

# Writing a resume: quick reference card

## Here are some tips on what to include when you write a resume

### Header

- Full legal name: Locate at top of page emphasized by larger and bold font.
- Mailing address: This should be your current address and reflect from where you will be commuting to work. Avoid using abbreviations.
- Phone number: If you have more than one phone number, identify each number you include (for example, work, cell and home). Ensure your voicemail is professional and includes your name.
- Email address: Ensure your email address is professional. If needed, create a new address for business purposes. A combination of your first name.last name@myinternetprovider.com is a safe bet.

### Skills

- Before you write your resume, think about the top three or four skills you've used in all of your current and previous positions, targeting those that can be transferred to a civilian position.
- Add soft skills describing your personal traits, such as patience under stressful situations or being a good critical thinker.
- List technical/functional abilities, including computer skills and on-the job experience.
- List language capabilities, including proficiency level.

### Knowledge

- Educational background (both formal and on-the-job experience), including:
  - Full name, location and dates attended
  - Degree earned
  - Specify any course work related to the position
- Applicable training or certifications relevant to the position (include when received or if current, as applicable)

### Experience

- List professional/military experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Include the name, location and dates of employment for your current (if applicable) and previous employers.
- After listing the organization or company, specify your role and describe any major responsibilities or accomplishments at each position.
- Include any relevant volunteer experience, providing the same information as you would for any professional experience.

### Objective

- Briefly emphasize goals and qualifications — highlight what makes you unique or appealing.
- Tie the objective to the position you are applying for, relating your goals to the company's goals and, if possible, explain how you could be an asset to the company.
- Be as specific as possible, including the company's name, the position for which you're applying and why you're qualified.
- Limit the objective statement to one or two sentences — more of a tag line than a paragraph.

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## Tips

- You can make your resume work for you. Build a skills-based resume highlighting talents that appeal to a specific employer.
- Networking is essential when you're branching out into a new career. Besides joining professional groups and organizations in the sector you're eyeing, consider more creative approaches. A Toastmasters class is a good place to rub shoulders with executives while polishing your own elevator speech; becoming part of a civic organization puts you in contact with leaders in the community; getting active with charity committees can bring you into the public realm. The more people you meet, the more opportunities will come your way. And, all of these activities will strengthen your resume.
- Use social media wisely. Build on the relationships you develop during face-to-face networking with social-media sites, like LinkedIn. They can be particularly helpful if you've met someone at an event or party, but don't feel comfortable asking about job opportunities on the spot. Do your research to see if the companies you're pursuing have recruiting blogs (often listed under the human resources link on their sites). Reading blogs can give you a lead on potential job openings, plus it exposes you to the culture and personality of the HR department (is the climate straight-laced or offbeat?) — all relevant information to have when going into an interview.
- Brand yourself. Keep everything professional in tone, but take advantage of the chance to shine the spotlight on yourself via a blog, personal website or job-search site. Recruiters often search online to get a full picture of a candidate's background. You have complete control of your online persona, so use it to your advantage. Check out the [Managing Your Online Presence Quick Reference Card \(QRC\)](#) for additional information on managing your online presence /brand.
- Leverage other available resources. There are multiple resources available to help you input your information and build your resume, such as Hire Our Heroes at [www.hiringourheroes.org](http://www.hiringourheroes.org).