Design Document: Customizing Your Resume Part 1

Class Description

Learn how to select the appropriate resume type and adjust formatting, language, headings, and craft a strong resume profile or objective in this class.

**Curriculum**

Job & Career

**Audience**

Adults

**Course Length**

90 minutes

**Training Method**

Instructor-led hands-on

**Purpose**

To provide information and assistance to participants who need to create or update a resume

Equipment Requirements

Projector and projection screen; computers with internet access for instructor and each participant; laser pointer (recommended)

Software Requirements

Windows 7, Microsoft Word

Material Requirements

Pens or pencils, activity sheets, handouts, participant surveys

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of the session, learners will be able to:

* Select an appropriate resume template
* Identify common formatting and language errors in a resume
* Customize their resume headings
* Create a list of transferable skills for use in their resumes

**Assessment Technique(s)**

Successful completion of class activities

Content Outline

**Agenda (2 mins.)**

* Outline the following topics that will be covered in the class:
  + Resume Types
  + Format & Language
  + Heading
  + Objective vs. Profile
  + Skills

**Topics, Talking Points, and Activities (85 mins.)**

* Resume Types
  + Review the elements of Functional and Chronological Resumes as you show the accompanying slides:
    - Functional
      * Stresses transferable skills
      * Minimizes gaps in employment history
      * Recommended for those with limited work experience or significant gaps in employment history (such as recent graduates, former stay-at-home parents, or those with significant periods of unemployment)
    - Chronological
      * Stresses continuous employment in a specific field
      * Highlights promotions and key accomplishments
      * Recommended for use by those with solid work experience who wish to show career progression over time
  + Show the examples on the slide and point out some of the differences

**ACTIVITY**: Have participants complete **Activity #1** on the *Activity Sheet*

* Format & Language
* Review the following formatting and language elements as you move through the accompanying slides:
  + - Readability
      * Should be visually appealing
      * Should look professional
      * Sections should be ordered in a way that makes sense
    - Fonts
      * Size should be at least 10 point
      * Style should be easy to read and widely available on most computers (such as Arial or Times New Roman)
      * Color should be used sparingly
    - Grammar and spelling
      * Must use proper punctuation
      * Must be free of spelling errors
      * Should use a parallel structure throughout
        + For example, if all sentences are written in 3rd person, don’t suddenly switch to 1st person (ex. *Conducted direct-marketing campaign and solicited customer feedback* vs. *I surveyed customers to get feedback on our direct-marketing campaign*)
      * Avoid abbreviations and jargon unless it is commonly understood, accepted, and used within the profession
        + Example: ISO9001 Internal Auditing Certificate is appropriate to use when applying for an ISO auditor position (no need to spell out that ISO stands for International Standard for Organization)
    - Descriptions
      * Should use specific, concise, and action-oriented descriptions throughout; the goal is to be brief, but provide enough info to give reviewers an idea of your experience
    - Voice
      * Use 3rd person objective writing as that is what is used in the business world; all reviewers will assume you are writing about yourself anyway, so it’s fine
    - Length
      * Unless you are an executive or in the world of academia, keep your resume to 1-2 pages; remember… it’s a teaser, not a personal history!
    - Margins and Spacing
      * Leave ample white space around the sides, between sections, and between sentences; a cluttered page overwhelms readers and turns them off to the content
    - Format
      * Use nice, professional-grade paper when submitting a paper copy of your resume
      * If submitting your resume electronically, try to create a PDF version of your Word document so the formatting will be preserved
      * If you must cut and paste your resume into a tool from MS Word, look for a preview option before submitting it to check for awkward formatting
  + Show the slide with the Bad Examples and discuss some of the comments visible in the boxes surrounding the resumes
  + Show the slide with the Good Example and discuss what is working in regard to format and language

**ACTIVITY**: Have participants complete **Activity #2** on the *Activity Sheet*

* Heading
  + Remind participants that a heading is what makes the first impression with resume reviewers so it’s important to make it stand out
  + Review the following required elements of a resume header:
    - Name
    - Phone Number
    - Email Address
  + Share that participants also can include the following pieces of optional information in their headers:
    - Address
    - URL for LinkedIn Profile, personal website, or online portfolio
  + Show the example slide, so participants can see two different header styles
  + Review the Tips & Tricks slide; be sure to cover the following:
    - Use the name that appears on your state-issued drivers’ license or ID card
    - List the phone number you use most often in the phone number section (preferably a cell)
    - Be sure to use an email address that is professional and uses a modern service provider such as Gmail, Outlook, or Yahoo

**ACTIVITY**: Have participants complete **Activity #3** on the *Activity Sheet*

* Objective vs. Profile
  + Review the difference between an objective and a profile as outlined on the presentation slide
  + Focus on the fact that an objective tells an employer what a candidate wants **from** his or her organization while a profile tells an employer what a candidate can **offer** his or her organization
  + Show the Examples slide to illustrate the difference

**ACTIVITY**: Have participants complete **Activity #4** on the *Activity Sheet*

* Skills
  + Discuss that skills is such a large topic that you will begin discussing it today and finish discussing it in next week’s class
  + Begin by reviewing the components listed on the slide, as follows:
    - Identify skills in job adds within your desired industry and include those you possess in your resume
    - Include them in one or more of the following sections, as appropriate for your resume type:
      * Skills (Functional Resume)
      * Profile (Chronological Resume)
      * Work Experience (Chronological Resume)
    - Remind candidates to highlight skills that fall into the categories of communication, teamwork, leadership, and technical proficiency
  + Show the example slide that contains both a position description and a piece of the work experience section of a resume, which ties in skills listed in the job posting
  + Move on to a discussion about transferable skills, which are skills that can be applied to any type of position
  + Hand out the list of transferable skills and spend a few minutes talking about them; solicit additional examples from participants

**ACTIVITY**: Have participants complete **Activity #5** on the *Activity Sheet*

**Wrap Up/Closing (3 mins)**

* Highlight the upcoming technology classes and share the types of topics that will be covered
* Ask if there are questions and answer any that were “parked” during the session
* Thank participants for coming and ask them to complete the class survey before leaving