# Developing an Effective Resume

- **A resume is** a concise, organized summary of your skills, accomplishments, experiences, and education, which is designed to capture the interest of a potential employer.
- **A resume should be** tailored specifically for the kind of job/organization/career you are seeking. This means you may have to write more than one resume if applying for different types of jobs.
- **The purpose of a resume** is to secure an interview.
- In writing a resume, **"one size does <u>not</u> fit all."** Don't try to make your resume look like everyone else's. For this reason, don't use a resume template.
- There are many different ways of constructing an effective resume, depending on the type of skills, work experiences, accomplishments, activities, and so forth that you want to emphasize as being related to your career/job preferences.

**BEFORE YOU CAN WRITE AN EFFECTIVE RESUME,** you must first be able to identify your skills, abilities, and interests and be able to relate them to the job/industry/career field in which you are seeking employment.

If you are unsure about the types of jobs, industries, organizations, or careers you are targeting, make an appointment with Career Services to help you in developing some focus. Employers cannot (and will not) decide what career is best for you; you must be able to communicate what skills and abilities you have that fit the specific job or jobs they are trying to fill.

# RESUME TIPS

**1. Be sure your resume communicates your abilities**, as well as your personal qualities that pertain to the job. These abilities may have come from activities, education, volunteer work, or from work experience.

**2. Focus on the employer's needs**, not on your own needs.

**3. Be concise**.
Keep it simple and to the point. An employer must be able to read over your resume quickly (30 – 60 seconds)!

**4. Eliminate the first person pronoun "I" from your resume**.
*For example,* " I am seeking a position in human services…" should read "Seeking position in human services..."

**5. Quantify your experience** wherever possible. For example, "Supervised others" can be made more clear by stating "Supervised three cash register attendants".

**6. Be consistent**.
The order of information, spacing, format, or highlighting should be consistent throughout your resume.

**7. Use action verbs** in describing your skills and experience.

*Instead of*…Responsible for assisting with preparation of sales tax reports each month
*Write*………Assisted in preparation of monthly sales tax reports

*Instead of*…Was in charge of organizing and taking care of spring rush activities
*Write*………Organized and directed spring rush activities for more than 50 new sorority pledges

**8. Write a draft of your resume**, then refine and polish it. Writing an effective resume takes some time and effort.

**9. Check your grammar and spelling**!
Have at least one other person proofread your resume before submitting it to an employer.

**10. Keep the resume to one page**.
A resume should only be two pages if you have a great deal of related experience, activities, or training.

# Resume

## RESUME FORMATS

### CHRONOLOGICAL

- Use if your education and/or experience closely relates to your career goals
- Lists education and work experience in reverse chronological order (most recent information in each section first)
- Most commonly used resume format

### FUNCTIONAL

- Puts greater emphasis on SKILLS and less on work history or educational background
- Effective when work experience does not show a direct relationship to the career goal or when there are significant gaps in experience

### COMBINATION

- Typically shows a short skills summary, while retaining the reverse chronological order on education and experience sections

### CURRICULUM VITAE

- Required for teaching/research positions in higher education
- Is a more comprehensive and detailed account of one's background, and is usually much longer than a resume

### SCANNABLE RESUMES

Many employers are now using electronic databases to store the large numbers of resumes they receive. Resumes are electronically scanned into a database; the database can then be searched for applicants that meet specific job requirements. If asked for a "scannable resume," follow these tips:

- Use "keywords" or phrases applicable to the career field or related to the job sought.
- Use a standard font style sized between 10-12 points. Avoid ornate fonts and those where the characters touch.
- Do not use italics or underlining. Use boldface for emphasis.
- Avoid graphics and shading. Use asterisks (*) instead of "bullets."
- Do not double space between sections.
- The resume should be an original, printed on white or light-colored paper. Do not fold or staple the resume.

For more information about scannable resumes, ask for the "Going Digital: Plain Text and Scannable Resumes" guide, available in Career Services.

## Resume Do's & Don'ts



### DO

- Use conservative font styles (Times New Roman, Arial, Arial Narrow, or similar styles). Font size may range from 10-12.
- Set page margins between 0.5 and 1.0 inches (top, bottom, left and right).
- Print your resume using a laser printer; white or off-white bond paper is preferred. (Dark paper does not copy or fax well!)
- Keep your resume up to date, with correct addresses and phone numbers!
- ALWAYS include a cover letter when mailing your resume to an employer.

