

CAREER FORWARD

IMPRESS WITH
YOUR RÉSUMÉ



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Your résumé makes an impression that can determine whether or not you'll be invited for an interview. Your goal is to craft a powerful document that shows off your accomplishments, experience, skills, and strengths—getting you front and center with recruiters and hiring managers.



IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Résumé best practices

Customize your résumé so it's as relevant as possible to the specific job for which you're applying

This can mean highlighting specific skills or experience differently for each application.

Position yourself

Including an "objective" statement on your résumé is outdated. Instead, use a strong positioning statement to show employers what you have to offer. For example: "Highly accomplished marketing professional with more than 10 years of experience developing multi-million-dollar product lines."

Be relevant

Going back 10 years, list your experience and dates of employment in reverse chronological order. Include more dated positions only when they may be critical in helping you obtain a certain position.

Showcase your accomplishments

Highlight your most impressive projects, incorporating measurable results when possible. A statement such as "Developed new direct mail campaign, resulting in more than \$4 million in yearly sales" is specific and accurately demonstrates abilities. Use action words such as developed, established, or managed, but omit personal pronouns. For example, use "accomplished" rather than "I accomplished."

Summarize your daily tasks

Use bullet points to succinctly keep descriptions short, and avoid company lingo or acronyms.

Include industry-related keywords

Your résumé may be submitted or placed into a searchable database that uses software to locate specific keywords or phrases. Always include keywords related to your industry and incorporate keywords that are

repeatedly mentioned in a job title, description, or posting.

Be truthful

False or misstated information can quickly cost you a job opportunity, or come back to bite you even after you get the job.

Proofread

Spell check your résumé and read it out loud multiple times. Then have a friend or colleague review it for mistakes you may have missed. Even one misspelled word can ruin your chances of getting an interview. Remember, if you are careless on your résumé, hiring managers may think you will be careless on the job, too.

Update your LinkedIn® and other social media profiles

Make sure the information on your résumé corresponds with the data on your LinkedIn and social media pages.

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Getting your résumé noticed

Applicant tracking systems (ATS) are software programs designed to help employers electronically manage the recruiting process. When you submit your résumé online, it almost always goes first to an ATS where the information is parsed and loaded into a searchable database. Unfortunately, this means that any résumé that's not structured in a manner the ATS recognizes won't be interpreted correctly. Experts estimate that up to 75 percent of all résumés don't get past these systems¹—but since they're used by almost all companies and recruiting agencies, you need to make sure that your résumé will be processed correctly. Keep the following tips in mind:

Use keywords and phrases that are specific to the job posting

In addition to industry-related keywords, an ATS recognizes word combinations that are unique to each specific job posting,² so pinpoint the most distinct phrases and repeat them in your résumé.

Label your professional experience "Work Experience"

This is the term most applicant tracking systems are programmed to recognize. Avoid terms such as "Professional Experience" or "Work History."

Don't submit a PDF

Most applicant tracking systems can't process that file type. Instead, submit your résumé as a Word document, text file (.txt), or in rich text format (.rtf).

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Organization and formatting

How you organize and format your résumé plays an important role in getting it noticed, as well as getting it past an ATS. Pay attention to the following points:

Get organized

Use simple categories to organize your résumé. Use the following categories: “Qualifications,” “Accomplishments,” “Work Experience,” “Education,” “Certifications,” and “Associations.”

List the employer, job title, and employment dates—in that order

In the “Work Experience” section, list the name of the company first. On the next line, list your job title and the dates of employment.

List education, certifications, and associations last

This information is important, but not more important than direct experience. Skip personal information such as hobbies or awards that have no professional relevance.

Be concise

Your résumé should be no more than two pages.

Keep it simple

Stick with a clean, simple, and professional look. Avoid multiple fonts, font sizes, and complicated formatting. Use white or off-white paper for print versions.

Avoid using tables, multiple columns, graphics, and expanded or condensed text, as well as special characters, italics, and underlines³

Applicant tracking systems can’t correctly parse information presented in this manner.

Use a standard font

Arial, Verdana, Calibri, Georgia, and Tahoma are the best choices.

