

HOW TO WRITE A WINNING RESUME

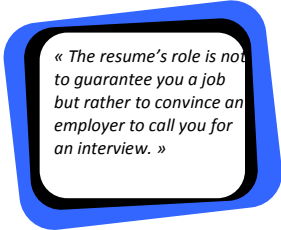


Prepared by Mireille Trottier-Roy

HELLO, MY NAME IS...

A resume is your first step to getting a job. Without it, it would be difficult to explain to a potential employer what experience and skills you have that make you a great candidate for the job you want. A resume is like a handshake when meeting someone new. It's an introduction to yourself, and this is why it is important that it reflect your personality but mostly your professionalism.

It is important to remember that a resume **doesn't** equal a job. Although the resume plays an important role, it is usually not the only tool used by employers to decide who to hire. The resume's role is mostly to convince an employer to call you in for an interview. At which point, during the interview you will be able to convince (at least try to convince) the employer to hire you.



« The resume's role is not to guarantee you a job but rather to convince an employer to call you for an interview. »

This guide was created to help you write a winning resume. However, it is important to note that there is not only ONE way to write a resume. Therefore, you will find tips and hints for writing a resume that is unique to you.

SECTIONS OF A RESUME

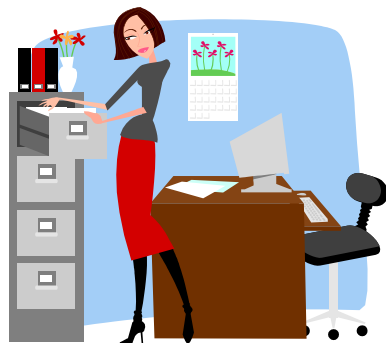
Hello? Hello? Is Anyone There?

Whatever you do, make sure that your NAME, complete ADDRESS (example : 123 Main Street, Sudbury ON, P3C 1R5), PHONE NUMBER and EMAIL (if you have one) appear on your resume. One of the worst mistakes job seekers make is to forget to put this important information on their resume. Remember, if they can't call you, they can't hire you. Got it? Thankyouverymuch!

The First 1/3 Of the First Page: The « Highlight of Qualifications »

And if it wasn't hard enough to write a resume and find a job, the first trick for writing a winning resume is to use the top third (1/3) of the first page to captivate the employer's interest.

Why? Because employers receive hundreds of resumes when they post a job. They only spend 10-30 seconds deciding whether or not to keep reading and/or call the job seeker for an interview. This is the reason why you must explain in a visually appealing and concise manner why they should not put your resume in the recycle bin.



So, what kind of information should you put? This depends on the job you are applying for... Which brings us to Tric #2 : write a resume specific to the kind of job you are applying for. One-size-fits-all-resumes don't fit well with most employers.

Maximize the impact of the first 1/3 of the first page, by pretending you are already working in that position. What are the most important traits that someone working in that position must possess? This is the information you want to add to your Highlight of Qualifications. Here are a few examples :

Highlight of Qualifications 1 – *Administrative Assistant*

- **Bilingual** : Speak, read and write, French & English
- Work well under pressure and meet tight deadlines
- Strive to provide the best customer service
- Excellent computer skills and type over 60 words per minute
- Able to follow directions and work under minimal supervision
- Excellent organizational skills

Highlight of Qualifications 2 – *Dental Hygienist*

- **Bilingual** : French & English
- Ease in making patients of all ages feel comfortable
- HARP and CPR certified
- Excellent manual dexterity
- Detail oriented and excellent observation abilities
- Work well independently or in a team

Highlight of Qualifications 3 – *Miner*

- Software knowledge : Mine 24D and Auto CAD
- Physically fit and able to complete assigned tasks
- Class G Driver's Licence
- Safety conscious : follows industry safety guidelines
- Work well in a team or independently
- CPR and WHMIS certified

And Then What?

Well, to answer honestly : it depends. The section that comes next could be your education or work experience depending on whether you have been in the workforce for many years or have never

worked before. Put sections in order of relevance for the employer/job applying for and whatever you feel sells you best.