### DON'T

- Don't make handwritten corrections.
- Don't include: age, marital status, height/weight, birth date, or a photograph.
- Don't abbreviate (other than for the states - SC).
- Don't exaggerate or lie on your resume. It will catch up with you.

# What to Include

**Your full name** (in all capital letters and/or bold)
**Complete address** (list permanent and present addresses if in college)
**Home and/or mobile phone numbers**
**E-mail address** (Make sure your email address does not sounds unprofessional.)

**OBJECTIVE**

The career objective tells an employer how you fit in the organization. It forces you to focus on your job interest, and it unifies the rest of your resume. Three pieces of information make up the objective:
1. The level or type of position (Example: entry level, sales trainee, social worker)
2. Where the job is located in the organization or industry (Example: international news, marketing department)
3. Interests, knowledge, or skills you wish to share or hope to incorporate into your work

**Examples:**
"To obtain an entry-level position in human resource management with particular interests in wage and salary administration"
"Programmer position requiring knowledge of Visual Basic, C++, and JavaScript"
"Professional position in higher education utilizing skills in administration, program development and counseling"

- Avoid double objectives: This can cause an employer to wonder if you really know what you want. Use two separate resumes if you have more than one career direction.
- Leave out phrases like "opportunity for advancement" or "challenging, rewarding position." These objectives only tell the company what you expect *from them* ("What's in it for me?"). Rather, tell the company what *you* are going to do *for them.*

**EDUCATION**

This section may contain the following: **names and locations of schools** or programs; **graduation date** (or expected date); **degrees, certificates, or licenses**; **major**; **grade point average** IF 3.0 or above; **coursework** related to the job you want; **awards or scholarships**; and/or, **study abroad experiences**. These may also be separate sections in your resume.

**EXPERIENCE**

Be sure that you cover full-time, part-time, summer and volunteer work, military service, internships, and self-employment. However, it is not necessary to list every job you've ever had. If you have had a lot of work experience, limit the jobs you list to the three or four you consider the most important as learning experiences. Include your **job title**; **employer name** (company/organization); **dates of employment**; and **bulleted, active descriptions** of your responsibilities and major accomplishments.

**SKILLS**

(**OR ACTIVITIES OR HONORS**) You may want to mention **interests and activities that demonstrate job-related skills** (leadership, organization, etc.); **special abilities**, such as knowledge of computers or a foreign language; and/or **honors or awards earned**. Do not include personal data, such as age and health status.

**INTERESTS**

These are optional. Include only if you have space and/or your interests are unique or demonstrate mastery of a skill.

**REFERENCES**

Indicate that references are available but do not list them on your resume (use the phrase "Available upon request"). Then list 3-5 references on a separate page that is the same type of paper as your resume.

