

The Workplace

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A Fact Sheet

Highlights

There are three basic resume formats: chronological, functional and combination.

1. The chronological resume gives a detailed account of your work experience or history in reverse chronological order.

2. The functional format highlights skills by showcasing what you know and the skills you possess.

3. The combination format, just as the name implies, combines the best features of the first two types.

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Job Search 101: The Resume Format

You are actively searching for a job that is perfectly suited to you. You have armed yourself with a list of potential companies, including all pertinent information. You have learned about specific job requirements and have gathered all the necessary information for selling yourself. You objectively evaluated your skills, values and attitudes so that you can accurately assess whether a job is right for you and whether you are right for the job.

With all of this information organized into a data sheet for accuracy and easy reference you ready to write a resume that gets attention and secures interviews. Before putting fingers on the keyboard, decide which resume format is most appropriate for you, your work experience, and the job for which you are applying.

There are three basic resume formats: chronological, functional and combination.

1. The chronological resume gives a detailed account of your work experience or history in reverse chronological order. Also included is a list of your educational background in reverse chronological order. This is the most common type of format used, is the easiest to prepare, and is preferred by most corporate human resource professionals. The most effective chronological format is one that includes a summary of qualifications. The chronological resume tends to point out gaps or weaknesses in your employment background. If you have never been in the job market, have limited work experience, or have a less than perfect work history, you probably should use one of the other formats.
2. The functional format highlights skills by showcasing what you know and the skills you possess. Information presented tends to fo-



Before putting your fingers on the keyboard, decide which resume format is appropriate.

cus on the particular job you are seeking. Although this format gives greater flexibility and allows for more creativity in how you communicate your skills, it is often looked at suspiciously by would-be employers because this type is most often used to hide unfavorable or problematic work histories. The most effective use of the functional resume format is to make a career change. By stating your planned career change in your career objective signals the hiring manager to focus on your skills and that your work history is solid.

Before putting fingers on the keyboard, decide which resume format is most appropriate for you, your work experience, and the job for which you are applying.

3. The *combination format*, just as the name implies, combines the best features of the first two types. The combination resume concentrates on a specific position or targets a specific job. It allows you to present capabilities in support of that position before you relate other job experiences and abilities that are not current, but are still marketable. The combination format includes job titles, descriptions, and dates of employment. This format is especially favorable when your most recent

work history is not directly related to your current career objective or when you have a limited work history. The most effective combination resume uses a summary. The summary “bullets” key information bringing it to the attention of the hiring manager. The summary is typically positioned at the top of the resume and stresses information that is presented later.

Keep in mind that your resume may be the first impression a potential employer will have about you. Most hiring managers spend less than 30 seconds deciding your fate with that company or business. The type resume format used does not really matter if the document is filled with typographical, grammatical, and punctuation errors.

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