

## Preparing to Write a Resume: Tips to Help You Get it Right!

Writing your resume can be an overwhelming task on top of the pressure of having to look for work. You can reduce a lot of this anxiety if you gather the appropriate information in advance. Once you have it all in one place, you can start to create an effective resume. Breaking the process into two parts, preparing and then writing will make things go much easier and produce a resume that gets results.

### Self-Analysis: A goal without a plan is just a wish

- Identify a clear job goal(s)
- What kinds of jobs are you interested in?
- What kind of company do you want to work for?
- If your answer is, *“I don’t care, I just need a job,”* your job search is less likely to be successful than if you spend some time thinking about where you want to work, and what you want to do

### Personal Skills Profile: Have faith in your skills

Know yourself so you know the product you’re marketing. Create a list of all the skills and qualifications you have and then group them into different categories.

#### Job Content Skills

- These are the skills specific to a job or occupation (e.g. a sales person would include customer service, record keeping, order processing, inventory management, billing and product displays)
- Job content skills are often used to screen you into or out of an interview
- They do not always come from employment
- You may have developed job skills through education, hobbies, community activities, and life experiences

#### Self-Management Skills

- These are personality traits that you have developed through life experiences, such as work, school, family, and volunteer projects
- Some call these “fitting-in skills” (e.g. reliable, co-operative, punctual, and responsible)
- You can usually say “I am” in front of a self-management skill

#### Transferable Skills

- These are skills that can be transferred from one work setting to another
- They help you to adapt from one environment to another (e.g. strong communication skills can be used in a variety of jobs)
- Since transferable skills readily transfer from one job to another, they are often considered to be among the most valuable

### Accomplishments: I cannot do everything, but I can do something

The secret to making a company interested in your resume is to include both professional and personal accomplishments.

- An accomplishment describes anything positive that you have achieved, or something you’re proud of

- It's usually something you solved, improved, developed, constructed, designed, sold, started or did well
- It's different from the tasks listed in a job description, which remain the same regardless of who fills the position
- What distinguishes you from another person doing the same position?
- What are you known for?
- Focus on the most relevant achievements
- Quantify by using numbers whenever you can (e.g. improved sales by 15%)

### **Job Description: Know your customer**

Good marketing involves not only knowing your product, but also knowing what the customer (employer) needs. If you want a job as a Customer Service Representative, then you should know what that job looks like and the skills and qualifications of a person doing that job

- Write down what position you are going after and then outline what the employer would be looking for in an applicant
- Look at job advertisements and profiles

### **Work Experience: Every experience, good or bad, helps us learn**

The work experience section of your resume should contain specific information about your employment history.

- Companies you worked for, employment dates, job titles, responsibilities and impacts, promotions, awards and recognitions, other experience
- Go back up to 10-15 years
- Job hunters with no experience - you can either keep it empty and focus on the other sections, or fill it up with work experience in student organizations, non-profits, volunteer and unpaid positions, etc.

### **Education & Training: I am still learning**

In this section you don't want to include every single course you've ever taken. It should relate to your job goal and the job(s) you are seeking. Gather the relevant information, such as:

- The name of the school/training provider, field of study or topic, location, mode, date completed
- What you obtained, such as a certificate, license, diploma, degree
- Any academic awards/honours (optional)
- If you didn't finish your education, you can still put it down
- If you [don't have any related education](#) or training, certifications, or licenses, this section isn't relevant to you and you can skip it. Use the other sections to highlight how you will add value to the company

### **Additional Items**

Other items that can be included on a resume include:

- Languages
- Certifications
- Publications
- Awards
- Volunteer experience
- Extra curricular activities (if related)