# Action Verbs

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| accelerated | completed | evaluated | learned | referred |
| accounted for | composed | examined | lectured | related |
| accomplished | computed | excelled | led | reorganized |
| achieved | concluded | executed | located | reproduced |
| acquired | conducted | exercised | made | researched |
| acted | confronted | exhibited | maintained | resolved |
| addressed | constructed | expanded | managed | responded |
| adapted | contacted | expedited | manipulated | restored |
| adjusted | continued | experimented | marketed | retrieved |
| administered | contracted | explained | mastered | reviewed |
| advanced to | contributed | expressed | measured | revised |
| advertised | controlled | facilitated | mediated | risked |
| advised | conveyed | filed | mentored | scheduled |
| aided | cooperated | financed | met | searched |
| allocated | coordinated | followed | mobilized | selected |
| analyzed | corrected | forecasted | modified | served |
| answered | corresponded | formed | monitored | serviced |
| anticipated | counseled | formulated | motivated | set |
| applied | created | founded | negotiated | shaped |
| arranged | critiqued | functioned | observed | shared |
| articulated | dealt (with) | furnished | obtained | showed |
| ascertained | defined | generated | operated | simplified |
| assembled | delegated | governed | ordered | skilled |
| assessed | delivered | graded | organized | sold |
| assigned | demonstrated | guided | originated | solicited |
| assisted | derived | handled | outlined | solved |
| assured | designed | headed | oversaw | sought |
| attained | described | helped | participated | specified |
| attended | detected | identified | perceived | spoke |
| audited | determined | illustrated | performed | staged |
| authored | developed | imagined | persuaded | streamlined |
| authorized | devised | implemented | planned | strengthened |
| balanced | diagnosed | imposed | played | studied |
| began | directed | improved | possessed | succeeded |
| bought | discovered | inaugurated | predicted | suggested |
| brought | discussed | increased | prepared | summarized |
| budgeted | displayed | influenced | presented | supervised |
| built | distributed | initiated | processed | supported |
| calculated | drafted | innovated | produced | surveyed |
| carried out | drew | inquired | programmed | tabulated |
| catalogued | earned | inspected | projected | taught |
| categorized | edited | installed | promoted | tested |
| chaired | educated | instilled | proofread | trained |
| challenged | elicited | instructed | proposed | translated |
| changed | employed | insured | provided | tutored |
| clarified | empowered | interacted | publicized | updated |
| classified | enabled | interpreted | published | upgraded |
| coached | encouraged | intervened | rated | used |
| coded | enlisted | investigated | realigned | utilized |
| collaborated | ensured | involved | recognized | verified |
| collected | entertained | joined | recommended | visualized |
| committed | escalated | judged | reconciled | volunteered |
| communicated | established | justified | recorded | won |
| compared | estimated | kept | recruited | wrote |

# SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

## JOSEPH FAULKNER
232 Oak Lane
Charleston, SC  29412
(843) 123-4567
jfaulkner@edisto.cofc.edu

**OBJECTIVE**

To contribute my skills in writing, analysis, and research to a position in publishing

**EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Arts in English, May 2006**
College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Major GPA 3.2/4.0          Overall GPA 3.0/4.0

*Courses taken include:*
Advanced Composition                    Advanced Creative Writing
Writing for the Mass Media              Electronic Publishing and Design

**HONORS**

Highly Distinguished Honor Student
Member of Phi Kappa Phi (Interdisciplinary Honor Society)

**EXPERIENCE**

**Language Lab**, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
*Lab Assistant*, January 2005 - present
- Assist students and professors with setting up and operating audio visual materials and equipment
- Maintain inventory, provide customer service and enter daily activities into a computer database

**George Street Observer**, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
*Staff Writer*, August 2004 - present
- Wrote several special interest and newspaper articles for College of Charleston weekly newspaper with a circulation of approximately 8000 readers

**J. C. Jansen & Co., P.A.,** Charleston, SC
*Courier/Office Assistant*,  Summer 2004
- Received and delivered official documents
- Assisted paralegals in legal research; proofread letters and documents

**SKILLS**

Computer proficiency in Microsoft programs including Word, Access, PowerPoint; PageMaker; Quark Xpress; and internet applications
Excellent research and editing skills

**ACTIVITIES**

Charleston County Library Book Exchange, February 2005
- Volunteer for program involved in selling and exchanging used books

Charleston Citizen Participation and Clean City Commission, March 2004 - present
- Perform general administrative duties and assisted with Clean City Sweep Campaign

**REFERENCES**

Available upon request

*This is an example of a resume in Chronological Style, which is the most common style used*.

**SAMPLE PLAIN-TEXT/SCANNABLE RESUME**

JOSEPH FAULKNER

232 Oak Lane
Charleston, SC  29412
843 123 4567
jfaulkner@edisto.cofc.edu

KEYWORD SUMMARY

Copy editing.  Creative writing.  Journalism.  Technical writing.  Publishing.  Research.  English major.  Microsoft Word.  Microsoft Access.  Microsoft Publisher.  Aldus PageMaker.  QuarkXPress.

OBJECTIVE

To contribute skills in writing, analysis, and research to a position in publishing.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in English, May 2006
College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Major GPA 3.2/4.0        Overall GPA 3.0/4.0
Advanced Composition.  Advanced Creative Writing.  Writing for the Mass Media.  Electronic Publishing and Design.

