**Draft Mon Feb 6
(content, not design)**

**Final due with
Communications Package
March 1**

Writing Your Resume - Telling Your Story

Writing a resume can be frustrating. How much do I write? How do I write so it sounds professional, but not too cheesy? How much detail should I include? A seasoned advertising executive (who was previously a journalist) once said that advertising is like journalism—just tell the story. In his case he sold products and services, but he still focused on telling each product's story and how they could benefit a customer. In our case, a resume is a form of personal advertising, so it is best to just tell your own professional story, as clearly and as succinctly as possible, and tell potential employers how you can benefit them.

I have provided resume categories below that help organize each person's story into easy-to-read chunks of valuable information. A recently retired as a Vice President of Human Resources found the summary of qualifications category most helpful when they would receive 100+ resumes for one job posting. He especially liked the information in bullet-points, because they were short, to-the-point, and allowed him and his staff to quickly learn if each candidate was initially qualified and was worth a second look and possibly an interview.

In order to help you with your wording, descriptions, and design I have provided several sample resumes for you to review. While there is no one way to write a resume, there are better ways. Keep writing and re-writing yours until is sounds clear and professional, and you are proud of it. It will be difficult, good writing always is, but it will be worth your efforts.

Resume Dos
1. Perfect spelling, grammar, punctuation
2. Write clearly and succinctly (saw a lot with few words)
3. Use bullet points
4. 1–2 pages
5. Clean, typographic design—no art, logos, photos or embellishments
6. Design using white space effectively
7. B/w, or a small accent of color
8. List job accomplishments, not job duties
9. Link to a web site with portfolio samples

Resume Don'ts
1. Misspellings
2. Grammatical Errors
3. More than 2 pages
4. Paragraph format
5. Don't list high school
6. Don't email with an attached 25MB PDF

Helpful Suggestions

Here are some "before and after" examples that may help you when you begin writing your Experience category.

Make each responsibility sound professional and meaningful. Use short sentences, and do not exaggerate. Try to begin each sentence with words that describe your duties. These words, like responsibility, trusted, trained, performed, managed, etc., help to quickly define your role and set a positive tone.

And remember to be as specific as possible with each job responsibility. The more detailed your answer, the more informative it will be to your interviewer. And the more it will demonstrate that you have valuable skills that you will use at your new job.

Before
    * Customer service phone rep
After
    * Dealt directly with customers over the phone to solve problems with their products
    * Handled an average of 30 customer calls per hour

Before
    * Made pizzas and bread sticks
After
    * Prepared meals and met tight deadlines in a fast-paced environment
    * Managed both the food prep area and the register during dinner rush

Before
    * Worked in a factory or assembly plant
After
    * Performed several complex jobs on a fast-paced muffler production line
    * Worked successfully in a 10-member team environment
    * Worked with other team members to meet weekly quota of 1000 completed mufflers

Before
    * Ordered paper cups and plates monthly
After
    * Solely responsible for maintaining and ordering all store inventory including dining, cooking, packaging and takeout supplies
Before
    * Manager at night when the boss would leave
After
    * Closing responsibilities, including store lock up, nightly cash deposit, and preparing store for the next morning
    * Responsible for the entire store when day manager left at 5:00 p.m.

Before

  * Called people at home to sell products

After

  * Contacted perspective costumers from a designated phone list

  * Explained product's benefits and advantages to convince customers to buy our

products

  * Targeted several different demographic and geographic regions of the United Stated

Before

  * Dealt with money

After

  * Responsible for timely evening cash deposits to the bank

  * Trusted with bank deposits, a store key and access to the store safe

Before

  * Vacuumed the floors and mopped the entry way each night

After

  * Maintained a clean, safe and organized work area

  * My work area has remained accident free for my 3 years of employment

Before

  * Customer Service-Dealt with or answered calls from angry people

After

  * Answered 30–40 calls per hour from newspaper customers in the Los Angeles area

  * Maintained a positive attitude during stressful situations

  * Decided which discounts and coupons to send customers as compensation for lost papers

Before

  * Poured concrete/carpenter/laborer

After

  * Performed several different jobs on the construction site including cement mixing

and finishing, wall framing, dry-walling, and finish carpentry work

  * Responsible for the productivity and efficiency of a 3-person work crew

  * Site management responsibilities

Before

  * Showed new employees around

After

  * Responsible for training new employees on all equipment and dept. processes

  * Trained 30 new employees in my two years of employment

Remember

The employer wants to know if you can do this job. All of your past work experiences are valuable and will be considered—so write about them and be specific.

Free Resume Samples

Go to the college or public library, or the Web. Make sure to visit the college or public library where you will find may books full of sample resumes, cover letters, thank you letters, and job search strategies. These sample resumes are especially helpful when you begin to write your resume. Or Google, "graphic design resume samples"

There are also many web sites that offer resume samples:
* www.onextrapixel.com
* www.allgraphicdesign.com
* www.blueskyresumes.com
* www.exampleresumes.org
* www.susanireland.com
* www.resume-resource.com
* www.bestsampleresume.com
* www.distinctiveweb.com
* www.careerperfect.com

Be sure to write clearly and succinctly. Read through sample resumes online and in resume books in our library to get ideas for your sentences and wording. Be sure to use your own words.

Categories

I would suggest following the categories listed below. They are the most common.

Name and Contact Information
* Name
* Address
* Phone
* E-mail
* Web Portfolio

Education

For each degree or school attended include: (do not include high school)
* Degree/diploma/certificate earned, Major
* School, City & State

Qualifications

Summary of qualifications/skills (Use bullets on your resume) (Use a combination of hard and soft skills) Be sure to give specific examples. See the sample resumes on the following pages for ideas.

