

# Direct Hire Associates

## The Art of Resumes

### The first step to your next job

When writing your resume, keep in mind that a resume is not a marketing piece; it is an outline of your professional experience, which highlights your skills and accomplishments. Approach the preparation of your resume with the objective of getting screened into a company's hiring process and moving to the next stage: the interview.

#### **Vital information**

Always make it easy for a potential employer to identify and contact you. The first thing on your resume should be your name. Followed by a physical address, one mobile number (no work phone numbers), an e-mail address, and – if you go by a name other than your given name – put it on your resume.

#### **Previous job experience**

If there is information that is unclear or missing, the resume reader will assume that you are hiding something. Employers want to see a candidate's stability, logical job changes and current employment. So, always use dates with months when listing your experience. If you have over 20 years of experience, it's okay to list some of it as "Prior Experience" with titles and dates of positions only (see page 3 example).

#### **Education and certification**

This section should feature educational institution names, degree, graduation date (year only), areas of study, awards, and important distinctions. Once you have professional experience, list your education below your experience.

#### **Computer skills and abilities**

This part is intended to provide information regarding your other attributes that are either not related to your previous work experience or not highlighted by your accomplishments. List the computer programs you have used in the last 10 years, any languages you speak fluently, and other information that you wish to point out to a potential employer. Avoid listing hobbies, unless they are pertinent to the job you are applying for. This section should always be listed last on your resume and – unlike your experience and education – the list should be divided by commas, not bullet points.

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## Formatting

This may seem like obvious information, but as recruiters we encounter countless resumes that are formatted in distracting and ineffective ways. Uncommon/unique resumes are an easy way to get screened out of a hiring process, so stick to simple formatting. Some basics to keep in mind include:

- Use a clear, easy to read font. Preferably not one that looks like an old school typewriter.
- Present the most important information first. Try to quantify some, but not all of the information – too many numbers are distracting.
- Write enough information in each bullet for someone to understand the thought; don't tell the whole story. They will ask if they would like to know more about a particular bullet point.
- Always list specific dates, using the month and year. If this is not included on a resume, a potential employer will always assume the worst.

## Sidestepping common mistakes

Effective resumes communicate not only your accomplishments, but a good resume also shows the quality of written work you can produce. Think of a resume as a work sample. You want to prepare it professionally and proofread it multiple times; even show a friend – it can't hurt!

Some common pitfalls include:

- Unless you are a long-time consultant/temporary employee, never use a functional resume.
- Avoid using pronouns. This will help you be concise.
- Do not use slang. If you must use jargon, acronyms, or abbreviations, be sure to explain as the resume reader may not be an expert in your functional role or industry.
- Do not list your reasons for leaving, salary history, confidential information or the name of the person to whom you reported on your resume.
- Do not have more than one resume. You are one person with one set of experiences.
- Do not apply "graphic design" to your resume. Avoid horizontal lines, boxes, or graphics.
- Do not force your resume onto 1 page, or go longer than 3. Do the best that you can to fit your resume onto 2 pages.

## A note about "embellishing" your resume

All too often, candidates try to edit or manipulate their resume in order to get an interview. This is the worst thing you could possibly do. As part of your application, this document follows you throughout your career and is grounds for immediate termination at any time in the future if you are discovered to have lied on your resume.

Please realize that tricking a company into interviewing you will only set up false expectations that you will not be able to meet. Trust us! You'd rather have fewer interviews in which you have the real potential to be hired, rather than just a bunch of first interviews. Unless, of course, you are independently wealthy and really enjoy meeting new people; in which case, you may want to try speed dating.

**Sample Resume – Light Experience**

**First Last Name**

Contact Address, City, ST Zip  
123.456.7890 emailaddress@domain.com

Experience:

**COMPANY NAME**, City, ST Month, Year - Present  
*Position Title* (October 2002 - December 2009)  
• 1st bullet point  
• Next bullet point

Education and Certification:

School, Location, Degree, Date (year of graduation only)

Computer and Other Skills:

List the computer programs you have used in the last 10 years, any additional skills that apply

**Sample Resume – Heavy Experience**

**First Last Name**

Contact Address, City, ST Zip  
123.456.7890 emailaddress@domain.com

Experience:

**COMPANY NAME**, City, ST October 2002 - Present  
*Position Title* (December 2004 - Present)  
• 1st bullet point  
• Next bullet point

*Position Title* (October 2002 - December 2004)  
• More and more bullets

**COMPANY NAME**, City, ST January 1998 - October 2002  
*Position Title*  
• More bullets

Other Previous Experience: (<Use only if over 20 years of experience or more)

**COMPANY NAME**, ST, Title, Dates of employment  
**COMPANY NAME**, ST, Title, Dates of employment  
**COMPANY NAME**, ST, Title, Dates of employment

Education and Certification:

School, Location, Degree, Date (year of graduation only)

Computer and Other Skills:

List the computer programs you have used in the last 10 years, any additional skills that apply