HONORS

Highly Distinguished Honor Student
Member of Phi Kappa Phi Interdisciplinary Honor Society

EXPERIENCE

Language Lab, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Lab Assistant
January 2005 - present
Assist students and professors with audio visual materials and equipment
Maintain inventory, provide customer service and enter daily activities into a computer database

George Street Observer, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Staff Writer
August 2004 - present
Wrote several special interest and newspaper articles for College of Charleston newspaper with a circulation of approximately 8000 readers

J. C. Jansen Law Firm, Charleston, SC
Courier, Office Assistant
Summer 2004
Received and delivered official documents
Assisted paralegals in legal research; proofread letters and documents

SKILLS

Computer proficiency in Microsoft programs including Word, Access, PowerPoint, PageMaker, Quark Xpress, Netscape, Microsoft Explorer
Excellent research and typing skills

*Note:  Resumes in scannable format are often more than one page; that is acceptable*

**SAMPLE COMBINATION RESUME**

**Rebecca Smith**
311 Mimosa Lane
Charleston, SC 29401
(843)577-0002
smithr@edisto.cofc.edu

| | |
|---|---|
| **Objective** | A public relations position requiring well-developed communication, administrative, and organizational skills |
| **Related Skills** | Experience in designing marketing research studies and surveys<br>Comfortable with public speaking; excellent oral and written communication skills<br>Computer literate in Microsoft Office programs; QuarkXPress; and PageMaker |
| **Education** | **College of Charleston**, Charleston, SC<br>Bachelor of Science in Corporate Communication, May 2005<br>Minor: Business Administration<br><br>***Study Abroad***<br>**Nene College**, Northhampton, England<br>Combined Honours Programme, January - April 2004 |
| **Activities** | **College of Charleston**<br>Student Alumni Ambassador, 2000 - 2005<br>• Assisted with Open House<br>• Gave tours of the President's historic home<br><br>Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority, 2001- 2005<br>• SPCA Volunteer<br>• Charleston Children's Fair volunteer |
| **Work Abroad Experience** | **Collège François Premier**, Villers-Cotterêts, France<br>Foreign Language Assistant, May - August 2003<br>• Strengthened French communications skills by living with a native family<br>• Organized, planned, and taught classes in a foreign language program |
| **Experience** | **Kirkman Sports Marketing**, Charleston, SC<br>Intern, Spring Semester 2003<br>• Created and sold marketing plans to clients<br>• Gained considerable experience organizing and assisting in all station promotions<br>• Developed and voiced commercials<br><br>**First Mortgage Services**, Inc., Charleston, SC<br>Customer Service Representative, August 2001- May 2002<br>• Answered customer inquiries regarding mortgage services<br>• Provided assistance in completing necessary forms<br>• Aided in the design and development of marketing plans<br>• Revised all investor processing forms and employee handbook |

***Note: Rebecca chose to add a "Related Skills" section to point out several skills needed in the Public Relations field; she also wanted to emphasize her work/study abroad experience.***

# SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL RESUME

**BENJAMIN RUSSELL**
25 Old Towne Road, North Charleston, SC  29414
(843) 223-8902 home
(843) 406-1234 mobile

## OBJECTIVE
To use my marketing, managerial and communication skills in a sales representative position

## SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
### Sales and Marketing
- Worked as a sales clerk in a fine men's clothing store, earning commissions on sales
- Awarded "Sales Associate of the Month" three times for exceeding sales goals
- Assisted in promotions of sales activities through in-store merchandising, advertising, and individual contact with repeat customers

### Leadership
- Elected president of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity during the 2004-2005 year
- Delegated responsibilities to committee members and evaluated progress toward achieving goals
- Worked with Interfraternity Council, student groups, and college administration in order to maintain a good working relationship with the college and with the community

### Management
- Learned effective time management through working part-time while participating in campus activities and carrying a full course load
- Gained experience in goal setting, plan development, and follow-up methods while serving as fraternity president
- Accustomed to accepting responsibility and to working effectively with people at all levels of an organization

