

What is a resume?

Your resume is a strategic, skills-based document designed to attract an employer's attention and get you the interview. It highlights skills relevant to the job or career field of interest to you. These skills may come from your education, prior work experience, or through involvement with sports, your community, an internship, and/or other volunteer activities.

Think about your resume as a "menu" of your skills. Not all your skills. Rather it is a menu of the skills you want to use and/or those you have developed that relate to your career field of interest.

Getting Started – step by step guide to drafting your resume

Step One. Consider content.

Content is the information you select to include on your resume. Eventually you will need to make decisions about what you will include and what you will eliminate – but not right away: To begin:

1. Make a list of all your paid and unpaid experiences. Work in "reverse chronological order" – begin at the present and work backwards.
 - A. Add brief descriptions of what you did using the action verb list at the end of this handout to help identify the key skills you want to convey.
 - B. Add dates – beginning and ending. When did you do these?
2. Make a list of any post-high school institutions you've attended.
 - A. Add the type of degree/diploma received and when.
 - B. Are there any courses you took that would be of particular interest to an employer?
 - C. Did you receive any special honors or awards (e.g., dean's list, scholarships)
3. Review your transcript to identify courses you took that might relate to the position you are pursuing.
4. List special honors or awards (e.g., dean's list, scholarships).
5. Decide what information is relevant to the job or career field you've chosen – keeping in my mind the ideal resume will be one page long. You may need to eliminate some information.

Step Two: Select a format

Format is how that information you ultimately select to include on your resume is visually presented. Once you've decided what you will include and what can be eliminated, it's time to determine the best way to lay that out on paper to catch the employer's attention. Consider:

- Listing that section first that will have the greatest impact on the reader

- The most strategic order in which to list your skills
- Incorporating “white space” so that an employer can easily scan your resume in 10 – 15 seconds

There is a sample format at the end of this handout that you will find helpful for generating your first draft resume. Visit this site for additional sample formats:

- http://www.vault.com/cb/careerlib/careerlib_main.jsp?parrefer=758

to access this site you will need to use your MassBay email address to obtain a password

Step Three: Get feedback from a Career Counselor

Have a professional on our staff review your resume to be certain you’ve:

- created the professional impression you intended
- included the information necessary to interest an employer in your candidacy
- eliminated information that does not support your candidacy
- generated a document with a professional sound and feel

Step Four: Make revisions

Consider what the counselor has to say and make your revisions. Their suggestions are based on expertise and knowledge of what employers want.

Step Five: Repeat Steps Three and Four until you have a document of which you’re proud - one that represents your skills and is likely to generate interviews

Ultimately you will make the final decision about what revisions to include and when you believe your resume is “done.” After all, it is your resume and a professional representation of you. You need to feel good about it.

Action Verbs – use of action verbs conveys skills you have to offer an employer. Be sure to use the correct tense. Here are some action verbs to consider:

addressed	administered	advised	analyzed
applied	appraised	arbitrated	assembled
briefed	calculated	collaborated	communicated
compared	complied	composed	computed
conceived	contributed	coordinated	counseled
created	dealt	defined	delegated
demonstrated	designed	developed	diagnosed
directed	edited	established	evaluated
expedited	facilitated	forecasted	founded
guided	implemented	initiated	instructed

interpreted
led
mediated
operated
persuaded
programmed
reported
searched
taught

invented
maintained
mobilized
organized
planned
promoted
researched
selected
tested

inventoried
managed
motivated
perceived
prepared
proposed
restored
supervised
trained

investigated
measured
negotiated
performed
produced
recruited
scheduled
surveyed
translated