

Building a Resume

Your resume is a summary of the skills and experiences that are demonstrated by your portfolio. A good resume is designed to persuade employers that you have what it takes to meet their needs.

The goal of any resume is to catch an employer's attention, show her what you can offer, and get you called back for a job interview. A good resume will look polished and professional, with enough visual impact to stand out in a stack of other applications.

There are as many ways to write a resume as there are people wanting to write one. Everyone needs to find the best possible way to present their own unique set of skills. That means what works on your friends' resumes may not work for you, depending on what your skills and goals are.

The one thing your resume has in common with others is that it has to catch an employer's attention quickly. Employers receive a lot of applications, and experts estimate that employers give each resume about 45 seconds. If they can't find out what they need to know about you in that time, they won't look at your resume again.

Countless books and style guides have been written to help people write resumes. There are professionals that charge up to \$50 per resume, or more.

Each of these "experts" tries to keep up with the trends in presentation and layout so they can sell you their skills.

Spending a lot of money on your resume is not necessary, but it can be useful to look at a few books to find ideas about describing certain kinds of experience. Also, there are several different formats of resumes that are good for different situations and careers.

On the attached two pages there is a "combination-style" resume that Renee used when she applied for the tourism assistant job. The combination format is good for young people just entering the workforce, because it can be made to sell your unique skills. This format doesn't draw a lot of attention to your lack of experience: instead, you can focus on your skills and education.

Notes on the side of the resume point out important things to remember when you're writing your own. Some of these notes may be opposite to what your teachers or parents are telling you. If you're in doubt, ask yourself:

- What seems most professional?
- Are there political or cultural changes affecting your choice?
- What are you comfortable with?