## EXPERIENCE
**Ben Silver**, Charleston, SC
Sales Associate, August 2003 - May 2005

**Eckerd Drug Store**, Walterboro, SC
Stock Clerk, Summer 2003

**Johnson's Home Construction**, Walterboro, SC
Construction Worker, Summers 2001 & 2002

## EDUCATION
**College of Charleston**, Charleston, SC
Bachelor of Science in Psychology, May 2005

## REFERENCES
Available upon request

*Note:  Ben's work experience may not appear impressive on its own; so he chose to highlight his skills and accomplishments in order to better communicate his qualifications for a sales representative position.*

# SAMPLE RESUME FOR LIMITED WORK EXPERIENCE

**BEA N. TERN**
**beantern@email.edu**

**CAMPUS ADDRESS**
18 Central Avenue
Charleston, SC 29402
(843) 789-3654

**PERMANENT ADDRESS**
1449 Jules Avenue
Ravenel, SC 29470
(843) 321-9654

**OBJECTIVE**      To obtain an internship position in accounting that will benefit from my interest in the field as well as provide career exploration and experience

**EDUCATION**      **Bachelor of Science in Accounting**
College of Charleston, Charleston, SC
Candidate for graduation May 2006

Coursework includes:  Financial Accounting
                                         Elementary Statistics

**RELATED**
**EXPERIENCE**    **College of Charleston**, School of Business, Charleston, SC
*Student Researcher*, Managerial Accounting, January 2005-May 2005
- Researched and wrote a term paper comparing accounting systems in a local non-profit organization and private industry

**EXPERIENCE**    **Lowcountry Pedalers**, Charleston, SC
*Rickshaw Driver,* May 2003 - present
- Operate bicycle-transport business as independent owner/operator
- Handle daily cash flow totaling $750 and above
- Compute daily earnings and record daily usage logs

**Ravenel Health Clinic**, Ravenel, SC
*Volunteer,* Summer 2002
- Received and logged client payments for services
- Prepared client paperwork for insurance reimbursement
- Answered telephones and scheduled patient appointments

**HONORS AND**
**SKILLS**            Computer literate in Windows and Microsoft Office - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Publisher
SC Life Scholarship, 2003 - present

**REFERENCES**    Available upon request


*Note: Bea doesn't have much work experience, so she is focusing on the knowledge she has gained from classes in her major.  The few jobs she has held are not related to her objective, but she has listed the job responsibilities that most closely relate.*

## Christine Edwards

*School:* 178 Green Street, Charleston, SC 29424   (843)788-6783
*E-mail:* cedwards@edisto.cofc.edu
*Permanent:* 199 Pleasant Drive, Columbia, SC  29615   (803) 271-2712

| | |
|---|---|
| **Objective** | To obtain an internship in information technology utilizing programming and communication skills |
| **Computer Skills** | Programming Languages:  Java, C++, Visual Basic<br>Applications:  Microsoft Office (Access, Excel, Word, PowerPoint), Adobe Acrobat 4.0, Adobe PageMaker, Filemaker Pro<br>Operating Systems:  Windows 98, 2000, ME, XP |
| **Work Experience** | **Information Technology Assistant**, September 2005 - present<br>APAC Manufacturing Company, Charleston, SC<br>• Assisted Computer Support team in writing a payroll program in C++ language<br>• Built database in Access in order to maintain employee information including names, addresses, hire dates, and other necessary information<br>• Gained exposure to a variety of software applications, as well as hardware requirements, in a business setting<br><br>**Temporary Staff**, Summer 2004<br>Manpower Staffing, Columbia, SC<br>• Worked in a variety of short-term assignments involving data entry, word processing, and database management projects<br><br>**Visitor Greeter**, August 2003 - May 2004<br>Charleston Visitor Center, Charleston, SC<br>• Provided information about the Charleston area to visitors, answered questions, gave directions |
| **Education** | **College of Charleston**, Charleston, SC<br>Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Minor in German<br>Elective coursework in computer science/computer information systems<br>Currently a junior, will graduate in May 2007 |

*Note:  Christine's major isn't directly related to her job objective, so she put her related skills and experience first in order to attract the reader's attention.*

# E-mail Resume Tips
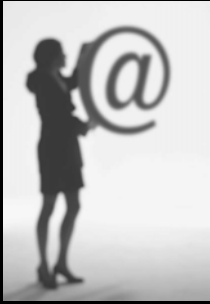
***E-mail makes it possible for you to respond instantly to an opportunity, but if not done correctly, your resume may be overlooked or deleted before it is read.***

Whenever possible, copy a **plain text (ASCII)** resume into the body of your email message, rather than sending your resume as an attachment. Why?

