

# Building A Great Résumé

**Career and Workforce Development Workshop**  
***Laying the Foundation for the Future of Aerospace***  
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Content on loan from Carrie D. Cooper & the AIAA Job Hunting Handbook

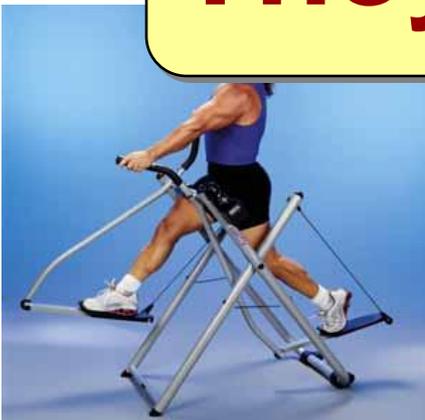
## Contents

- Résumé Overview and General Concepts
- Steps to Creating a Résumé
  - Gathering appropriate data
  - Determining what to include and what to leave out.
  - Discussion of Résumé types and formats.
- Things to Remember

What do these people have in Common?



**They are all Salesman!**



## Selling Yourself with a Résumé

- Your résumé should be no different from any other sales campaign.
- To make a sale you must:
  - Know your Customer
  - Know your Product
  - Know The Five Stages of Selling:
    1. Attention
    2. Interest
    3. Desire
    4. Conviction
    5. Action

## Understand Your Intent

- What is the purpose of a résumé?
- Avoid the misconception that the goal is to get a job.
- ***The goal is to get an interview!***
- One right phrase will get you an interview.
- Make it stand out.
- Too many, unnecessary details will hide the phrase and get your resume thrown out.

## Résumé Overview

- **A résumé has two aspects:**
  1. Content: skills and experience
  2. Form: paper or electronic
- **You can build a great résumé in three simple steps:**
  1. Develop content. List what you know about yourself.
  2. Decide what to include. Analyze the raw content and pick only the most relevant information.
  3. Pick a format. Highlight your strengths in a pleasing format.

## Step 1: Develop Content By Gathering Raw Data

- List basic information such as the following:
  - Contact information:
    - name, address, phone, and e-mail.
  - Your career goal and objective
    - (in “job—skill—benefit” format)
  - Summary of Qualifications or Profile
    - the answer to “Tell me about yourself.”
  - Achievements at jobs and in community, education, training, and certificates.
  - References available upon request. (debatable)

## Step 1: Develop Content By Gathering Raw Data

- Write a Strong Objective
  - Keep succinct and specific
  - No more than two points long
  - Apply “Job – Skill – Benefit” format:
  - Strong Example:
    - *“A position as technical editor that uses my communication skills, research experience, library skills, and computer knowledge to add value to technical publications and communications.”*
  - Weak Example:
    - *“To Obtain a challenging position in Technical Communication for an Information Technology Leader”*

## Step 1: Develop Content By Gathering Raw Data

- List information about your jobs.
  - Dates of employment
  - Company name
  - Job title
  - Job description
- Decide the Order
  - Develop separate a series of lists to emphasize:
    - Employers and skills
    - Job Titles
    - Continuity of employment and time in each job
    - etc.

## Step 1: Develop Content By Gathering Raw Data

- List Optional Job-Related Information
  - Areas of interest (personal research)
  - Foreign languages spoken
  - List of books and articles published
  - List of presentations given at conferences
  - Military service
  - Professional association memberships
  - Recognitions and work-related honors
  - Relevant coursework
  - Security clearance level
  - Technical Expertise: Knowledge and skills with software, hardware, and equipment
  - Teaching experience
  - Volunteer experience

## Step 2: Decide What To Include

- Only include the most relevant information.
- Omit anything that can be used to weed you out, such as the following:
  - Hobbies
  - Weight, age, appearance (photos), or IQ
  - Marital status, children's info
  - Religious or political affiliations
  - Irrelevant information
  - Salary history — on the resume
- You can safely omit these:
  - Incomplete degrees
  - Past jobs of little relevance
  - High school achievements
  - Involvement with “ancient” technology
  - Jobs at start-up companies that failed before coming to market / short-term positions
  - Unsolicited work samples
  - Reference letters

### **Omission Tip (Saul Carliner):**

If you have to remove jobs or degrees, title sections as “*Employment Highlights*” and “*Educational Highlights*”.

## Step 3: Pick A Format

- Three Basic Formats:
  - Chronological
  - Functional
  - Electronic/Plain Text
- Style should depend on the customer.
- Hybrid style may be applicable in certain situations.

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Chronological Résumé

- Classic style and most common
- List jobs in reverse chronological order
  - Most recent position first.
- Achievements are listed under each job title.
- Entire Career history is visible at a glance to demonstrate growth.

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Chronological Résumé

- Suggested Sections:
  - Objective (Job – Skill – Benefit)
  - Summary of Qualifications
  - Employment History
    - With accomplishments for each job
  - Education
  - Technical Expertise (software)
  - References available on request (debatable)

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Chronological Résumé

R. H. R.  
 Address Home: 703-555-1212  
 City, State, Zip Code Office: 703-555-1234

**OBJECTIVE:** Marketing management in an electrical, electromechanical, or electric firm, serving defense and industrial markets.

**EDUCATION:** BSEE, North Carolina State University  
 General Electric Courses: Business Management, Computer Logic, Finance, etc.

**EXPERIENCE:**

1996 – 1999 NATIONAL RADIO COMPANY, INC.  
 Manager, District Operations — Washington, D.C.