There are about 5 other sections that can be added after the Highlights of Qualifications on a resume. These include :

- ▣ Education
- ▣ Work Experience
- ▣ Volunteer Work
- ▣ Relevant Skills
- ▣ Certificates, Licences and Training

Education

The order you choose for the sections depends, as mentioned above, on your personal situation. If you are a new graduate or student your education should appear right after the Highlight of Qualifications. This explains to an employer why you don't have a lot of work experience or tells the employer why you are qualified to do the job. Regardless of where you put it, here is an example on how to put your Education on your resume :

Business Administration

Cambrian College, Sudbury ON

2004-Present

- Placement : *Hatch*, Sudbury ON

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

École secondaire Hanmer, Hanmer ON

2000-2004



Relevant Skills

For those who have had a variety of jobs (that are not related to the job being applied for) or have no or little work experience could benefit from putting a « Relevant Skills » section. This section is basically a list of the skills or knowledge you have that makes it possible for you to do the job you are applying for.

It is easy to « cheat » while doing this section. For example, if you are a college or university grad, take a look at the course description for the classes you took. It is a great place to start.

Another tool is the National Occupation Codes. It is actually OK for you to copy and paste from this website. Go to <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC-CNP/app/index.aspx?lc=E>. Search for the positions you have held and copy and paste from the job description (those lines that you can honestly say you have done).

Which brings another important piece of information : DO NOT LIE OR EXAGGERATE on your resume! This is bad for many reasons. It doesn't impress an employer when you answer with « Uhhhhmmmm... » when he/she asks : « So on your resume you say you know how to do ABC. Give me an example of a time when you did ABC? ». Also, even if you are hired, an employer can choose to fire you (even if you have started to work) if they find out you lied on your resume.

Work Experience and Volunteer Work

Whether or not your work experience is related to the position for which you are applying, it is important to include this information on your resume. “But why?” do you ask. Because you have learned *transferable skills*. What the heck does that mean? Simply put, this means you have skills that you can bring from job to job such as arriving for work on

time, getting along with co-workers, being reliable when working different shifts and hours, not swearing and much more.

You can include your volunteer work in the Work Experience section or put it in a section all by itself. The choice is up to you.

Here is an example of how you can write your « Work Experience» section:

Waitress

East Side Mario's, Sudbury ON 2005-Present

Front Counter Worker

Tim Hortons, Val Caron ON 2003-2005

Volunteer – Fund Raiser

MS Walk for the Cure, Sudbury ON 2005

Licences, Certificates and Workshops

A few examples for this section are :

- Class G Driver's Licence
- First Aid and CPR Certificate (2008)
- WHMIS
- A+ Certificate
- Dealing with Difficult People Workshop

The list is endless and depends on your field of interest and job being applied for.

HINT: KEEPING THINGS CONSISTENT IS IMPORTANT FOR A RESUME THAT ROCKS! THIS MEANS, IF YOU PUT YOUR HEADINGS (SUCH AS "WORK EXPERIENCE" AND "RELEVANT SKILLS") IN BOLD, MAKE SURE TO BOLD ALL OF THE HEADINGS. IF YOU DECIDED TO PUT COMPANY NAMES IN ITALICS, DO THIS FOR ALL THE COMPANIES YOU MENTION IN YOUR RESUME. THIS MAKES IT EASIER TO READ YOUR RESUME AND HELPS AN EMPLOYER FIND INFORMATION THEY ARE LOOKING FOR.

References

There are many opinions regarding references. But as a general rule it is better to write « References available upon request ». This is to make sure that employers are not calling your references just because you submitted your resume. Can you imagine if you applied for 50 different jobs and your references had to talk about you 50 different times? They would probably get annoyed no matter how wonderful they think you are! Your references are doing you a big favour and you should only have employers call them when you go for an interview (or if they ask for references in a job ad). Make sure you type your references on a different page and include their first and last names, title, business they work for and phone number.