- Attachments may contain viruses, particularly if they are in Microsoft Word.
- Firewalls may stop email attachments from entering a company network.
- Recruiters may not take the time to open the attachment.

## CREATE AN ASCII / PLAIN TEXT RESUME AND COVER LETTER

A text (or ASCII) resume will be stripped of formatting features such as bold and italics, so it may not appear very attractive to you. However, it will be universally compatible with all systems. To convert your resume from MS Word to plain text:

- Open your resume document, go to Edit > Select All and change the font to Courier 12 point; go to File > Page Setup and change the left and right margins to 1.5 inches
- Go to File > Save As > under "Save as Type," select "Text Only with Line Breaks."
- Select "yes" at the prompt that warns about features being compatible.
- Name and save this file, then reopen the file, which should now have a text (.txt) extension
- Review and clean up your document:
  - Insert space where necessary
  - Change bullets to asterisks or dashes
  - Change or remove symbols that didn't convert properly
  - Left-justify all text
  - Take out tabs and centering
- *Save your work!*

## TEST THE FILE

Open your text resume, copy and paste it into your email message box and send it to yourself and a few friends to ensure that the text transfers properly.

## CREATE THE EMAIL MESSAGE

Follow the employers' directions for applying to each position! Requirements and instructions will differ, based on the individual company's needs. If no specific instructions are given:

- Open your email program and set the message format to plain text, not HTML.
- Make the message Subject memorable! 'My resume" isn't going to grab the attention of busy person. Make the subject line relevant, and include your name, e.g. "Resume of Jane Smith – Copy Editor position."
- Now create a "cover letter" message just as you would in print, except leave off your mailing address, the date, and the recipient's mailing address. The message will begin with the salutation, e.g.: "Dear Mr. Jones:"
- Type your "signature" at the bottom of your "cover letter". *Avoid clever quotations/sayings in your email signature.*
- After your signature, add a couple of blank lines and the text notation.

  ===================Resume Text Below======================

- Add a couple more blank lines, then paste the text from your ASCII resume into the body of the email message.
  - Unless the employer has requested no attachments, attach your Word resume. This will accommodate employers who prefer a traditional resume. It doesn't hurt to send your resume in both formats!

*Tip: When posting a resume to an online resume builder, use your ASCII resume, and cut and paste it to fill the online form.*

# Resume Planning Worksheet - Traditional Resume

Identifying information:

_____
first name, middle initial, last name

_____
current address, telephone number, e-mail address

_____
permanent address, telephone number, e-mail address

**OBJECTIVE**

_____
*A (An) x position utilizing my x, y, and z skills* OR *A position in x that would benefit from my x and y experience*


**EDUCATION**

_____
college, city, state

_____
degree, month, year to be received

_____
major(s), minor(s), concentration(s)

_____
grade point average (if above a 3.0)

_____
related course work (maximum of 6 classes; only if applicable to objective)


**EXPERIENCE (volunteer or paid. List most recent experience first.)**

_____
title, name of organization, city, state, and dates of employment

_____
leading with an action verb, describe what you did at the organization

_____
describe another responsibility or duty

_____
describe another responsibility or duty

_____
describe another responsibility or duty

*(over)*

title, name of organization, city, state, and dates of employment

leading with an action verb, describe what you did at the organization

describe another responsibility or duty

describe another responsibility or duty

title, name of organization, city, state, and dates of employment

leading with an action verb, describe what you did at the organization

describe another responsibility or duty

describe another responsibility or duty

**SKILLS (specify computer languages or special skills, including working knowledge, proficiency, or fluency in languages other than English)**

**ACTIVITIES (list leadership positions, memberships or affiliations)**

name of organization, title or position (if applicable)

name of organization, title or position (if applicable)

**HONORS AND AWARDS (if listing awards, tell the employer what the award was for)**

name of honor or award, date received

name of honor or award, date received

**INTERESTS (only list interests if they would be important to the employer)**

**REFERENCES      Available upon request**