

# Resume Writing

A good resume is your best marketing tool. It should be written in a way that gets you invited for an interview. Resumes are typically scanned by employers in under **30 seconds**. To be effective, it has to be a well organized presentation of relevant information and accomplishments. **Keep a working copy and tailor it to be specific to each position you are applying for, highlighting your skills that are specific to the job.**

## Gathering Information

The first step is to gather all the facts about your work/volunteer experience and identify your skills and accomplishments. A good place to do this is in your **Portfolio**.

Your Portfolio is where you can store all of your accomplishments and accolades. Try to be well rounded and include items that showcase achievements in a range of areas eg. academics, athletics, extra-curricular activities, volunteering, community involvement, special skills and/or knowledge and personal references that validate how great you are. Get involved at SACHS and in the community. Use this information to **start building your resume**. Your Portfolio will assist you with writing your resume, applying for scholarships and with entrance interviews if your post secondary program requires one.

## Decide what to include

Sort through the facts you have gathered and compare your qualifications to the requirements of the work you want or specific to the job you are applying for. Write to your target market. **Remember, it is the reader's perception, not the writer's intention that matters.**

Essential things to have on your resume:

- Contact information
- Education and training
- Employment History
- Skills and Abilities
- Career Objective (optional)
- Interests (optional)

## Choose a format

The third step is to decide how to organize your information. It needs to be clear, direct, professional and easy to read, 1 - 2 pages in length and structured to direct the reader's attention to specific qualifications. Different resume formats are appropriate in different circumstances. The most common types of resumes are chronological and functional. Sometimes a hybrid or combination of these two styles is used. Plain text resumes are used when you submit a resume by email to prevent formatting problems. Any of these formats are acceptable so you must choose which style best fits your situation.

To see more tips and great examples, check out your [myBlueprint](#) account under the Work tab - Resumes and/or [alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/](http://alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/)

**Do**

- Keep it simple and clear 1 - 2 pages at most
- Use active, expressive words
- Be honest, don't exaggerate or undersell yourself
- Check it over carefully for errors

**Don't**

- Use "I" or "My"
- Sign, date or title
- Add a photograph,
- Add age, sex, height, weight or ethnic background

## Tailor your resume every time you use it!

Make sure everything you include on your resume indicates how well suited you are for the position.

The upper part of your resume should tell the employer what you have done, your qualifications and the benefits you offer the employer.

Make sure you have provided specific examples of your achievements and how you have used your skills.

Place titles in the left margin and dates on the right hand side. Choose strong action verbs.

Maintain consistency in the tense you are writing in.

Avoid using jargon, abbreviations or acronyms unless they are industry known.

Overall the format needs to be well laid out, consistent and easy to read.

If responding to an ad or job posting, use the job title and reference number.

## **Final Touches**

**Proofread**, check spelling and grammar, read it over, print it on good quality white paper. Save a hard copy and save it to your computer.

Finally, write a strong **cover letter**. It introduces your resume to the employer and will also increase your chances of getting an interview

For more tips and great examples of cover letters and resumes go to:

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