

Resume Briefs

Defining a resume A resume is a communication document that summarizes your qualifications: education, talents, skills, experience, interests and accomplishments. The resume is a marketing tool to assist you in obtaining employment interviews, approaching galleries, entering competitions, to accompany exhibitions, or for acceptance into academic programs/graduate school. Your resume is a unique personal statement about your qualifications and should be highly individualized. You should develop your own resume; the process helps you assess and reflect on your experiences as you prepare to communicate your qualifications with prospective employers.

Communicating qualifications Determine the purpose of your resume and your audience; often you will need to have more than one resume for communicating with diverse audiences. It can be a challenge to draw little word sketches of yourself to create a vision of who you are. Use action verbs to describe your experiences: designed, created, developed, planned, researched, drafted, rendered, coordinated, etc. Use numbers when appropriate to quantify statements: how much money you received for a Focus grant; how many people you supervised as a resident hall advisor; how much money you raised; the \$ value of the projects you managed. Qualify statements for a clearer understanding: describe the type of research; the type of organization for which a project was proposed; what medium used in creating the image; software used in implementing design. Include important buzz words such as: leadership, team player, communication abilities, software programs, etc.

Details It is essential that the reader can scan your resume easily and quickly to summarize your qualifications. Use a high quality paper that copies well. The print quality should be excellent; laser or ink jet printing is appropriate.

What to avoid in your resume Avoid passive language: was responsible for; was involved in; assisted with..... Avoid using complete sentences; describe experiences in brief phrases. Omit personal pronouns (I, me, and my) and articles (a, an, and the). Omit listing high school activities unless you have a specific reason for doing so. Do not include trite self-serving objectives: to obtain a challenging position with opportunity for career advancement. Avoid print and paper combinations that are difficult to read or photo copy. Avoid extensive lists of courses. Employers prefer to know skills, knowledge or experience gained from coursework.

Using visual images & WWW design Employers who hire design & art graduates are often visual people and will respond positively to a good design on the resume. Again, know your audience and create a resume that is easy to read. Do not "over design". An alternative to a creative resume format would be to include a page of your design images, scanned and reduced in size. For technical design work such as Web page design or animation, an interactive web resume is ideal. It is essential to communicate via the media! Often, your first contact will be via e-mail rather than the traditional telephone call, snail mail resume and cover letter. If you have created a Web site, and would like employers to see your design work, include the address on your resume.

Having the resume critiqued Ask three people to proofread the resume to check for spelling errors, inconsistency in tense or typos before the final printing. If possible ask for a resume critique from a professional working in your area of interest. Career Days is a great opportunity to get critiques.

The bottom line Since your qualifications are constantly changing, store your resume on a zip disk or CD so it can easily be revised as you apply for diverse positions and as your career progresses.