
Resume Writing

Do It Right the First Time

The only job of a resume is to get you an interview. That's it. Your effectiveness in generating interviews will depend on your ability to communicate your skills and competencies to employers. Remember, your skills are transferable from one environment to another. Successful Old Dominion University job seekers understand the importance of the following steps.

Step One: Gather Information and Conduct a Self-Inventory

Review your personal information and experience. Start with a blank piece of paper and list each item that has relevance. This is not your resume—that will come in the next step. Instead, now is the time to get the relevant information out of your head and commit it to paper. Go for volume here, focus on details and specifics. You will condense this information later.

Contact Information

State your full name, current and temporary addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail address.

Career Objective

State what position you are seeking and describe the skills, abilities, experience, and interests that back up your candidacy. If you can't match yourself to the position, then perhaps you need to redefine your career goals. Need help with your objective? Come to the Career Management Center.

Education

Begin with current school (ODU) and list your degree/s, major/s, and minor/s. State the date you will graduate. For each school you've attended list city and state in which they are located. Include academic honors, awards, scholarships, projects, or publications. Juniors and up, please, no high school information. Generally, list your GPA if 3.0 or better. You can also list your GPA in your major if it's better than your cumulative. Military training can be listed here. Create a list of the relevant courses that complement your career objective.

Work Experience

Describe any paid and non-paid experiences that have helped you develop skills. Detail your title, employer name, location, and dates of employment. Focus on the work you performed, your contributions/achievements, and what skills you used/gained while there. Be specific—use numbers, figures and descriptions of the environment. You need to give the reader a mental picture of the experience.

College, Community and Professional Involvement

State name of organization and the role you played. Be sure to describe the organization for readers who may not be familiar with Old Dominion University or the Hampton Roads area. Don't just list organizations; instead, state contributions, offices held and demonstrated skills. Include dates of membership.

Organizations

List memberships, offices held, dates, projects, certifications and licensure.

Special Skills

Detail skills in foreign languages, computer hardware and software, laboratory skills, and any other skills you may have.

Interests and Activities

Again, no lists. Instead detail any hobbies and endeavors that support your objective.

Step Two: Choose a Resume Format

The format you choose should reflect your own personal situation. Consider your qualifications, career objective, experience, and the kind of employer you are seeking before you select a style. The most common formats are:

Chronological—Jobs and education are listed in reverse chronological order—the most recent experience first. This format is best for those who have some experience directly related to their objective.

Functional Skills—Highlights qualifications, skills and related accomplishments with little emphasis on dates. This format is not recommended.

Combination—Similar to functional resume, but with employment history listed in a separate section. This style is best for people who have little related experience but lots of transferable skills, new graduates, career changers who have gaps in their work history, and those who have had many similar jobs. It allows the writer list their experience in order of relevance to the position rather than by date or functional title.

Step Three: Write Your Resume

Describe your experience in terms of the functions you performed and what you accomplished. Use action verbs to strengthen descriptions. Employers are interested in how successful you were in the past because it predicts future performance.

Make It Clear

Do not use personal pronouns like "I" and "my." Do not use full sentences. Instead, use short bulleted phrases in past tense for past experience, present tense for present activity. Avoid "responsible for" and "duties included." Place the most relevant information first and avoid abbreviations. Your experience can be divided into "related" and "other" in order to highlight related experience first.

Objective Statement

Your objective statement can be general or specific. It should be work-centered, not self-centered, and should emphasize what you

Action Words

Use some of these action words in your descriptions:

accelerated	demonstrated	fostered	negotiated	rendered
activated	designed	founded	observed	reorganized
adapted	detected	generated	obtained	repaired
administered	determined	governed	operated	repeated
analyzed	developed	handled	ordered	represented
anticipated	diagnosed	imagined	organized	researched
appraised	directed	implemented	originated	revamped
approved	discovered	improved	oversaw	reviewed
arranged	dispensed	increased	participated	revised
assembled	dispersed	indexed	performed	rewrote
assisted	displayed	initiated	persuaded	routed
bargained	disproved	inspected	pinpointed	scheduled
budgeted	distributed	installed	pioneered	served
built	dramatized	instituted	planned	serviced
calculated	drew up	instructed	predicted	set up
charted	earned	interpreted	prepared	simplified
classified	edited	intervened	prescribed	sketched
coached	effected	interviewed	presented	sold
collected	eliminated	invented	presided	solved
compiled	endured	investigated	processed	sorted
completed	entertained	judged	produced	spoke
conceived	established	launched	programmed	streamlined
conducted	estimated	lectured	promoted	structured
conserved	evaluated	led	proposed	studied
consolidated	examined	listened	protected	supervised
constructed	executed	located	proved	supported
consulted	exhibited	logged	provided	systematized
controlled	expanded	maintained	questioned	taught
coordinated	expedited	managed	read	tested
corresponded	experiences	mastered	received	timed
counseled	explained	measured	recommended	trained
created	explored	mediated	recorded	translated
criticized	facilitated	moderated	recruited	treated
decided	figured	monitored	reduced	updated
delegated	fixed	motivated	referred	worked
delivered	formulated	moved	reinforced	wrote

can bring to the position, not what the position can do for you. All other information on your resume should focus on the objective.