Don’t include a headshot

You should never include an image of yourself (unless you’re applying for a modeling, acting, or other type of performing job).⁴ The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission explicitly prohibits employers from discriminating against employees or candidates based on ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, age, national origin, or genetic information.⁵ Providing a photograph of yourself during the recruitment process can put employers in a difficult situation.

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Special circumstances/types of résumés

If you're a recent college graduate with little experience:

- Highlight skills and experience that are important to the job you are applying for, such as classes, volunteer efforts, internships, and memberships in professional organizations.
- Try a functional résumé rather than a chronological one, listing your skills and accomplishments first and putting less emphasis on your previous positions and dates of employment. Create a robust qualifications section that compensates for your lack of work experience.

If you're changing careers:

- Consider using a functional résumé, which allows you to highlight transferable skills.

If you have gaps in your work history:

- Use your cover letter to explain how you've kept your skills up to date through temporary/contract assignments, volunteer work, and professional development courses.

If you've had several temporary/contract positions:

- List temporary/contract positions in reverse chronological order, just as you would full-time positions.
- If you worked with a staffing company, use its name as your employer, grouping all of your assignments together.

Listing your GPA:

- Academic accomplishments become less significant as work history develops so don't include your GPA if you've been working for a few years.
- An exception: If you are a recent graduate with a high GPA or degree from a distinguished university, list this information near the top of your résumé.

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ ONE: CHRONOLOGICAL P/1

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

JOHN SMITH
123 Any Street
Anytown, AT 12345
Phone: (123) 456-7890
Email: jsmith@anymail.com

Qualifications

Experienced management professional specializing in financial analysis, planning, and budgeting. Demonstrated expertise in and dedication to developing innovative process improvements that positively affect company profitability—with a consistent and documented record of creating positive organizational enhancements.

Accomplishments

- Deep knowledge of asset management/wealth development built through 6 years of business experience
- Created and implemented strategic planning and analysis process resulting in more than 200 enhancements to client organization
- Reduced labor costs by average of \$500 per month by cutting 2 days off monthly close schedule
- Commended by CFO for developing model for long-term forecast of accounts payable payments to determine cash requirements and timing of bank borrowing

Work Experience

Investment, Inc. – investment and consulting firm

Finance and Administration Director 2012 – Present

Directed accounting, finance, and operations for the North American consumer division. Major accomplishments include:

- Drove improvement in operating profits for division resulting in \$80 million increase over the course of 3 years
- Led \$30 million acquisition of new operating unit resulting in a 25% increase in market penetration
- Implemented financial controls and managed \$1.5 million budget
- Drove implementation of the CST.2 Active Accounting System throughout branch offices resulting in increased efficiency and a \$1 million YOY reduction in expenses
- Reduced monthly receivable write-offs by \$556,000 by developing and implementing restricted credit policies for the lowest margin customers
- Designed executive management, financial, and operational reporting for more than 100 branches

Planning Company, Inc. – publicly held capital management company

Senior Financial Manager 2009 – 2012

Co-managed \$5 – \$10 million in domestic equities for private individuals. Selected securities, valued portfolios, traded equities, and built personal customer relationships. Developed valuation models and analytical framework for the equity management service. Major accomplishments include:

- Allocated and oversaw \$50 million in corporate cash for a large public company, helping to build and maintain the relationship for more than 3 years
- Secured new client relationships that resulted in \$3.5 million in new business
- Analyzed more than 100 companies across various industries using traditional financial statement analysis, qualitative analysis, break-up, and comparative valuation methods
- Won contract offering investment services through 14 branches of a local bank
- Developed a rapidly growing brokerage clientele of 275 accounts. Products included mutual funds, stocks, bonds, individual and company retirement plans, insurance, and annuities
- Managed team of 7 financial managers

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ ONE: CHRONOLOGICAL P/2

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Interactive Company, Inc. – Management Consulting and Registered Commodity Trading Firm
Senior Financial Analyst 2006 – 2009

Financial Analyst 2005 – 2006

Provided customized analysis, software, charting, and data for clients. Major accomplishments include:

