

# Preparing your Resume: RESUME CHECKLIST

Employers spend less than a minute evaluating your resume. Catch their attention by tailoring your resume to meet their needs. Here are some suggestions to help focus your edits. They address the issues of form, function, and feedback.

## FORM deals with appearance.

- ✓ **Templates:** Avoid resume wizards and resume software templates. They are difficult to edit and do not allow you to present information in the most effective format.
- ✓ **Length:** For college students and recent college graduates, create a one-page, one-sided resume.
- ✓ **Font:** Choose one basic, easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Helvetica in 10-12 point size. The point size can vary; your name should be in a larger point size than the other text. Use black ink.
- ✓ **Paper:** Use 8½” x 11” resume-quality paper in a light color, such as white or off-white. Use envelopes and cover letter paper to match your resume.
- ✓ **Spacing:** Margins of ½ to 1 inch and double-spacing between headings improves readability. Base your spacing on the amount of content you have to include (for example, if content is limited use larger margins).
- ✓ **Format:** Use bullets, bold, capitalization, and underlining sparingly to call attention to the most important information, usually aspects of education or experience. Leave some white space to create an uncluttered look.
- ✓ **Layout:** The most common layout summarizes your experience with the following headings: Education, Experience (work, internship, and volunteer), Skills, and Activities. Under Education and Experience, list information in reverse chronological order. Recent graduates without a lot of work experience should list their education first. Optional headings may include: Languages, Honors, Leadership, Computer Skills, Community Service, etc.
- ✓ **Professionalism:** Eliminate all typos and misspellings by asking other people to proofread.

## FUNCTION conveys an image of you that meets the readers’ needs.

- ✓ **Image:** Decide what image you want your resume to communicate. Does it show that you are a leader, a team player, an artist, an innovator, a salesperson, or something else?
- ✓ **Content:** Select three core qualities that define you and are of importance to the position for which you are applying. Make sure your resume stresses the accomplishments and skills that reflect these qualities.
- ✓ **Style:** Start off sentences with action verbs to convey enthusiasm and achievement. Sample verbs are listed on the next page. Make sure the verb tense is appropriate (for example, current responsibilities should be described in present tense).
- ✓ **Avoid:** Do not list your own web site if it includes personal information. Never reveal confidential personal data such as social security, driver’s license, or credit card numbers on a resume.

## FEEDBACK allows others to offer ideas for strengthening your resume.

- ✓ **Sources:** Consult Career Services for individual resume review and group workshops. Also seek feedback from family, friends, professors and professionals in an organization or position similar to the one you seek employment in.
- ✓ **Review:** When you receive feedback, decide if the changes suggested are useful.