

Resume' Preparation Guide

Your Resume represents you; so you should try to make the most favourable first impression that you can. The resume should present your skills, qualifications and experiences in the best possible light. Your resume will not get you the job but if properly prepared, it should help you get the interview.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Ensure that your resume tells the truth. Do not add qualifications or experiences that you have not had, it will be discovered sooner or later. Ensure there are no periods that are left unaccounted for. The person reading your resume should be able to track your activities from high school to the present.

PRESENTATION ISSUES

Make sure the resume is typed. Use good quality paper. Do not use folder leaves or ruled paper for your resume. The paper should not be torn or dirty.

Take the time to check the resume through carefully. Check for spelling errors and missing data. Ensure that all corrections are done. Errors of this type do not give a positive impression of you.

Resumes that use a small font, or that have such dense text that they offer no white space to help guide the reader immediately turn the reader off. You want your readers to quickly understand your expertise, skills, where you worked and your specific accomplishments.

FORMAT ISSUES

Chronological is probably simplest and most user-friendly. Start with the most current achievements, job, qualification and activities.

Try to make your resume concise - a maximum of two (2) pages. Recent graduates - 1 page is sufficient.

Going to the USA or Canada ? Make the resume one (1) page. For persons with 10 years of working experience or more, you can create two versions of your resume - a 1-page version and a longer 2-3 page version that you would take with you for the interview.

Ideally a resume should not be more than two (2) pages, here in Jamaica we will allow three (3) pages if the person's accomplishments are exceptional. To quote a US based recruiter "If a candidate cannot adequately communicate the information in two pages or less, there is a problem. Situations that usually contribute to long resumes are: too many jobs, a career that is not focused, an inability to be concise, written communication problems, or something similar."

If you have a lot more useful information to give, prepare an addendum or a longer version of your resume which can be presented in the Interview stage. Remember, your resume is your marketing tool designed to get you an interview - it must be short, concise and it must tell the potential employer what you can do for him/her.

CONTENT ISSUES

A potential employer needs to know what you can offer to his company and your resume should focus on providing those details. Usually, s/he will not need to know your weight, height, state of health or marital status. If that is required, they will ask.

State where you can be reached quickly. No telephone? Give a number and a name where a message can be left for you. Make sure this person is reliable.

Provide an email address if you have one and make sure it sounds professional. Leave "chachaboy@hotmail.com" and hotbodybrowning@yahoo.com for correspondence with your friends. Your name is adequate - lisamariebrown@cwjamaica.com.

Identify your Skills. Your skills or special abilities are those activities that you are especially good at. List those that would be useful in a work setting.

List your Achievements based on the posts/positions that you have held. Rank each achievement according to its impact on, or importance to the organization.

Give your Work History. The reader should know the posts you have held, when you held them and in what companies.

Give information on your Education and Training by indicating the courses of study that you have successfully completed. If you are a recent graduate - first degree, you can list some of the courses that would be relevant to the post that you are applying for. Recently completed Secondary Education? You can list your passes giving subjects and grades, and indicate the examining body, and the proficiency level if done at CXC.

List the short courses you have attended, including in-house training programmes, give the date and the name of the trainer(s)/training organization.

Provide the names of organizations or clubs you are affiliated with and give dates of membership. Also indicate any official post that you have held.

References should not be provided in the resume. Simply state that References will be provided upon request. Make sure to contact persons who will serve as your referees.

Prepare the information for your references on a separate sheet giving names, telephone and email contact information and indicating the type of reference the person will provide for you e.g. Work related, Social etc.

Make sure that a Cover Letter accompanies your resume and ensure that you address the envelope properly (you may need to research the name of the Human Resource person). You do want to get your resume in the right hands!

Based on the numerous requests we have had for assistance with Resume Writing, we are now providing a SAMPLE layout. This is intended ONLY AS A GUIDE.

The Essential Resume

Name

Make sure that you give your Proper Name

Address

Street Address and/or Mailing address

Telephone

Give Daytime / Evening/Mobile numbers as you want to be reached

Email Address

This is an important form of communication now, but make sure that you check your email at least 3 times per week

SPECIAL SKILLS (Things you are very good at)

Identify what you do well by making a list of ALL your skills and abilities. Don't limit your observations only to past work experiences. Consider recreational uses of these skills as well. Then, review the list that you have created, decide which of the items would describe you best to a potential employer, select your top ten skills and abilities and list them on your resume

COMPUTER LITERATE (Computer programmes you know and are competent at using)

Give the Names of the programmes you work with well

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS (All the exceptional things you have accomplished)

Use your Top Ten Skills list to help you with this task. Often, by writing out examples of how you have utilized your skills, you will identify those activities in which your performance has been exceptional. Quantify your achievements. For example say: **Increased sales by 56% over a 12 month period** rather than "Increased sales significantly".

WORK EXPERIENCE

Chronological order is useful to both writer and reader so give the most Recent job FIRST. Recruiters want to know your **Job Title**, the name of the company that you worked for - your **Employer**, and the period that you worked there for, so give start and end **dates**.

EDUCATION

Use Chronological order for this also. Provide the **Name of the Course of Study**, the name of the **Institution** where you studied and the **Date** you completed the programme

THE OPTIONAL ITEMS

INTERESTS (Things you like doing in your spare time)

PERSONAL

Date of Birth

References

Available upon request