- Expanded proprietary database to include numerous unique data sets, particularly in the cash commodity markets
- Created 20 new and innovative products to meet specific customer needs
- User liaison for billing system in place in 40 offices throughout U.S.; new system showed decrease in overdue accounts resulting in 34% more billable revenue each month

Education

Master of Business Administration in Finance 2010
Any State University, Anytown, Any State

Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance 2004
Any State University, Anytown, Any State

Associations

Board of Directors – Anytown Foundation

- Responsible for organizing and managing monthly and yearly financial records

Fundraising Committee Chair – Any Foundation

- Raised donation in excess of \$75,000
- Organized and managed fundraising efforts

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ TWO: FUNCTIONAL P/1

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

JOHN SMITH

123 Any Street, Anytown, AT 12345

Phone: (123) 456-7890

Email: jsmith@anymail.com

QUALIFICATIONS

- Executive-level, strategic marketing, and product development professional in the financial services industry
- Advanced strategic marketing and promotions
- Extensive direct-to-consumer and business-to-business experience
- P/L management
- Online and traditional product development
- Budget administration
- Recognized leadership and team building

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Strategic Marketing

Significant accomplishments include:

- Generated \$41 million in annual organic growth with \$500,000 marketing investment through client-focused lead generation, advertising, and promotion efforts
- Development and execution of vertical industry strategy resulting in annual division revenue increases of 38% depth of online product offerings, resulting in new account growth averaging 37% per year
- Led expansion efforts by identifying and capitalizing profitable markets, increasing branch coverage by 25%
- Led insurance investment group through intensive overhaul of sales and marketing approach that increased penetration into personal investing by 20% and division revenue by 23% in 2007
- Improved online lead generation activity by 9,500 active leads each month
- Worked directly with CEO to develop strategic marketing plan and determine corporate direction
- Leveraged CRM data to develop models to identify customers at greatest risk of decline. Developed and implemented strategies to help retain key customers, resulting in consistent double-digit YOY growth for this segment

New Product Development

Significant accomplishments include:

- New product development resulting in more than \$200 million in additional yearly revenue
- Developed premium account product for high-volume clients, which increased account penetration by 46% in the financial services market
- Developed and introduced specialty product for the business-to-business market, which drove an additional contribution of \$80 million in the first year
- Enhanced existing offline products for the consumer market, improving margin by 24%
- Introduced more than 50 enhancements to existing online product, resulting in 200% more repeat visitors to consumer website
- Established formalized product life cycle management approach, resulting in 10% YOY growth in niche markets
- Generated comprehensive product plans to address challenges and exploit opportunities identified in product review

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ TWO: FUNCTIONAL P/2

IMPRESS WITH YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Leadership and Talent Management

Significant accomplishments include:

- Lead cross-functional teams responsible for new product development, product management, marketing, and promotions
- Motivated teams to regularly exceed targets and financial forecasts
- Built national team of 30 marketing professionals that drove sales growth an average of 34% at the branch level
- Identified and promoted key performers within the organization
- Retained marketing team at 95% over a 5-year period

WORK EXPERIENCE

Investing Company, Inc., Anytown, AT

A publicly held investment firm with 200 locations worldwide

Vice President of Marketing

2014 to Present

Planning Company, Inc., Anytown, AT

A national financial planning agency with more than 100 locations nationwide

Director of Product Development and Marketing

2010 to 2014

Financial Investments, Anytown, AT

A boutique financial planning agency specializing in environmentally responsible investments

Marketing Manager

2008 to 2010

Associate Marketing Manager

2005 to 2008

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration

Any University, Anytown, AT

Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting

Any University, Anytown, AT

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WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MOVING YOUR CAREER FORWARD? This document is an excerpt from our comprehensive *Career Forward* guide, which will help you make the most of your job search in today's competitive market. Download your complete guide today.



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SOURCES:

¹<http://biginterview.com/blog/2015/03/applicant-tracking-system.html>

²<http://www.forbes.com/sites/lizryan/2014/07/07/1132/2/>

³<http://www.cio.com/article/2398753/careers-staffing/5-insider-secrets-for-beating-applicant-tracking->

⁴<http://www.personalbrandingblog.com/your-resume-should-not-include-a-headshot/>

⁵<http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/>