

# Tips on Building a Resume

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**If you're looking for a job, you need a resume. Your resume is your calling card, your advertisement, your brochure, your flyer. It's a one-page handout that shows what a great catch you are.**

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## Resume writing tips

The first impression you make with a potential employer is usually on paper – through your resume. Your resume is the most important component of your job search. This is the first impression to an employer. It serves as a guide to your personality, goals, skill sets, and experience. A resume can determine whether you'll get an interview or not. If you want your potential employer to see you for the organized, intelligent, hard-working person you are, you need to make that clear on paper. Here are some tips:

- Give your resume a KISS; Keep It Super Simple.
  - Avoid fancy type. Also avoid cutesy artwork or photos.
  - Use simple, everyday language. Keep sentences brief, under 12 words.
  - Bold or CAPITALIZE section headings so they stand out.
  - Single-space within sections, double-space between sections.
  - Be concise and use action words when describing your experience.
  - Use bullets at the beginning of a list.
  - Don't exaggerate; you'll have to back it up.
  - Show a positive and enthusiastic attitude.
  - Limit your resume to ONE PAGE on standard 8½" by 11" white paper.
  - Proofread for *spellig* and *gramer*. Don't just trust spell check – read it carefully. Then re-read it. Then have someone else proofread! Stupid mistakes and typos will KILL a good resume.
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## Experience

Looking for a first job can be an adventure in itself. Many employers look for experienced workers. But how do you get experience without having a job?

You have to expand the way you think about experience. Volunteer programs, school projects, and organizations sometimes provide experience that is useful in a work setting also.

Identify your skills when thinking about job hunting, but also keep track of experiences you've had that an employer might be looking for:

- Have you ever worked on a team in school (yearbook staff, literary magazine, athletics)?
- Did you use word processing, or databases and spreadsheets in your studies (research, writing, web site development)?
- Did you work on special projects during high school that brought you additional knowledge in an area of your interest (video projects, theater productions, planning committees, student government organizations, internships, debate team)?

Work experience is almost always a good thing. It shows responsible behavior and the ability to get along with others. And, having a part-time job is a good way to help meet education and personal expenses. That being said, not everyone can or should get a job while they're in school, but it's definitely something to consider. Talk to your parents and others who have experience working while in school to help you figure out whether it's a good idea for you.

## Skills for any resume

It doesn't matter if you are working for a large corporation or a local car wash, there are three key skills that are needed to be successful at any job. Today, organizations are forced to accomplish more with less resources. With this in mind, it is important for you to have a variety of skills.

### Interpersonal Skills

If you are working at a company that has more than one employee, you will need good interaction skills. The success of an organization is highly dependent on how well people work together. Having good interpersonal skills simply means you have the ability to convey your ideas and opinions in a way that is palatable and non-offensive to others.

### Problem-Solving Skills

The business world is fast paced and complex. It is inevitable that challenges will arise. When problems do arise, having skills to diffuse the problem is an imperative. Individuals with the ability to identify conflict, develop solutions and make effective business decisions will most likely be approached to play a leadership role.

### Technology Skills

The majority of organizations today rely heavily on technology to manage business. Furthermore, organizations need employees who have some technical skills. It is not necessary to know every detail of technology, but it is necessary for you to have a working knowledge of basic technical functions, like word processing, transporting files, etc.

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## 100 great resume words

The words you choose for your resume can help you catch the attention of a potential employer. It is important to use action words and to write in the "active voice" instead of "passive voice."

Passive voice: "Monthly financial reports were generated by me." — BAD!

Active voice: "I generated the monthly financial reports." — GOOD!

Here are some words you can use to make your resume more attention grabbing and dynamic:

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Assist	Able	Action	Analysis	Achievement
Accomplished	Advanced	Conduct	Consult	Committed
Conducted	Contributed	Coordinated	Develop	Deliver
Design	Defined	Diversified	Devoted	Distinguished
Encourage	Earned	Enhance	Evaluate	Examined
Extended	Facilitate	Formulate	Fulfilled	Forecasted
Generated	Gained	Gathered	Gave	Headed
Hosted	Identified	Implemented	Improved	Improvised
Influenced	Launched	Lobbied	Maintained	Managed
Marketed	Maximized	Mediated	Modernized	Motivated
Negotiated	Observed	Obtained	Operated	Organized
Originated	Oversaw	Participated	Performed	Pioneered
Planned	Prepared	Presented	Promoted	Provided
Published	Pursued	Quantified	Ranked	Received
Recommended	Redesigned	Reengineered	Reorganized	Represented
Restructured	Revised	Safeguarded	Secured	Selected
Specified	Spearheaded	Standardized	Strengthened	Structured
Suggested	Superseded	Supervised	Targeted	Taught
Tested	Trained	Transformed	Transcended	Unified
Upgraded	Utilized	Validated	Valued	Wrote