



## **How to Write a Winning Résumé**

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In today's job market, human resources professionals and hiring managers are often swamped with stacks of résumés for a single position. With that kind of competition it is extremely important that you make a good first impression to ensure that the employer will continue to pursue you as a candidate. That first impression, in most cases, is in the form of a résumé. Therefore, it is essential that you submit a quality résumé to every employer.

A résumé is a summary of qualifications for a specific type of work as well as a marketing tool to land an interview. The résumé should reflect your qualifications and what you have to offer an employer. It should be honest, positive, concise and easy to read. Because employers may have limited time to look over a large number of résumés, it is important that you present your information quickly, clearly and in a way that makes your experience relevant to the position to which you are applying. Most résumés are one page, and many employers prefer one page résumés. However, if you are an experienced job seeker with more than seven years of relevant work experience, you may need more than one page.

The best resumes include experiences that emphasize skills required for a specific field, industry or position. For example, if the position requires strong interpersonal skills, which of your duties or experiences can be highlighted to demonstrate such skills? It is imperative that you research industries prior to applying to jobs so that you know what skills are most important to emphasize on your résumé. An effective résumé will:

- Focus on the employer's needs;
- Communicate abilities for the kind of work you want;
- Stress contributions and accomplishments;
- Quantify results;
- Indicate your career direction and interests;
- Be appealing to the eye, concise, easy to read and professional looking;
- Communicate that you are responsible and focused;
- Be completely error free.

Effectiveness in generating job interviews and offers will depend on your ability to communicate your skills and competencies to employers. Identifying skills can be a challenge, and it is a good idea to take an inventory of your experiences, skills and abilities before writing your résumé. Some steps to identifying the skills used in a job are:

- Take an inventory of ALL of your duties – make a laundry list of all of your accomplishments;
- Carefully review job listings for skills that employers seek in a desired field;

- Quantify, when possible (for example, “Supervised a staff of 20” or “Increased sales by 15%”);
- Refer to a thesaurus to find action verbs and adjectives that best describe your experience.

Another tool that can help you create a resume from scratch is *WinWay*, a resume building program that is available on various computers around both the Main and Downtown Campuses, such as in Galvin Library. The computers with the program are marked “*WinWay*.”

Also, don’t forget to have the experts at the CMC look over your résumé before you send it out to employers. When your first draft is complete, come to the CMC to have it critiqued by your Career Advisor who can give you information specific to your industry or field. To arrange an appointment, call (312) 567-6800.