

Résumé Strategies

Chances are, if you've been in contact with Lock, your résumé is already exceptional. However, it's always good to check yourself against best practices (we do it all the time). With this in mind, here are a few tried and true résumé tips.

Be clear. Be concise. Be consistent.

Your potential employer is as busy as you are, so order your information accordingly. Place the strongest points at the beginning and at the end of the document; this will grab the reader's attention quickly and leave a great first and last impression.

Convey a sense of focus.

Employers look for overall consistency so be sure to focus on specific industries and positions.

Use positive “trigger” words.

The point of a résumé is not just to summarize but also to sell your skills, accomplishments, and experiences. Highlight your strengths with action-oriented words that trigger an employer's interest – for example, “achieved,” “marketed,” and “supervised.” Wherever possible, avoid passive language, acronyms, abbreviations, and jargon.

Include the right content.

There are numerous résumé formats, each with their own merits. Whatever style you choose, be sure to include the following:

- **Contact information:** Place your name, permanent address, phone number(s), and email address at the top of the document.
- **Career objective:** Your career objective sets the tone for the rest of the document. Write one or two succinct sentences that convey the type of employment you want and the benefits you can offer an employer.
- **Employment experience:** List past positions in reverse chronological order. Present each entry in paragraph form or as bulleted lists of responsibilities and accomplishments. Make sure dates, company names, and position titles are clearly highlighted.
- **Education:** List your most recent and highest degree first, followed by other degrees and relevant education. Indicate the type of degree or diploma, school attended, and graduation date (or anticipated date, in the case of current studies). Be sure to include any academic awards and distinctions.
- **Additional skills:** Include skills or specialized abilities – fluency in French or proficiency with new software, for example – that may apply to the type of position you seek.
- **Volunteer experience:** Present your volunteer experience as you have presented your work experience. Note relevant achievements and responsibilities.
- **Personal interests:** A brief list of your personal interests gives an employer a better understanding of who you are as a person.
- **References:** Include three professional references or indicate that “References are available upon request.”

Proofread. Then proofread again.

Misspellings, punctuation errors, and poor grammar suggest sloppiness – or worse, incompetence – and may automatically disqualify you. To guarantee a perfect document, ask someone else to proofread your résumé or hire a professional editor.