Writing a Resume

The purpose of a resume is to sell yourself when you can't be there in person. Your resume is the first glimpse a company has of who you are. There are many different views of what makes a great resume, and while it won't get you the job outright, it can prevent you from getting to the next step.

Appearance. There is not one **right** format to follow when preparing your resume. The first impression should be a professional one. Your resume must be neat and error free with good eye appeal. Remember, most companies utilize the resume to both include and exclude individuals from the possible employee pool. We suggest you print your resume on a thicker, white paper paying special attention to spacing and margins. This gives it a tailored, business-like appearance. The more simplistic the style the better since the transmission of your resume will be governed by technology, whether it is scanned, faxed or e-mailed. Try to limit your resume to one page, making it no more than two. You want to be concise, but do not sacrifice content just for the sake of keeping it on one page. Remember to utilize spelling and grammar checks; "spell check" doesn't always catch errors. Once your product is complete be sure to have someone proofread your resume one last time before you send it out. There are hiring managers who exclude great candidates solely on the basis of misspelled words on a resume, (a reflection on the quality of your work?). Don't be one of them.

Content. While the professional appearance of your resume is important, the content is even more critical in getting your message communicated. Your resume should summarize your career strategy, along with the skills, experience, and accomplishments that will help you achieve it. In addition, note other unique characteristics that will make you stand out such as your education, special talents or language skills.

You want to show the readers that you can organize information in a logical sequence while telling your story. Carefully analyze the following elements when first gathering information to prepare your resume:

- **What is your goal?** Keep your answers simple. Do not be so specific that you miss an opportunity.
- **List your activities/accomplishments.** Name activities that demonstrate leadership and highlight your involvement in activities that indicate well-roundedness.
- **Detail your experience.** Identify key skills and strengths using active verbs. Highlight your successes and account for facts that demonstrate and backup your accomplishments. Include your technical computer skills.
- **Summarize your education.** List the schools you have attended, area of study, the degree and date awarded and relevant academic accomplishments.

After you gather all of your information, you should have a much easier time building a solid resume that highlights your skills, education and accomplishments. Remember that the reader is looking to see that you meet the criteria necessary for the job.

On a final note, if you already have a resume, make every effort to keep it updated.