References

Names and addresses of references should not be included on your resume. List this information on another sheet of paper and bring it with you to interviews. Include the name, title, business address, phone number, fax and e-mail address of each person.

Step Four: Critique Your First Draft

After you are satisfied with your first draft, ask several individuals who are familiar with the type of employment you are seeking

to look it over. Always have someone at the Career Management Center check it before distribution.

Step Five: Write a Final Draft and Make It Look Professional

Print your resume on 24 lb. cotton bond paper. Use pure white, cream, ecru or beige paper. Avoid pastels, grays or showy designs. These colors will not reproduce well if the employer decides to make copies or forward your resume via fax. Never have a copy center photocopy your resume onto quality paper; it is not good enough for your resume. Always print your resume using a laser or high-quality inkjet printer.

Sample Chronological Resume

Alexander T. Smith

atsmith@aol.com

Current Address:
34 Argall Ave., Apt. 2
Norfolk, VA 23508
(757) 555-9653

After December 17:
56 Bluffton Place
Richmond, VA 24593
(757) 555-3942

Objective: A position as a Legislative Intern in the Virginia General Assembly.

Education: Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
Bachelor of Arts, December 2005
Major: History Minor: English Major GPA: 3.3/4.0

Activities:
Alumni Relations Director, Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity
• Acted as a liaison between 61 collegiate members and over 1000 alumni.
• Re-established, wrote, designed, and edited alumni newsletter for distribution to 1000 alumni.
• Coordinated social activities for alumni to interact with undergraduate members.
• Created an updated database of chapter and regional alumni.

Board Member, Old Dominion University Greek Judicial Board
• Reviewed cases of student groups charged with violating university regulations.
• Recommended disciplinary actions and sanctions to the Dean of Students.
• Maintained confidentiality of all cases.

Main Street ODU Director, Old Dominion University Office of Student Activities
• Corresponded with university officials, student groups, and other participants.
• Organized 25 committee members in planning event with over 100 booths.
• Developed innovative solutions to problems, from traffic flow to lack of cooperation.

Member Services Clerk, Tidewater AAA Motor Club, Norfolk, VA (Summer 2003)
• Planned and mapped trips for over 100,000 AAA members.
• Soothed irate customers by solving problems without intervention of supervisor.
• Dealt with high levels of stress in fast paced, vacation oriented atmosphere.
• Earned outstanding service evaluations from clients.
• Assisted in the development of improved international travel service registration.

Tour Guide, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA (Summer 2002)
• Led tours for new students and their families as part of Orientation/Preview program.
• Utilized public speaking, interpersonal, and memorization skills.

Games Host, Busch Gardens USA, Williamsburg, VA (Summer 2001)
• Promoted games booth to 20,000 theme park guests per day.
• Handled large amounts of cash.
• Trained over 10 new employees.
• Worked up to 68 hours per week, often in adverse weather conditions.

Computer Skills: Seven years of desktop publishing experience. Computer proficient, including MS Word, PowerPoint, PageMaker, QuarkExpress, Ophoto, Eudora Email, HTML.

Excellent references available on request.

Sample Combination Resume

Valerie T. Marcado

232 Guilford Place • Norfolk, VA 23508 • 757-555-6543 • vmar006@odu.edu

OBJECTIVE

A Laboratory Technician position with Illinois Tech's DNA research laboratory.

EDUCATION

Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA May 2006
Bachelor of Science
Major: **Biochemistry** Minor: **Chemistry** GPA **3.2**
Related courses: Genetics, Microbiology, Organic/Inorganic Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Cell Biology, Physiology, Hematology, Introduction to Computers, and Senior Seminar.

LAB SKILLS

- Genetics Lab – analyzed *Drosophila*, and *C. Elegans*
- Organic Lab – identified dozens of chemical compounds
- Analytical Lab – analyzed unknown compounds using complex formulas
- Hematology – worked with various types of blood and counted cells
- Microbiology – used agar plate, cultured bacteria and identified organisms

LAB EQUIPMENT

- Agar Plate, Aseptic Transfer, Autoclave
- Blood Counting, Blood Typing, Crystallization
- Distillation, Electron microscope Gas Chromatograph, Gel Electrophoresis, Gel Extraction
- PCR, Phloromicroscope, Pipet, Recrystallization

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Nauticus Maritime Museum, Norfolk, VA

Water Quality Lab Assistant (March 2005–Present)

- Prepare reagent (Hydrochloride, Chloroform Methanol, Thiosulfate, Dichloric Acid)
- Prepare samples for Chesapeake Bay research vessel
- Work with team of four students to create over 700 sample bottles per cruise and input sampling results into an Excel database.

Upward Bound Program, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

Tutor/Counselor (September 2001–April 2004)

- Tutored over 30 high school students in the fields of biology and chemistry on Saturday mornings.
- Answered questions and assisted students with assignments.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Target Store, Stafford, VA

Salesperson (Summers 2000–2002)

- Worked with team of three salespeople to help customers in busy electronics department.

ACTIVITIES

Old Dominion University Filipino-American Student Association (2000-2004)

- Secretary, 2003–2004

References available upon request.