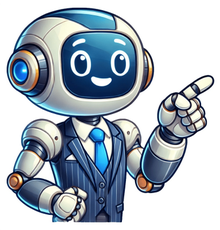
Click Here



How to write a job description for resume

Hiring managers receive anywhere from dozens to even thousands of resumes and job applications daily. That's why a well-crafted resume is crucial to helping you stand out from the competition. And your experience section in particular—where your resume job descriptions live—really needs to shine. Trending SearchesSEARCH ALL JOBS This section highlights your previous experiences—whether in a formal job, internship, volunteer work, or other roles—demonstrating your achievements and capabilities. To make an impact, you need to strategically tailor your experiences and skills to align with the job you're applying for, showing recruiters that you're a perfect fit for the role. Below, you'll find key tips on how to write job descriptions for resumes and examples to guide you through it. Get that resume out there! Browse open jobs on The Muse and find your dream job » When you apply for jobs, you'll see a description of the role and what the company is looking for. To really stand out, your resume should match those requirements as closely as possible. That's where the job description section comes in handy. It's your chance to highlight past experiences and make sure they align with the job you're aiming for. Your resume job description should include: Job titleCompany nameDate of employmentLocationResponsibilities and achievements Of course, this section alone won't land you a job—your whole resume should be written to impress the recruiters. However, when you're an experienced professional, even if you're not a senior in your position yet, well-written job descriptions can at least guarantee you some interviews. The following tips will give you some insights into what this section of your resume should look like—and what hiring managers are looking for in candidates' resumes. If you're not new to resume building, you probably know that each section of the file should have a heading. It should be clear and concise, telling the recruiter exactly what they're going to read next. ExperienceWork ExperienceProfessional Experience Next step is filling out the experience section—or whatever you decide to name it—with your professional background. You'll always start with basic information from each job (or internship, volunteer work, and such), like your title, the company name, location, and date of employment. You can change the order as you see fit—for instance, putting the company name first and your title second. However, it's important to keep the same formatting throughout the resume, so be sure your choice works well for every experience. There's no set amount of experiences you should include in your resume. But keep in mind that, ideally, it should only have relevant and recent experience, listed in reverse chronological order (from the most recent to the least recent). Additionally, most recruiters prefer a one- to two-page resume, max. Now, it's time to write the actual job descriptions. It's typically ideal to use bullet points and one to two sentences for each. As a standard, most resume templates have three to four bullet points for each experience, but you can use more (or less) as long as the information is relevant and you're not simply trying to fill out the page. In describing your role, avoid falling into the trap of only listing job responsibilities. Muse career coach Andrea Gerson says that candidates should expand task-focused language into action-driven, accomplishment-oriented information. For example, instead of writing "Performed X, Y, and Z," try "Performed X, Y, and Z, which led to [achievements]." "This information showcases your capabilities—which is exactly what employers want to see," Gerson says. A commonly used formula to describe accomplishments within your roles is the context-scope-outcome strategy. You start with action verbs, show how you fulfilled each responsibility, and finish with an achievement that resulted from those actions. If possible, present your achievement with a quantifier, meaning metrics or numerical data that illustrates the impact of your work. If you have a hard time identifying your impactful actions and accomplishments within your job responsibilities, Gerson suggests asking yourself these contextual questions: What was the setting I was working in?Was it a fast-paced pizzeria? If so, how many customers were served on a daily/weekly basis? If it's a smaller company that's not very well-known, what products or services did they provide?What was their scope of operations? Local, regional, global?Who was their target customer base? Your resume job description could also benefit from including some relevant context about the companies you previously worked for, such industry, size, or differentiating factors. You can add this info within the first bullet of a position—which is called an introductory bullet. "These introductory bullets should highlight your most impressive or transferable responsibilities in the context of the company that you were working for," Gerson says. The following job responsibilities templates show examples of introductory bullets you can adjust for your resume: "Contributed to [achievement, outcome] on behalf of [company]""Managed key aspects of [project responsibilities] for [company]""Assisted in [a project] on for [company]" Here are examples of how these templates would look like filled out: "Billed 50 clients on behalf of the company's