

## RESUMES

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## RESUME BASICS

1. Make sure that the most important and relevant information is listed near the top and clearly highlighted.
2. In general, resumes should be no more than two pages in length. Be concise.
3. Resumes should include: a profile or summary, expertise or skills, accomplishments, work experience, education. Resumes should not include references.
4. Target your audience. Your resume should be individualized for each position you are applying for. Resumes that are too general and that lack a clear focus are likely to be tossed out.
5. Keep the needs of the employer in mind. What can you contribute?
6. Use action words to describe your accomplishments. Present specific accomplishments and achievements: percentages increased, accounts expanded, awards won, etc.
7. Don't include too much employment history. Usually 10 -12 years is enough. Focus on the experience, skills and knowledge you have that are relevant to the kind of work you are seeking.
8. Do not lie. If a prospective employer decides to conduct a reference check and discovers you lied, you are out of the hiring pool.
9. Use white space liberally. Your resume should be easy to read and uncluttered.
10. Choose a standard font (Arial or Times Roman). Use headings consistently - same font, same size, etc. Don't overuse design elements such as bold, fancy fonts, etc. It will make your resume hard to read.
11. Ensure your resume is free of spelling and grammatical mistakes.
12. Make sure your resume looks professional. Print on a laser printer and use good quality white or off-white paper.
13. Remember: The sole purpose of the resume and cover letter is to get you an interview.

# RESUME FORMATS

## **Chronological Resume**

The chronological resume is the most common and readily accepted resume format. You should use a chronological resume if you have no large gaps in your work history and if your previous jobs relate to your current job objective.

A chronological resume focuses on your work history and lists it in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent employment.

### **Tips:**

- List jobs from the last 10 to 15 years; they are often the most relevant and this helps minimize age discrimination.
- Highlight relevant skills and accomplishments under each company.
- Volunteer Experience and/or Interests: use if relevant to the job; avoid religious/political affiliations.

## **Functional Resume**

A functional resume focuses on skills and accomplishments, instead of work history. These skills may have been acquired through work, education or volunteering. Skills are often grouped under appropriate headings to organize the information for the reader.

This format is often used for people with minimal job experience, career changers, those re-entering the workforce, those who have employment gaps, new graduates, new Canadians or those with a work history in a field that doesn't match. This format can also be used for repetitive jobs, where the same skills would be listed for each job.

### **Tips:**

- Select skill headings that are relevant to the job for which you are applying.
- Group related skills and accomplishments under each skill heading. These may be from employment, volunteering, education or personal experience.
- Quantify your accomplishments, such as # people supervised, \$ sales, % savings.
- You could list an organization's name in describing a skill/accomplishment, so that it is easier for employers to match up where it was used/achieved.

### **Note:**

It is said that recruiters and employers favour chronological resumes because they can easily see where you worked and what you did. But remember, there is no "right" format, only strategy when it comes to selecting the best resume format for your situation.

# CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME SAMPLE

## JASON BRADLEY

100 Railroad Street, Sydenham ON K0H 2T0 [jbradley@gmail.com](mailto:jbradley@gmail.com) 123-456-7890

### Payroll and Benefit Specialist

10+ years experience in Payroll and Benefits

Benefits administration experience includes program development and reduction of costs through development of alternative benefit programs

Team player interested in achieving organizational goals

Proven ability to coordinate many tasks efficiently and meet deadlines

Solid Computer skills including Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and HRIS

CHRP designation; member HRPAO

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

**Payroll Specialist**, ABC Inc., Kingston, ON, 2003 - Present

- Processed biweekly payroll for 150 employees
- Reduced annual costs by \$75,000 by implementing TaxSaver benefit plans
- Administered payments, including bonuses, vacation, incentives and retroactive pay; provided assistance to employees to resolve payroll issues
- Reconciled payroll related accounts, including preparation of journal entries, adjustments and corrections

**Human Resources Assistant**, MNO Co., Napanee, ON 1999 - 2003

- Assisted in developing in-house training programs that saved more than \$250,000 in training costs over 4 year period and reduced staff turnover by 15%
- Compiled statistics, conducted analysis and prepared management reports on benefit plan utilization and trends
- Prepared benefit packages for 400 employees
- Assisted in the recruitment, interviews and selection of staff

**Payroll Assistant**, GHI Ltd., Kingston, ON 1997 - 1999

- Maintained staff attendance, overtime working hours and staff compensation data for payroll

### EDUCATION

CHRP designation

Business Administration - Human Resources Advanced Diploma, St. Lawrence College, Kingston