Get a « Wow! »... a Few Tips:

- When submitting your resume make sure it is clean and crisp (not folded and full of stains); put it in an envelope if possible. Remember if you don't make a good first impression, the employer will call: "Next!" and go to the next resume
- Your resume must be tailored to one job or type of job
- Research, research, research! Find out what the employer's preferences are. Think of your resume as a cereal box. Would you buy All-Bran cereal? No? Why not? Because it's for « old » people. The folks at All-Bran know this and this is why they make their cereal box appeal to the « older » crowd. So don't try to sell *All-Bran* to an employer who prefers *Lucky Charms*
- Make sure you don't have any grammar or spelling mistakes
- Don't use coloured paper or « busy » fonts

- Use bulleted lists instead of paragraphs to make it easier to read
- NEVER exaggerate or lie. Did you know that even 5 years after you were hired, if an employer finds out you lied you can say “buh bye!” to your job?
- Don’t use abrv. (abbreviations) or A.C.R.O.N.Y.M.S (acronyms) without giving the complete meaning of them
- Use action verbs to describe your skills (some examples are: *verify, assist, complete, demonstrate*, etc.);
- When possible, add a cover letter to your resume. The letter helps to link the information in your resume to the job advertisement.
- Make sure someone rereads your resume to scan for mistakes. If possible ask someone who works in the job search field (like the people at your local Job Connect office).

Well, you are now armed with all the information you need to write a winning resume. Take your time and make your resume reflect who you are and that you feel confident using it to apply for jobs.

Good luck!

Example 1

CANDY CANE

1 Main Street, Chelmsford ON P0M 1L0 ▪ 705.855.1562 ▪ cc@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE: Personal Support Worker Position

PROFILE

- **Bilingual** : fluent in French and English
- First Aid and CPR certified
- Work well under pressure and with minimal supervision
- Excellent interpersonal, empathy and active listening skills

EDUCATION

Certificate – Personal Support Worker

CTS, Sudbury ON, 2007

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Chelmsford District Composite School, Chelmsford ON, 2005

RELEVANT SKILLS

- Care for individuals and families during periods of incapacitation, convalescence or family disruption
- Administer bedside and personal care to clients such as aid in ambulation, bathing, personal hygiene, and dressing and undressing
- Plan and prepare meals and special diets, and feed or assist in feeding clients
- Demonstrate infant care to new parents

WORK EXPERIENCE

Tutor

The Learning Centre, Hanmer ON, 2007

Child Care Provider

Private Employers, Chelmsford ON, 2001-2005

VOLUNTEER WORK

Housekeeper

ICAN- Independence Centre and Network, Sudbury ON, 2006

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Example 2

JO-JO POTATOE

10 Oak Street, Sudbury ON P0K 7Y9
(705) 555-1234 ou potatoe@hotmail.com

Computer Technician

A+ Certified

Windows ▪ Linux ▪ Microsoft Office ▪ hardware ▪ Internet

EDUCATION

Diplomat – Information Technologies

CAMBRIAN COLLEGE, Sudbury ON

2004-2007

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

CONFEDERATION SECONDARY SCHOOL, Val Caron ON 2000-2004

COMPUTER KNOWLEDGE

- **Operating Systems** : Windows 3.0/95/98/ME/XP/Vista; Linux
- **Microsoft Office** : Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher
- **Internet**: Explorer, FireFox, Netscape, Lotus Notes, Group Wise
- **Hardware**: souris, claviers, moniteurs, balayeurs, imprimantes

RELEVANT SKILLS

- Diagnose and locate circuit, component and equipment faults
- Adjust, align, replace or repair electronic equipment, assemblies and components following equipment manuals and schematics, and using soldering tools and other hand and power tools
- Complete work orders, test and maintenance reports

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Representative – Computers Department

FUTURE SHOP, Sudbury ON

2004-Present

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Example 3

123 Smith Street
Sudbury ON P3C 6H9
(705) 555-1234

CHLOE SMITH

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- ✍ Experienced Early Childhood Educator
- ✍ Organized and dynamic individual
- ✍ Works well within a group
- ✍ Valid First Aid and CPR certificate
- ✍ Work well under pressure
- ✍ **Bilingual** : Fluent in French and English

WORK EXPERIENCE

Early Childhood Educator

COTTON CANDY DAYCARE, Sudbury ON, 2004-Present

- Develop and implement daily activities that support and promote the development of children
- Lead children in activities by telling or reading stories, teaching songs
- Guide and assist children in the development of proper eating, dressing and toilet habits
- Observe children for signs of learning disabilities or emotional problems and take appropriate action
- Assess the skills, abilities, interests and needs of children
- Discuss progress or problems of children with parents and other staff members
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with other community service providers working with children