national and international enterprise clients""Managed key aspects of product development and management on for the national launching a hair care brand""Assisted in the development of the rebranding and repositioning of a dating app with 5+ million users for a international tech company" These days, most hiring managers use application tracking systems (ATSs) to segment and quickly scan resumes to select the best based on their similarity to the open job description. This similarity is determined by keywords. Keywords are specific phrases or terms within a job description precisely used to describe or explain responsibilities, skills, abilities, and knowledge the employer is looking for. These terms usually repeat throughout the job listing, signaling their importance for that specific role. For this reason, you should do your best to incorporate keywords from the open job description on your resume, wherever it accurately reflects your prior work experience. "It not only makes your resume stronger but encourages you to think deeply about what the position is asking for and how your skills match," says Muse career coach Lauren Wethers. Review the job description you want to apply for and segment phrases that explain the specific duties or skills required for the role, which could be technical skills or transferable skills. For example: If the company's job description for an account manager says: The employee responsibilities are: Creating a market specific sales plan that meets set sales goalsEducate the community on the company's valuesMeeting regularly with sales market's customers to understand their needsIdentifying local marketing needs to enhance presence and grow sales You could write your job description like this: Created a market specific sales plan to meet company's set sales goals for a skincare brandEducated the community on the company's value by meeting regularly with customers to understand their needsEnhanced presence and sales by 20% by identifying local marketing needs and implementing a new sales strategy Be sure to use the exact same language as is used in the open job description, because the ATS machine might not understand synonyms. "The computer doesn't know the difference between 'coached' and 'advised' on your resume—it's looking for one over the other," Wethers says. Here are some examples of job descriptions for resumes for different roles you can adapt for yourself: Streamlined checkout and return transactions on behalf of a multinational chain with 10+ locations in Florida working simultaneouslySupervised and trained front-end cashiers for two consecutive years, enhancing 15% crew performance in PoS transactions and reducing shrinkProvided excellent customer service and assistance to customers, processing 155+ transactions per shift while identifying selling opportunities for cross and up-sellsBalanced cash drawers with a 98% monthly accuracy, handling $119,000 of annual revenue Restaurant Server & Crew Member Performed table management on behalf of a family-owned, award-winning Italian restaurant from downtown DenverPicked up and delivered patrons' orders from the bar and kitchen, satisfying +75 patrons per shiftCollaborated with Head Chef to streamline order communication processes, inventory shortages, and event assistance, reducing 25% of overall waiting timeProvided excellent customer service with a 96% NPS while calculating multiple patron's accounts & payments through cash, PoS, and e-wallets Customer service representative Responded to thousands of calls each month on behalf of one of the fastest-growing CMS companies worldwide, generating 15% in revenue or serving 5.000 customers each yearWorked closely with the IT division to address and resolve a high volume of customer issues pertaining to software functionality and technical issues, achieving a 97% NPS scoreContributed to the development and implementation of upselling and cross-selling strategies which led to over $35,000 in new annual revenueLeveraged CRM tools to improve response times by nearly 25%, impacting nearly 1.000 customers/accounts Managed sales initiatives on behalf of Fortune 500 manufacturing companies generating over $12M in annual revenue, specializing in car salesAchieved 35% increase in lead conversion rates, working to qualify over 500 customers each monthNegotiated contracts valued at up to $1 million, interfacing with 35+ major accounts Rainfall Care Nursing Center Worked with over 50 adults on behalf of a specialized health center, focusing on cardiac patientsWorked closely with patients and family members to ensure high quality of life, providing weekly reports on the patient's health statusContributed to 45% reduction in emergency room visits during tenure, closely monitoring patient conditions throughout short-term and long-term stays Provided monthly housekeeping services on behalf of a specialized cleaning agency for apartments and small housesCleaned over 150 apartments and houses resulting in a satisfaction rate of 97%Achieved a 95% rate of returning clients by performing cleaning and maintenance tasks, along with preferred requests solicited by clientsAssured high-standard quality cleaning process on each property, decreasing by 15% the agency's average apartment turnaround time Writing resume job descriptions can seem difficult at first, but the key is going beyond responsibilities to list accomplishments, starting with a strong action verb (e.g. "implemented," "created," "managed") and following up with quantifiable results. Remember to only include experiences that are relevant for the position you're applying for, use keywords from the job listing, and use a simple and clean formatting to make your resume ATS-friendly. That's all there is to it—now go out there and get that dream job! Business document For other uses, see Résumé (disambiguation). An example of a résumé with a common format with the name John Doe. A résumé or resume (or alternatively resumé),[a][1] is a document created and used by a person to present their background, skills, and accomplishments. Résumés can be used for a variety of reasons, but most often are used to secure new jobs, whether in the same organization or another.