Bachelor of Arts, University of Toronto, Toronto

### VOLUNTEER WORK

**Fundraising Committee Member**, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Kingston, ON 2002 - Present

# FUNCTIONAL RESUME SAMPLE

## Jennifer White

100 Kingston Road, Sydenham, ON K0H 2T0 jennifergwhite@yahoo.ca 613-456-7890

### Summary of Qualifications

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- 3+ years experience as Receptionist in a busy manufacturing environment
- Strong computer skills, including MS Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, MYOB, email and Internet; accurate and quick data entry; 65 wpm
- Skilled 20-line Meridian switchboard operation; used exceptional telephone and communication skills to support management and staff, and assist callers in a calm and professional manner
- Bilingual; Fluent in English and French

### Employment Skills

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#### Reception

- Greeted customers and clients; maintained reception area as a welcoming and professional environment
- Answered 20-line phone system as primary receptionist
- Exceptional customer service skills; built rapport easily and provided courteous and efficient service
- Trained and supported all relief staff to ensure professional first point of contact

#### Office Administration

- Supported Executive Assistant with reconciling accounts, word processing, planning and coordinating functions, travel arrangements
- Created and maintained database of 750 customer accounts
- Typed letters, contracts, and 50 page monthly reports
- Opened and distributed mail; completed courier documentation

### Work History

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Receptionist, JKL Company, Kingston, 2000-2004

Customer Service Specialist, Department Store, Kingston 1997-2000

Cashier, Pizza Store, Kingston, 1993-1995

### Education

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Office Administration Diploma, St Lawrence College, Kingston

Ontario Secondary School Diploma, Sydenham High School, Sydenham

### Volunteer Experience

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Receptionist, Inverary Kids Centre, 2005-Present

## **ACTION VERBS FOR RELEVANT SKILLS**

### **Management Skills**

administered  
analyzed  
approved  
attained  
chaired  
consolidated  
contracted  
coordinated  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
evaluated  
executed  
improved  
increased  
organized  
oversaw  
planned  
prioritized  
produced  
recommended  
reviewed  
scheduled  
strengthened  
supervised  
trained

### **Communication Skills**

addressed  
arbitrated  
arranged  
authored  
channeled  
collaborated  
convinced  
corresponded  
developed  
directed  
drafted

edited  
enlisted  
formulated  
influenced  
interpreted  
lectured  
mediated  
moderated  
negotiated  
persuaded  
promoted  
publicized  
reconciled  
recruited  
spoke  
translated  
wrote

### **Research Skills**

clarified  
collected  
critiqued  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
extracted  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
investigated  
organized  
reviewed  
summarized  
surveyed  
systematized

### **Technical Skills**

assembled  
built

calculated  
designed  
devised  
engineered  
fabricated  
maintained  
operated  
overhauled  
programmed  
produced  
remodeled  
repaired  
solved  
upgraded

### **Teaching Skills**

adapted  
advised  
assessed  
clarified  
coached  
communicated  
coordinated  
counselled  
demonstrated  
demystified  
developed  
educated  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
guided  
informed  
instructed  
persuaded  
set goals  
stimulated  
taught  
trained

### **Financial Skills**

administered  
allocated  
appraised  
audited  
balanced  
budgeted  
calculated  
computed  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
planned  
projected  
researched

### **Creative Skills**

acted  
conceptualized  
created  
customized  
designed  
developed  
directed  
established  
fashioned  
founded  
illustrated  
initiated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
originated  
performed  
planned  
revitalized  
shaped

### **Helping Skills**

assisted  
clarified  
coached  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
expedited  
facilitated  
familiarized  
guided  
motivated  
referred  
rehabilitated  
represented  
solved

### **Clerical or Detail Skills**

approved  
arranged  
catalogued  
classified  
collected  
compiled  
dispatched  
executed  
generated  
implemented  
inspected  
monitored  
operated  
organized  
prepared  
processed  
purchased  
recorded  
retrieved  
screened  
specified  
systematized  
tabulated  
validated

## RESUME CHECKLIST

- My resume is either one page or two pages in length (with contact information on both pages).
- My skills and experience clearly match the job requirements.
- My contact information is clear, professional and includes a phone number with voice messaging.
- I have selected the best format and strategies to describe my skills and experience.
- My strongest and most marketable points are made first.
- I have listed my accomplishments (how my work benefited the organizations where I worked), not just my duties and responsibilities.
- I have quantified the results I have achieved where possible.
- I have eliminated words that do not add to my resume and made sure I am using strong action verbs.
- There are no false statements. (These can be grounds for dismissal.)
- I have not 'aged ' myself by including dates of education and/or by going beyond 10 –15 years of work experience.
- References are not included on my resume.
- I have checked for grammatical and spelling errors by using computerized tools and by having it read by someone else.
- My resume is printed on good quality paper.