EDUCATION

Diploma – Early Childhood Education

CAMBRIAN COLLEGE, Sudbury ON, 2002-2004

- Placement : Educator Assistant, ABC DAYCARE (2004)

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE ESPANOLA, Espanola ON, 1998-2002

« Chloe is a hard worker and wonderful with children. »
-Mrs Doe,
Supervisor,
Cotton Candy Day
Care



REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Example 4



ANNA WORK

100, Whatever Street
Alban ON P9K 6M0
705.555.1111

wannawork@canada.com

ASSISTANT MANAGER with excellent **LEADERSHIP** skills who helped **BOOST SALES** by **75%** in less than 2 years as well as developed an **INNOVATIVE** marketing plan for newly established retail store.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Retail Assistant Manager

Clothes that Rock, Sudbury ON, 2005 – Present

- ⇒ Assist with planning, directing and evaluating operations of establishment
- ⇒ Manage staff and assign duties
- ⇒ Study market research and trends to determine consumer demand, potential sales volumes and effect of competitors' operations on sales
- ⇒ Determine merchandise and services to be sold, and implement price and credit policies as directed by manager
- ⇒ Locate, select and procure merchandise for resale
- ⇒ Develop and implement marketing strategies
- ⇒ Plan budgets and authorize expenditures
- ⇒ Resolve customer complaints
- ⇒ Determine staffing requirements and hire or oversee hiring of staff as directed by manager

EDUCATION

Business Administration Diploma

Collège Boréal, Sudbury ON, 2003-2005

- ⇒ Graduated with Honours
- ⇒ Placement: Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)

Ontario Secondary School Diploma

École secondaire catholique Champlain, Chelmsford ON, 1999-2003

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Example 5

MARY X. MAS

124 Main Street
Val Caron ON P3P 1F7
(705) 897-1234

OBJECTIVE: Full-Time Cashier Position

HIGHLIGHT OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Over 2 years experience in retail
 - Always make the customer a priority
 - Reliable and able to work shifts
 - Excellent mathematical abilities
 - Valid WHMIS certificate
 - Friendly and good sense of humour
-

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Clerk/Cashier

Suzy Shier, Sudbury ON

2006-2008

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND CASHIER SKILLS

- Greet customers and discuss type, quality and quantity of merchandise or services sought for purchase, rental or lease
- Advise customers on use and care of merchandise, and provide advice concerning specialized products or services
- Estimate or quote prices, credit terms, trade-in allowances, warranties and delivery dates
- Prepare merchandise for purchase, rental or lease
- Prepare sales, rental or leasing contracts and accept cash, cheque, credit card or automatic debit payment
- Assist in display of merchandise
- Maintain sales records for inventory control
- Operate computerized inventory record keeping and re-ordering systems

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Companion

Extencicare, Sudbury ON

2004-Present

EDUCATION

Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Confederation Secondary School, Val Caron ON

2002-2006

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Resources

DiFALCO, Marcelle et GREENKY HERZ, Jocelyn, The Big Sister's Guide to the World of Work, The Inside Rules Every Working Girl Must Know, New York, Fireside, 2005, 256 p.

BRITTON, Susan Whitcomb, Résumé Magic, Indianapolis, JIST Publishing Inc., 2003, 583 p.

YATE, Martin John, Resumes that Knock 'Em Dead, Avon, Adams Media, 2006, 306 p.

How To Be a Better Resume Coach (Manuel), Winnipeg Transition Center, 2007

<http://resume.monster.ca> – Monster.ca

www.quintcareers.com/resres.html - Quintessential Careers

www.emploisetc.ca – Service Canada

www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca – National Occupations Classification



Job Connect Connexion Emplois

CHELMSFORD • SUDBURY • VAL CARON

Job Connect is a free service that helps people prepare for and find work.

Job Connect

Val Est Mall
3140-14 Hwy 69 North
Val Caron, ON P2N 1G3

☎ : (705) 897-5627 (JOBS)

☎ : (705) 897-5622