[2] A typical résumé contains a summary of relevant job experience and education. The résumé is usually one of the first items, along with a cover letter and sometimes an application for employment, a potential employer sees regarding the job seeker and is used to screen applicants before offering an interview. In the UK, EMEA, and Asian countries, a curriculum vitae (CV) is used for similar purposes. This international CV is more akin to the résumé—a summary of one's education and experience—than to the longer and more detailed CV expected in U.S. academic circles. However, international CVs vary by country. For example, many Middle East and African countries and some parts of Asia require personal data (e.g., photograph, gender, marital status, children) while this is not accepted in the UK, U.S., and some European countries.[3] In South Asian countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, biodata is often used in place of a résumé.[4] The word "résumé" comes from the French word résumer meaning 'to summarize'.[5] Leonardo da Vinci is sometimes credited with the first résumé, though his "résumé" takes the form of a letter written about 1481–1482 to a potential employer, Ludovico Sforza.[6][7] For the next 450 years, the résumé continued to be simply a description of a person, including abilities and past employment. In the early 1900s, résumés included information like weight, height, marital status, and religion. By 1950, résumés were considered mandatory and started to include information like personal interests and hobbies. It was not until the 1970s, the beginning of the Digital Age, that résumés took on a more professional look in terms of presentation and content.[8] The start of the 21st century saw a further evolution for résumés on the internet as social media helped people spread résumés faster. In 2001 LinkedIn was launched, which allowed users to post their résumés and skills online.[9] Since, many SaaS companies began providing job seekers with free online résumé builders; usually templates to insert credentials and experience and create a résumé to download or an online portfolio link to share via social media. With the launch of YouTube in 2005, video résumés became common, and more and more high school students began to send them to different colleges and universities.[10] In many contexts, a résumé is typically limited to one or two pages of size A4 or letter-size, highlighting only those experiences and qualifications that the author considers most relevant to the desired position. Many résumés contain keywords or skills that potential employers are looking for via applicant tracking systems (ATS), make heavy use of active verbs, and display content in a flattering manner. Acronyms and credentials after the applicant's name should be spelled out fully in the appropriate section of the résumé to increase the likelihood they are found in a computerized keyword scan.[11] A résumé is a marketing document in which the content should be adapted to suit each individual job application or applications aimed at a particular industry. In late 2002, job seekers and students started making interactive résumés such as résumés having links, clickable phone numbers and email addresses. With the launch of YouTube in 2006, job seekers and students also started to create multimedia and video résumés.[12] Job seekers were able to circumvent the application for employment process and reach employers through direct email contact and résumé blasting, a term meaning the mass distribution of résumés to increase personal visibility within the job market. However, the mass distribution of résumés to employers can often have a negative effect on the applicant's chances of securing employment as the résumés tend not to be tailored for the specific positions the applicant is applying for. It is usually, therefore, more sensible to optimize the résumé for each position applied for and its keywords [13] In order to keep track of all experiences, keeping a "master résumé" document is recommended, providing job seekers with the ability to customize a tailored résumé while making sure extraneous information is easily accessible for future use if needed. The complexity or simplicity of various résumé formats tends to produce results varying from person to person, for the occupation, and the industry. Résumés or CVs used by medical professionals, professors, artists, and people in other specialized fields may be comparatively longer. For example, an artist's résumé, typically focused on experience and achievements in the artistic field,[14] may include extensive lists of solo and group exhibitions. Résumés may be organized in different ways. The following are some of the more common résumé formats: A reverse chronological résumé, the current preferred standard as of 2024, lists a candidate's job experiences in chronological order (last thing first), generally covering the previous 10 to 15 years. Positions are listed with starting and ending dates. Current positions on a résumé typically list the starting date to the present. The reverse chronological résumé format is optimal for professionals who are making advancements in the same vertical.