

Turney's Tips:

Resume Writing

Your resume is basically a personal sales flyer that helps you sell yourself to a prospective employer. It should present career-relevant information about you in a way that makes the employer think you are the best possible person for the job that needs to be done.

For a communication professional—or an intern—your resume should emphasize communication skills, knowledge, and work experiences that directly relate to the position you're seeking and the duties you'd be expected to perform in that position.

Although non-communication work experiences also demonstrate your skills, abilities, achievements, maturity, and sense of responsibility, they are usually considered much less important than specific communication experiences, even those gained through unpaid internships or volunteer work.

Working tips:

- The more your resume is tailored to the specific position for which you're applying, the more effective it will be. You may even want to develop several versions of your resume tailored to emphasize different aspects of your background that you use in applying for different positions.
- Put your best foot forward, **but never lie, exaggerate, or mislead the reader.**
- Entry level professionals usually limit a resume to one page. But, heavy involvement in internships, student media experience, part-time jobs in communication, or extensive production credits could easily justify two or more pages.
- Extracurricular campus involvements, especially student media and communication related activities, should be included on your resume. So should communication-related volunteer work.
- Provide specific, verifiable information and concrete accomplishments rather than generalities or subjective judgments. Don't just claim to be "an excellent salesperson;" cite your actual sales volume instead. If you list a part-time job, include how many hours per week you normally worked. If you had managerial responsibilities, specify how many people you supervised, how much your unit's operating budget was, or how much of the total operation you were responsible for.
- Work experience and education are usually listed in reverse chronological order to put more emphasis on your most recent activities. Your current or most recent activities should also be described in more detail than older activities. As entries become older, include fewer details.

For additional information:

The Resume Kit, 101 Best Resumes, The World's Best Resume Book, and similar resources won't tell you what's right for your resume,—That's a personal decision, and no single approach will ever be right for everyone.—but they give you lots of good ideas to consider. In this respect, they're probably more helpful and thought-provoking than software which “does” your resume by putting everything in a standard format.

Format and organization:

Name, address, and phone number(s) where you can be reached and/or messages can be left for you need to be very prominent on the page. Listing an e-mail address is only good if you check it every day.

Most experts recommend including an objective (the kind of job you want) or a footprint (the kinds of work you've already done) near the top of your resume. But, if you do include one, be careful that it doesn't send mixed messages about what you want. It's particularly critical that it doesn't inadvertently contradict anything in the body of your resume or cover letter or anything you say in an interview.

Previous communication experiences—in paid jobs, internships, or volunteer service—are your strongest selling points and should be emphasized in the first major section of your resume.

- Work with student media—*The Northerner*, WNTV, WRFN, etc.—is more appropriately reported as communication experience than education. Don't try to hide the fact that they're student media, but refer to them by name and cite their frequency and reach. E.g., *The Northerner* should be cited as an 8-12-page student weekly with a circulation of 10,000, not merely as "the school paper."
- Any awards or recognition you've received for communication—KIPA awards, certificates from the Communication Department, etc.—can go here or in a separate awards section.
- Involvement in professional organizations—Women in Communication, the Society of Professional Journalists, International Association of Business Communicators, etc.—can also be included in this section or in a separate membership section.

Experts differ on the value of listing your special skills or equipment you can operate, but the more unusual or more related to the job you're seeking they are, the more helpful this might be.

Academic preparation is usually less important than practical communication experience except for graduates of unusually prestigious schools. NKU graduates should list their experience before their degree; Harvard graduates might want to reverse that order.

- For each school, list the degree or certification received, major/specialization, and the date the degree was awarded. Prior to graduation, list the degree as "anticipated" or "expected" and the date you expect to receive it. The exact years you attended are usually not necessary.
- Schools you attended without receiving a degree/certificate are usually not listed at all.
- High school is usually omitted once you have a college degree unless the person doing the hiring attended the same school you did, it was a very prestigious school, or you were an honor student at the top of your graduating class and you specifically cite that fact.
- Additional academic information, e.g., listing relevant coursework and/or special projects, is optional and usually not recommended when applying for a full-time, professional position. However, it can flesh out your accomplishments and may be important when seeking an internship.

Non-communication work should be listed to demonstrate your overall accomplishments, sense of responsibility, and willingness to work, but extensive detail is generally not needed.

Personal information, if any, is usually the least important part of a resume and is listed last.

References are generally not included in the resume itself. Instead, have a separate page which you can give to someone who requests references. It should list your references' names, titles, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail address, and it should also indicate how/why they know you and can evaluate you.