Hard skills: Design experience, freelance projects, computer experience, industry experience, printing/printers experience, packaging mock-ups, etc.

Soft Skills: Strong communication skills, organizational skill, ability to manage several projects at the same time, ability to manage a project from start to finish with little supervision, ability to work well in a team environment, ability to work under tight deadlines, ability to work well independently, punctual, dependable, reliable, resourceful, etc.

Software

List all of the major graphics software that you are proficient with, experienced with, and have knowledge of (no browsers or leisure music/video software).

Experience

List the last 3–5 jobs that you have held. List your most current job first, the rest in reverse chronological order. Look at the sample resume below, and others online and in library books for more examples and ideas.

For each job include:
* Position/Title
* Company
* City, State
* Dates employed (Year, or Year–Year)
* 3–4 lines expand on individual duties and accomplishments at your job. Be as specific as possible.

Achievements

Write your achievements in bulleted points

Examples of graphics industry or work related achievements are:

* Employee of the month, company, (Month and Year)
* Gutenberg Award, project, award details, (Year)
* Excellence in Customer Service Award, employer, (Year)
* President of Student Government, Western Technical College, (Year–Year)
* Treasurer of Graphics Club, Western Technical College, (Year–Year)

I would suggest leaving out: Spending time with friends, traveling, water skiing, skiing, etc. They do not pertain to your ability to do the job and they could bias an employer.

Portfolio and references—available upon request.
(Use this line only if you need to fill space on your resume)

Personal Information

Do not put personal information on your resume. No photos, religious or political beliefs, marital status, number of children, how many pets you have, etc. Just state the facts—and just the facts that relate to your ability to do the job for them and be a great addition to their company. If you get hired there will be plenty of time to get to know your boss on a personal level.

Remember…

The "rock star" of your resume is the information about you and what you have to offer a potential employer. The ink color, design elements, type style, format, and shape all take a back seat to your information. There is nothing wrong with a type heavy resume with black type on off-white, lightly textured paper.

The resume gets you an interview. The interview gets you a job.

Designing Your Resume

You are applying for a job as a professional designer—Your resume is the first step to showing them that you are a professional designer.

1. Once you have written and re-written and re-written and polished your resume, type all your information into InDesign and design it.
2. You must design your own unique resume to help set you apart from the competition. Remember your main focus is legibility. Do not over-design your resume.
3. Choose your font wisely! Do not choose fancy, decorative fonts, or fonts that are out-dated and hard to read. You are a professional designer—your resume should prove it.
4. Choose your fonts wisely. Make sure they are easy to read and not too small. Do not create a resume that you need a magnifying glass to read. 9–11 point type is best.
5. I strongly recommend that you do not use art, photos, or drawings on your resume. Most hiring managers don't like them, most don't look good, and most will not help you get noticed or interviewed. Let your samples page or Web site show your artistic talent, not the resume.
6. Remember to use white space effectively. Since most of your resume will be text-based, you will have to draw upon your typography skills to create an outstanding resume that is readable, communicates your skills and abilities, and lands you an interview.
7. Choose your paper wisely. Your resume must be on paper you purchase yourself at the campus bookstore or at an office supply store. Office Max and Office Depot have a good selection.
8. When choosing a paper and envelope, make sure they are not too dark and do not have a coarse texture. Coarse textures do not allow the ink to print flat and the type will be blotchy and broken.
9. I would recommend using the large, 9" x 12", professional resume envelopes. You will not have to fold your letters or samples page when you mail them.
10. Use watermarked resume paper. The package should state "watermarked."
11. Basic guidelines to follow. One page only. One-sided only. Black (dark) ink only f or main info. One color paper only, (no rainbows, clouds, bright-pinks, etc.) Paper size: 8.5" x 11" only.

What is a Cover Letter? And why use one?

A cover letter is a form of professional business correspondence used to apply for a job. It is your first impression—so make it count. You are a professional graphic designer now, so the way you apply for a job should be professional as well. Businesses will be expecting a cover letter to accompany your resume. Most will ask for it directly in their job posting. Each cover letter should be customized for the specific position you are applying for. Don't use a "form" or generic cover letter.

Your cover letter is your opportunity to show your personality and to communicate your skills, abilities, interest, and enthusiasm for the job. It elaborates on your resume, and It helps to differentiate you from other candidates.

Guidelines for writing your cover letter

- Content should be individualized to meet the specific position requirements.
- Some, but not all the content should be similar to what is on your resume.
- Paper should match exactly the paper used for your resume.
- Length should not exceed one page.
- Your name and address should appear on every page.
- Have several people proofread your letter.
- Each letter should be addressed to a specific name.

Find cover letter samples in your college's library, and at:
    www.smashingmagazine.com
    www.susanireland.com
    www.resume-resource.com
Also... search Google and Yahoo for more cover letter samples.

- Your personally branded header should be used here. Use the same branded look for your resume, cover letter, references and any other letter or business correspondence you send (it may be altered somewhat to fit your color samples page).
- Date you write and mail the cover letter. Make sure they are within the same week.
- Be sure to spell everything correctly and get their title right.
- Salutation. I still prefer Dear. I think it gives a personal touch. I also prefer Mr. or Ms. and a last name only.
- The main reason for the letter.
- Your skills, experience, knowledge and education. Refer to their job posting to see what they want.
- Soft skills, personal goals, excitement and enthusiasm.
- Enthusiasm, Action line, state the next steps.
- Thanks them in advance.
- Sign you name in blue or black.
- What did you send them?