[15] In this format, the main body is the Experience section, starting from the most recent experience and moving chronologically backward through previous experience. The reverse chronological résumé works to build credibility through experience gained, while illustrating career growth over time and filling all gaps in a career trajectory. In the United Kingdom the chronological résumé tends to extend only as far back as the applicant's GCSE/Standard Grade qualifications. Largely fallen from favor,[16] the functional résumé listed work experience and skills sorted by skill area or job function and specific to the type of position being sought. This format directly emphasizes specific professional capabilities and utilizes experience summaries as its primary means of communicating professional competency. The functional résumé was used by individuals making a career change, a varied work history, or relevant roles which were held some time ago. Rather than focus on the length of time that has passed, the functional résumé allowed the reader to identify those skills quickly. However, it has largely been replaced by hybrid résumé. A hybrid or combination résumé combines the best of the reverse chronological and functional resume formats. Opening with a profile or summary to showcase the most relevant information, it often continues with a section of highlights and/or a list of strengths before listing reverse chronological experience and education. This enables the candidate to present the most relevant strengths and impressive accomplishments at the top. This format is particularly helpful for candidates who have employment gaps, may have more than one to two short-term roles, or have relevant experience from early in their careers. It is also excellent for those who are looking to change fields or industries. The strength of this format is it spotlights relevant information up front and deemphasizes less relevant titles and less desirable chronological issues. A blind résumé is a modern and equitable style used by some employers to focus on an applicant's qualifications and experience by removing any personal identifying information that could potentially result in bias. By excluding or minimizing details such as the candidate's name, age, gender, address, or educational background, blind résumés aim to ensure that recruiters assess candidates based solely on relevant information like their academic qualification, abilities, experience, and skills, rather than on discriminatory factors such as ethnicity, gender, or academic pedigree, which do not provide meaningful insights into the candidate's qualifications. This method is designed to promote fairness, equality, and diversity in recruitment by reducing the impact of biases that often influence hiring decisions, particularly for racialized and diverse job applicants. Studies have shown that candidates with certain demographic characteristics, such as names associated with a particular race or gender, are often unfairly disadvantaged in the hiring process. While the challenge of deeply ingrained systemic bias cannot be fully addressed by blind résumés alone, and not all recruiters may be familiar with this approach, it is considered a best practice among some organizations and applicants. This de-biasing approach is promoted in environments where broader systemic changes to address biases in hiring practices, interviews, and promotions within organizations are still evolving.[17][18][19] As the Internet becomes largely driven by multimedia, job-seekers have sought to take advantage of the trend by moving their résumés away from the traditional to website résumés or e-résumés. Video and infographic résumés have gained popularity in the creative and media industries.[20] This trend has attracted criticism from human resources management professionals, who warn that this may be a passing fad and that multimedia-based résumés may be overlooked by recruiters whose workflow is designed only to accommodate a traditional résumé format.[21] According to Forbes, almost 85% of employers use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), and it is common for employers to only accept résumés digitally. This has changed much about the manner in which résumés are written, read, and processed, as paper-based résumés become an exception rather than the rule.[22] Many employers and recruitment agencies insist on résumés in a particular file format. Most prefer Microsoft Word documents, while others will only accept résumés formatted in PDF or plain ASCII text. Since almost all employers now find candidates through search engines and ATS, which use artificial intelligence (AI) to search, filter, and manage high volumes of résumés, it is critical to tailor résumés to ATS standard or risk being eliminated: according to the Harvard Business Review (HBR), 88% of employers believe qualified applicants are filtered out by ATS.