your resume.

This exercise might be most valuable if you have a conversation with the reviewer, rather than just a passing of paper. This allows the reviewer to ask you questions and explain her notes. The more information you can get from your reviewer, the better.

After you've reflected on your reviewer's input, revise your resume. We'll call this version the Final Draft, though you are likely to make other changes as you move along the job search path.

Summing It All Up

Here's what you have accomplished up to this point:

- You have considered the place of the resume in your job search strategy.
- You have compiled information to use in your resume(s).
- You can make good decisions about what to include in your resume.
- You can choose the most strategic resume structure for you and your target job.
- You have drafted your resume.
- Perhaps most importantly, you have benefited from another person's review of your resume.

By now, your resume should be in good shape for the wider world to see. Print a few copies, and get ready to take it with you into the world of opportunity!

Resume Review

Resume Writer: _____ Resume Reviewer: _____

Instructions to Reviewer: Review the resume marking on it and/or on this sheet any corrections, suggestions, or noteworthy strengths of the resume.

CRITERIA	REVIWER'S COMMENTS
"Thoughtfulness" Considerations	
1. Employment objective is stated in terms of benefit to employer.	
2. Information included is relevant to the employment objective.	
3. Resume structure highlights the job-seeker's suitability for the stated objective (most relevant on top).	
4. Organization is clear.	
5. Skills and accomplishments stated in strong, precise action words.	
6. Items in historical sections listed in reverse-chronological order (most recent on top).	
7. Only personal information relevant to the employment goal is included.	
Writing Mechanics Conventions	
8. Consistent, parallel structure.	
9. Contains no errors in spelling, capitalization, or punctuation.	
10. Contains no errors in grammar or word usage.	
Graphics Conventions	
11. Plain, highly legible fonts are used (rather than ornate, cursive or otherwise fancy fonts). Not too small.	
12. No more than three kinds of type are used.	
13. Length is no more than 1 page.	
14. Minimum one inch border on all sides.	
15. Ample vertical white space.	

Other Comments:

Quiz

1. **T F Writing a good resume is the most important part of a job search.**

2. **Choose the sentence that best states the role of a resume in your job search.**

- A. A resume summarizes your work history.
- B. A resume can be circulated among employees at a business.
- C. A resume is an advertisement to help you get an interview.
- D. A resume indicates your strengths as an employee.

3. **Why is it a good idea to assemble information before attempting to structure it in a resume format?**

- A. It puts information you need for different versions of your resume and for job applications at your fingertips.
- B. It makes you “look good” to potential employers.
- C. The assembled information may be interesting.
- D. The building blocks of success are good work experiences.

4. **T F It is counterproductive to put an email address on your resume if you don't have the habit of checking your email regularly.**

5. **List experience as an unpaid volunteer...**

- A. if the volunteer work demonstrates valuable skills.
- B. if you have limited paid work experience.
- C. if the volunteer work is somehow related to the industry you'd like to work in.
- D. if any of the above is true.

6. **T F The less work experience you have, the more important your educational information will be on your resume.**

7. **Which list of items represents the “safest” personal information to provide on your resume for most kinds of jobs?**

- A. Special interest associations, hobbies, language ability
- B. Height, weight, special interest associations
- C. Marital status, hair color, religious affiliation
- D. Language ability, sexual orientation, religious affiliation

8. **Which of these is the strongest goal statement?**

- A. A well-paying, flexible job where I can hone my organizational skills and advance.
- B. An entry-level accounting job in a non-profit organization needing my excellent bookkeeping, organization and teamwork skills.
- C. A position in retail sales at Big 5 Sporting Goods in El Cerrito, California.
- D. A position using my skills in writing, public speaking, training, web development, grant-writing, human resource management and supervision.

9. **Choose the most accurate statement:**

- A. A chronological resume is advantageous if you have little experience in the field you are applying for.
- B. A functional resume is advantageous if you are new to the industry you are applying for and you lack the skills necessary to succeed.
- C. A functional resume is advantageous if you have skills required for a kind of job, but you have not worked in a similar job before or in the targeted industry.
- D. A chronological-functional combination resume is advantageous for those who aren't sure what skills to highlight.

10. Many of the best resumes are...

- A. one page long.
- B. two pages long.
- C. three or four pages long.
- D. fifteen pages or longer

Discussion of Quiz Questions

1. T F Writing a good resume is the most important part of a job search.

False. A good resume is worth little if, on the one hand, you are unable to place it in the hands of people likely to hire you, or, on the other had, you are ineffective at communicating your skills orally in an interview. Preparing your resume is a **critical step** in an overall job search **strategy**. To call the resume the “most important” is to overstate its role.

2. Choose the sentence that best states the role of a resume in your job search.

A. A resume summarizes your work history.

Incorrect. Often a resume summarizes your work history, but the role of a resume is to help you get an interview.

B. A resume can be circulated among employees at a business.

Incorrect. A resume can be passed around among people, and it is a good thing for you if that happens. But a resume’s role or function is to help you get an interview.

C. A resume is an advertisement to help you get an interview.

Correct. During the interview employers collect the most important information about you. Almost never will someone be hired without an interview.

D. A resume indicates your strengths as an employee.

Incorrect. A resume should indeed indicate your strengths as an employee. This statement of your abilities is an enticement for an employer to take the next step, to interview you.

