



# Guidelines and Categories for Resumes

## CATEGORIES FOR RESUMES

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In this increasingly competitive job market you need to have a professional resume that contains the right information, so that it will stand out amongst the countless other resumes that potential employers will be looking at, and give you the best possible chance of getting their attention. The best way to do this is by carefully selecting the categories that showcase your skills.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Include name (you can put the name you go by, not your legal name), complete address (both permanent and present if different), home phone number with area code, cell phone and email address.
- Also be sure to add your LinkedIn profile or a personal website if applicable.
- Make sure that the message on your answering machine and your email address are professional and appropriate for a potential employer.

### SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Break down individual skills into easy to read bullet points or nicely formatted lists for your employer to scan.
- Cater your qualifications to the job you're seeking.
- Qualifications to list might be specific training, awards, and experience that relate directly to the job you're applying for.
- These may include laboratory skills, foreign language ability, computer skills and others.
- Use subheadings as a way to organize large groups or similar qualifications

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- List in chronological order with the most recent degree or education first.
- Include university/college/school name and location, degree, date of graduation (or expected graduation), major and possibly related coursework. Once you have some form of post secondary schooling you no longer want to include high school.
- May also include honors, awards, scholarships, dissertation and thesis topics.

### EXPERIENCE:

- You can organize your experience by relevant and additional, putting all work (paid and volunteer) in the same pool to draw from, include full-time, part-time, seasonal, internships and co-op experiences.
- Start with your most recent employment and work backward.
- Provide names and location of companies, dates of employment (month/year to month/year).
- Describe your duties, responsibilities, and accomplishments using short, powerful phrases beginning with action verbs. Quantify and qualify data with specific details and statistics whenever possible.

### ADDITIONAL AREAS:

- List extracurricular activities that demonstrate skills, accomplishments and leadership, teamwork, self-management, organization abilities
- Add accomplishments to show you make a difference in the workplace.
- Include licenses, certifications and even conference that are relevant to your current job prospects.
- From some professions Affiliations are a great way to show how active you are in the community.

### REFERENCES:

- References and, in some cases, portfolios or transcripts can be listed as "available upon request" if you have enough room at the bottom of the resume.
- You should have a separate reference page. Generally, this page will have the same heading as the resume and will list the name, title, employer, business mailing address and phone number of 3 to 5 academic or business references. Obtain permission from each reference before giving to a prospective employer and give each a copy of your resume.
- Make sure to bring a copy of your references to every interview as this demonstrates a high level of professionalism.



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## GUIDELINES FOR RESUMES

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You can never underestimate how important it is to have a good resume. First impressions count, and the first impression that a potential employer will have of you, is going to depend on how you present your resume. Your resume is a written representation of who you are, and everything on it should showcase your uniqueness and ability to do the desired job. Here are some basic guidelines for creating a resume that best represents you.

### APPEARANCE:

- Must be well-organized and neat as to draw the employer in.
- All B/W, no color! Color may look nice on your computer screen, but if it's hard to read when printed then it's no good. Same goes for pictures and graphs, employer's state they find them distracting and hard to read.
- Use popular, non-decorative typefaces (like Times New Roman or Calibri), a font size of 10-12, avoid italics, script and over using underlining and bold.
- Recommend using high-quality white or ivory paper, references and cover letter should also be on the same paper. Do not use colored paper.
- Layout should generally have a one-inch margin on top and all sides, but there is wiggle room for the top and bottom margins.

### LENGTH:

- A one-page resume works well for some current students and when you are first getting started.
- Two pages are reasonable if you have extensive work experience.
- Front load your important information on the first page, that way the employer will see it first and be enticed to turn the page and learn more about you.
- You don't want to include everything you've ever done on resume, just the highlights and relevant information for your current job objectives.

### CONTENT:

- Design your resume with a particular objective in mind. It doesn't need to be specific to an exact job, but it does need to focus on a specific industry.
- Be honest. Never falsify or exaggerate information.
- Don't include personal details like Social Insurance Number, birthday, race, or religion, these are confidential and your resume is not a confidential document.
- Concentrate on the positive and highlight your strengths, showcase any awards or distinctions you have earned.
- Action statements beginning with action verbs show confidence and assurance.
- Your professional career starts in university so stay in that area. Unless an activity directly relates leave high school off your resume and focus your attention elsewhere.
- Be careful of repetition in your resume so be creative, employers will glaze over your action statements if they see them more than twice.
- You do not need to include your GPA on your resume. Many employers prefer to have "Dean's List" instead of GPA. If you do want to include it make sure it's 3.0 or higher.
- Use key words and phrases instead of complete sentences and eliminate the pronoun "I".
- Proofread to make sure grammar, punctuation, and spelling are flawless. There is no excuse for spelling mistakes on resumes.

### Get in Touch with the Bissett Student Success Centre

Location: 4th Floor Student Union Building

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