[23] ATS and to some extent other search engines use natural language processors to parse résumés. Résumé parsers often correctly interpret some parts of the résumé while missing or misinterpreting others. The best résumé parsers capture a high percentage of information regarding location, names, and titles, but remain less accurate with skills, industries, and other less structured information, and can fail entirely if faced with formats they are not designed to handle. According to Indeed, the ideal ATS-friendly résumé uses Arial, Calibri, Cambria, Garamond or Georgia font, does not include graphs, tables, or headers (formatted headers not sections), and uses "keywords" or role-specific words and descriptions in a job description.[24] Shapes, text boxes, other graphic images should be avoided on résumés or they can set off ATS filters (each ATS varies). Résumés written following these rules are more likely to be correctly captured by, and ranked higher by, ATS, thereby making candidates more findable. AI tools can also be used to test résumés,[25] but AI-generated resume content must be rigorously verified and edited as generative AI produces very consistent sentence structure, and under different jobs with similar responsibilities, often repeats identical phrases. This can catch the attention of algorithms, so résumés must be edited carefully to be make it through ATS to be seen by potential employers.[26] Having a résumé online was first pioneered by professions that benefit from the multimedia and rich detail of an HTML résumé (such as actors, photographers, graphic designers, developers, dancers, etc.[27]) but all job seekers should now have a digital version of their résumé available to employers and professionals who use Internet recruiting.[28] Background check Europass European Standardized model Federal resume Résumé fraud Curriculum vitae Cover letter Résumé parsing Video resume Ghost job ^ US: /ˈrɛzʊmeɪ/ UK: /ˈrɛzjʊmeɪ/; French: [ʁezyme] ^ "résumé". Merriam-Webster Online. ^ "Resume | Define Resume at Dictionary.com". Dictionary.reference.com. Retrieved 8 March 2017. ^ "Customizing Resumes for Different Countries and Cultures". www.linkedin.com. Retrieved 12 December 2024. ^ Sehgal, M. K. (2008). Business Communication. Excel Books. p. 392. ISBN 9788174465016. ^ "resume". Merriam-Webster. Retrieved 9 March 2015. French résumé, from past participle of résumer to resume, summarize, from Middle French resumer ^ Pratt, Síofra. "3 Lessons Every Job Seeker Can Learn from the World's Oldest CV". LinkedIn. Retrieved 8 June 2015. ^ "The Skills of Leonardo da Vinci". Lettersofnote.com. 28 March 2012. Retrieved 8 June 2015. ^ "The 500-Year Evolution Of The Resume". Business Insider. Retrieved 2 December 2016. ^ "The History of the Resume". davron.net. 10 February 2016. Retrieved 31 July 2021. ^ "The 500-Year Evolution Of The Resume". Business Insider. Retrieved 31 July 2021. ^ "How to Write Powerful and Memorable HR Resumes". 19 May 2021. ^ "The 500-Year Evolution Of The Resume". Business Insider. Retrieved 31 July 2021. ^ Chen, Zhisheng (February 2023). "Collaboration among recruiters and artificial intelligence: removing human prejudices in employment". Cognition, Technology & Work. 25 (1): 135–149. doi:10.1007/s10111-022-00716-0. ISSN 1435-5558. PMC 9516509. PMID 36187287. ^ "How To Write an Artists CV in 10 Steps". thepracticalartworld.com. The Practical Art World. 12 February 2011. Retrieved 6 November 2023. ^ "Reverse Chronological Resume Format: Focusing on Work History, Growth - For Dummies". Dummies.com. Retrieved 22 December 2015. ^ "The Death of the Functional Resume: Why It No Longer Works". www.linkedin.com. Retrieved 12 December 2024. ^ "Can Blind Hiring Improve Workplace Diversity?". Society for Human Resource Management. ^ "Is Blind Hiring the Best Hiring?". The New York Times. ^ "When Blind Hiring Advances DEI — and When It Doesn't". Harvard Business Review. 1 June 2023. ISSN 0017-8012. ^ Shontell, Alyson (27 February 2013). "10 Resumes That Got Worldwide Attention". finance.yahoo.com. Retrieved 25 June 2014. ^ "Recruiters Tell Us: Do Résumé Fads Really Work?". forbes.com. 18 May 2012. Retrieved 25 June 2014. ^ Garone, Liz (23 June 2014). "To Print or Not to Print". bbc.com. Retrieved 25 June 2014. ^ Hamilton, Dr Diane. "Your Résumé Passed AI Screening: How To Also Stand Out To Recruiters". Forbes. Retrieved 12 December 2024. ^ Taylor, Suzanne (21 August 2023). "How To Write an ATS Resume (With Template and Tips)". indeed. Retrieved 10 December 2023. ^ Zwan, Gwen van der (11 June 2019). "Robots reviewed my resume and they were not impressed". TNW | Work2030. Retrieved 12 June 2021. ^ Rojas-Galeano, Sergio; Posada, Jorge; Ordoñez, Esteban (3 October 2022). Nilashi, Mehrbakhsh (ed.). "A Bibliometric Perspective on AI Research for Job-Résumé Matching". The Scientific World Journal. 2022: 1–15. doi:10.1155/2022/8002363. ISSN 1537-744X. PMC 9550515. PMID 36225947. ^ "How to Write an Actor's/Singer's CV". Kent University. ^ Presely, Eric (8 May 2008). "An E-friendly Résumé in 5 Easy Steps". cnn.com. The dictionary definition of curriculum vitae at Wiktionary Bennett, Scott A. The Elements of Résumé Style: Essential Rules and Eye-Opening Advice for Writing Résumés and Cover Letters that Work. AMACOM, 2005 ISBN 0-8144-7280-X. Whitcomb, Susan Britton. Resume Magic: Trade Secrets of a Professional Resume Writer, Third Edition. JIST Publishing, 2006. ISBN 978-1-59357-311-9. Thiollet, Jean-Pierre.Euro CV, Paris, Top Editions, 1997. ISBN 2-87731-131-7 Retrieved from " Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.