



The Resume

Resume Basics

- ✓ Employers spend 15- 60 seconds the first time they read your resume
- ✓ Recruiters know immediately if a resume is generic or tailored
- ✓ Most employers have zero tolerance for spelling or grammatical errors
- ✓ Employers review resumes in different ways. They can be reviewed on-paper, on a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smart phone
- ✓ There is no standard way of writing a resume or cover letter

See our resume-writing resources - www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/resumes

Step One: Know What you Have to Offer

- ✓ Create a list of all of your activities. This includes your education, academic projects/essays/presentations, co-curricular activities, volunteer work, paid employment, and hobbies
- ✓ For activity, note the duties, skills, and accomplishments

Step Two: Research the Employer Needs

- ✓ Review the job description. What are the key requirements?
- ✓ Research the employer. Are there key skills or characteristics that they look for in employees?

Step Three: Link Your Skills to Employer Needs Using Examples

- ✓ For each key requirement, think about examples about where you used or demonstrated the skill. For example, if the employer is asking for customer service skills, think of a time when you helped someone

Necessary Sections

- ✓ **Contact Information** - include your name, email, and phone number. Street address is optional. Please ensure that the phone number is a number where you can be reached easily (preferably with voicemail)
- ✓ **Education** – include all post-secondary education. High school education is optional, especially after a few years in university
- ✓ **Experience** – include volunteer and paid experience

Optional Sections

- ✓ **Objective** – not required as this is included in the cover letter
- ✓ **Skills/Qualifications Highlights** – if you are including this, you will need to provide examples; use a maximum of 5 or 6 text-heavy bullets, or 8-10 brief concepts at two or three words each
- ✓ **Related Courses** – include this if your coursework is directly related to the position(s) to which you are applying
- ✓ **Projects and Presentations** – describe your relevant academic projects and essays using the same format as your experience
- ✓ **Co-Curricular or Volunteer Activities** – this might fit under Experience
- ✓ **Interests and Travel**
- ✓ **References** – don't provide names unless asked; you can state "References Available Upon Request"

Marketing Yourself

Resumes, cover letters, LinkedIn, and interview skills are your key tools for marketing yourself to potential employers. Attend the *Winning Resumes and Cover Letters* workshop and/or have your resume critiqued in the AA&CC.

Please note:

You are NOT required to provide any of the following on an application or resume:

- ✓ Date and/or place of birth
- ✓ Maiden name
- ✓ Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- ✓ Medical history
- ✓ Citizenship
- ✓ Credit rating history and/or personal finances
- ✓ Family status (e.g. married or single, children or none)
- ✓ Religious or political affiliation

Common Resume Styles

There are many different resume styles and formats. Find the style that best communicates your skills and qualifications quickly to an employer using an evidence-based approach.

Chronological Style - Information is presented in reverse chronological order, with the focus on work experience. This works best when you have a clear career goal and directly related work, volunteer or academic experience

Modified Chronological – Information is grouped by relevance. Typically there will be a “Relevant Experience” section and an “Other Experience” section. This style works best when you have different types of experiences, some of which are more relevant to the job you want than others

Electronic Resume – sometimes employers will ask you to submit information in text format. These need to be simple in formatting and are most commonly chronological

What is a CV?

In North America, a CV refers to a lengthy document intended for academic work search. It is like a resume, with a very academic focus. PhD students pursuing careers in academia should develop a CV. Occasionally an undergraduate student may need a CV for a graduate/professional school application. See our *Curriculum Vitae (CV)* tip sheet.

Describing Your Experiences

- ✓ Keep a consistent style and format, with dates and titles in the same order for each activity
- ✓ Use point-form statements, beginning with positive action words to describe your responsibilities/accomplishments (developed, aided) — include results wherever you can
- ✓ Be direct, assertive, honest, but not modest – brag a little with your accomplishments!
- ✓ Accomplishment-based words include terms like: achieved, attained, established, improved, motivated, refined, and spearheaded
- ✓ Use keywords from the job description if you are submitting your resume electronically. You want to match those words in case the employer does a search in their database
- ✓ Use 2 – 6 (maximum) points to describe any experience

Resources

- ✓ **Winning Resumes and Cover Letters workshop** - in [CLN](#) under Events and Workshops
- ✓ **Employment Peer Coach Resume and Cover Letter critiques** - in [CLN](#) under Appointments
- ✓ **Real Job Application Samples** - www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/node/303
- ✓ **University of Toronto Mississauga Career Centre Resume Toolkit** - www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/resume-cover-letter-toolkit
- ✓ **Quintessential Careers Resume Toolkit** - www.quintcareers.com/resume_tutorial/
- ✓ **Resume Target Template Gallery** - higherred.resumesamples101.com

Please note: While every effort is made to avoid errors, information and web links do change. Some fields of work have typical expectations around resumes and cover letters, like a 1-page resume in accounting or finance. This tip sheet is intended as an informational document only.