Marketed communication systems and components, navigation equipment, data acquisition systems and audio/visual equipment to DOD and nondefense government agencies, industrial, and educational customers.

- Obtained the largest single order for commercial-type microwave systems placed up to that time.
- Increased sales from \$1 MM to \$10MM.

1994 – 1996 GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY  
 Sales Engineer, Defense division – Washington, D.C.

Market flight reference systems, fuel management systems displays and sensors to defense and nondefense government agencies, air frame manufacturers, and commercial airlines. Negotiated contracts and prepared forecasts.

- Increased several innovations in fuel management systems that are still in current use.
- Represented company on nationwide airline coordinating committee that established standards on flight reference systems. As a result, company's sales tripled.

1988 – 1994 HONEYWELL, INC.  
 Manager, Peripheral Products, Computer Dept.

- Developed product plans for common peripheral components. Prepared short- and long-range business forecasts. Computer dept. liaison with all other Honeywell divisions.
- Forecast several new markets, which gave company an edge for several years.
- Suggested elimination of several peripheral devices that were becoming unprofitable.
- Transformed computer services from half-million-dollar loss into a profitable operation in one year.

- A Fair to Good Example
- Some Achievements but hidden with all the detail.
- Too long in length and too short on interest
- Hard to pick up on any one point.
- Tells the reader what YOU want to say, not what HE/SHE wants to hear.
- No Sales Story
- Restrictive Objective
- A lot of unnecessary information.

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Functional Résumé

- Emphasizes what you did, not where you did it.
- Contains a list of skills.
- Dates may be eliminated, although suspicious.
- Lists of skills and achievements are split from individual jobs.
- Job titles are listed together
  - Only details required are job title, company, and dates

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Functional Résumé

- Suggested Sections:
  - Objective (Job – Skill – Benefit)
  - Technical Expertise (software)
  - Functional Summary
    - With accomplishments by area
  - Employment History
  - Education
  - References available on request (debatable)

## Step 3: Pick A Format - Functional Résumé

R. H. R.  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Home: 703-555-1212  
Office: 703-555-1234

**OBJECTIVE:** Marketing management in an electrical, electromechanical, or electric firm, serving defense and industrial markets.

**EDUCATION:** BSEE, North Carolina State University  
Company Courses: Business Management, Computer Logic, Finance, etc.

**EXPERIENCE:**

**MARKETING:** As manager of district operation, marketed communication systems and components, navigation equipments, data acquisition systems and audio/visual equipment to DOD and nondefense government agencies, industrial, and educational customers.

- Obtained the largest single order for commercial-type microwave systems placed up to that time.
- Increased sales from \$1MM to \$10MM.

**SALES**

**ENGINEERING:** Sold flight reference systems, fuel management systems displays and sensors to defense and nondefense government agencies, air frame manufacturers, and commercial airlines. Negotiated contracts and prepared forecasts.

- Increased several innovations in fuel management systems that are still in current use.
- Represented company on nationwide airline coordinating committee that established standards on flight reference systems. As a result, company's sales tripled.

**APPLICATIONS**

**ENGINEERING:** As manager of the peripheral products division of the computer department, developed product plans for "common peripheral" components. Prepared short- and long-range business forecasts. Computer department liaison with all other Honeywell divisions.

- Forecasted several new markets that gave company an edge for several years.
- Suggested elimination of several peripheral devices that were becoming unprofitable.
- Transformed computing services from half-million-dollar loss into a profitable operation in one year.

- Achievements stand out better and in an order that is easy to understand.
- Long beginning to get to the "meat".
- First major paragraph:
  - Much too wordy and full of clutter.
  - One long sentence with 29 words! Seventeen words are two syllables.
  - Poor representation of communication skills.
  - Difficult to find meaning.
- **Write as if the reader has only 60 seconds to review your résumé.**

## Step 3: Pick A Format – Electronic

- Many companies are using their web pages as the gateway to their personnel department.
- Electronic resumes are read by computers, not by people (at least not initially).
- The content is the same, although the format is slightly different.

## Step 3: Pick A Format – Electronic

- Use a simple format
  - Use a non-proportional font (Courier).
  - Replace all unsupported characters, such as bullets and smart quotes, with their ASCII equivalent.
  - Eliminate block indents, tables, or two-column lists.
  - Use short lines to prevent awkward text wrapping.
  - Include a keyword section to help your resume get selected for the right job openings.

## Step 3: Pick A Format – Electronic

- Use plain text
  - Save your resume as a text-only file (plain text) with line breaks.
  - Use ALL CAPS for emphasis and section headings.
  - Do not use bold, italic, or underlining.
  - Review your resume in the text editor, such as Notepad.
  - Create a short cover letter in ASCII format using the same steps..

## “Top 10 Checklist for an Effective Resume” by David Alan Carter (EffectiveResume.net)

Keep it Short

Easy to Read

Avoid Professional Jargon

Curb Your Design Enthusiasm

Tailor for a Specific Position

Portray Yourself as a Problem Solver

Quantify Accomplishments with Hard Numbers

Do Not Mention Salary

No Personal Information

Check for Spelling and Grammar



## Conclusions

- Engineers are trained to think in terms of detail.
- They want to be thorough and not leave anything out.
- Detail clogs up a resume.
- You must be a salesman and not an engineer!
  - Being exact and precise do more harm than good.
- Think in terms of accomplishments and not tasks.



*The World's Forum for Aerospace Leadership*