3. Why is it a good idea to assemble information before attempting to structure it in a resume format?

A. It puts information you need for different versions of your resume and for job applications at your fingertips.

Correct. Collect the information thoroughly one time so you have it ready for any purpose.

B. It makes you “look good” to potential employers.

Incorrect. Employers will probably never see your information in this format.

C. The assembled information may be interesting.

Incorrect. Though the information may be interesting to someone, this collection of information is for your own personal use only.

D. The building blocks of success are good work experiences.

Incorrect. This could be true. But it does not directly answer the question.

4. T F It is counterproductive to put an email address on your resume if you don’t have the habit of checking your email regularly.

True. Imagine giving an employer a phone number that you never answer or check messages. The employer might try to call you, never get through, and conclude you are unresponsive or perhaps you got another job. The same goes for an email address you do not check.

5. List experience as an unpaid volunteer...

A. if the volunteer work demonstrates valuable skills.

Incorrect. This is true, but A is not the best, most complete answer.

B. if you have limited paid work experience.

Incorrect. This is true, but B is not the best, most complete answer.

C. if the volunteer work is somehow related to the industry you'd like to work in.

Incorrect. This is true, but C is not the best, most complete answer.

D. if any of the above is true.

Correct. Make an inclusive list of experience, including a volunteer experience if any of the above are true.

6. T F The less work experience you have, the more important your educational information will be on your resume.

True. The resume must give the employer enough information about you that she will want to meet you for an interview. If you have very limited work history, then your education history might be a good place to highlight your skills and strengths.

7. Which list of items represents the “safest” personal information to provide on your resume for most kinds of jobs?

A. Special interest associations, hobbies, language ability

Correct. Special interest associations and hobbies can be of value on your resume, especially if there is some tie between them and the job you seek. It is almost always advantageous to include your language abilities.

B. Height, weight, references

Incorrect. Height and weight should be included only if you are applying for a job as, say, a model or actor. Most career coaches advise that references not be included in the resume. References should be provided if the employer requests them **after** an interview.

C. Marital status, hair color, religious affiliation

Incorrect. Your performance in very few jobs would depend on your marital status. In fact, it is illegal for an employer to ask about marital status in an interview. Hair color is not appropriate unless the job directly involves your appearance (model). Religious affiliation should not be included except in those rare cases when religion is a required part of the job, for example, for ministers.

D. Language ability, sexual orientation, religious affiliation

Incorrect. Language ability should be included in a resume, but sexual orientation and religious affiliation almost never should be.

8. Which of these is the strongest goal statement?

A. A well-paying, flexible job where I can hone my organizational skills and advance.

Incorrect. This statement is focused on the job-seeker's needs to the exclusion of how the applicant can meet the needs of the employer.

B. An entry-level accounting job in a non-profit organization needing my excellent bookkeeping, organization and teamwork skills.

Correct. This statement states the level and sector of job desired and indicates the skills the applicant can contribute to the employer.

C. A position in retail sales at Big 5 Sporting Goods in El Cerrito, California.

Incorrect. This statement is overly specific. It might come across as “pushy” to the manager of Big 5 in El Cerrito. Any other employer might disregard this resume as irrelevant.

D. A position using my skills in writing, public speaking, training, web development, grant-writing, human resource management and supervision.

Incorrect. This statement lacks focus. It would be stronger if it listed fewer skills (the ones the applicant is most interested in using).

9. Choose the most accurate statement:

A. A chronological resume is advantageous if you have little experience in the field you are applying for.

Incorrect. A chronological resume is advantageous if you have a solid track record in the industry or in similar jobs that you are applying for.

B. A functional resume is advantageous if you are new to the industry you are applying for and you lack the skills necessary to succeed.

Incorrect. There is no advantage to using a functional resume if you lack the skills required the job you are targeting.

C. A functional resume is advantageous if you have skills required for a kind of job, but you have not worked in a similar job before or in the targeted industry.

Correct.

D. A chronological-functional combination resume is advantageous for those who aren't sure what skills to highlight.

Incorrect. A hybrid resume must clearly communicate both the skill strengths of the applicant and details of the applicant's work history.

10. Many of the best resumes are...

A. one page long.

Correct. In most cases you should strive to present yourself on a single sheet of paper.

B. two pages long.

Incorrect.

C. three or four pages long.

Incorrect.

D. fifteen pages or longer.

Incorrect. University faculty and other scholars use a "curriculum vitae" to record the totality of their academic work, but academia is probably the only industry that uses such a document as a "resume." Career coaches usually encourage their clients to focus and prioritize their statements to produce a one-page resume.

Prepare to Meet Your Coach

Student:

Bring the completed items listed below when you meet with your instructor or coach.

Reflective Writing:

What idea or activity in this module has been the most helpful to you? Why?

What questions do you still have?

Instructor:

Record student performance in right column of the table.

Item	%age of Module	Standard	Student Performance
Resume Review Worksheet	40	Worksheet has name of student AND reviewer and is submitted with the resume draft that was reviewed. Reviewer's suggestions should be visible in marks on the resume and/or on the worksheet.	
Final Draft of Resume	40	Resume clearly meets 12 of the 15 criteria on the Resume Review Worksheet.	
Quiz	20	8 out of 10 correct.	

Date Module Completed: _____

Notes:

Next Meeting Date & Time: _____