

Resumés

What They Are, How They Work, and How to Create One

What is a resumé? A resumé...

- is a document you create to introduce yourself to possible future employers
- briefly describes your employment history
- lists your education (high school / GED, college, graduate studies)
- mentions other noteworthy skills, certifications, and achievements

How do resumés work?

A resumé is a formal document you prepare and later present to prospective employers.

When hiring and selecting possible candidates for a particular job, employers often will review resumés to determine which persons qualify to be called for an interview.

Since your resumé alone can decide whether or not you are called for an interview, you must design it so that it can accurately and professionally presents all your skills and experience.

Getting Prepared...

Before rushing to “create a resumé,” you will want to gather information such as:

- Names and locations of previous places where you worked
- The dates / years you worked at each place
- The official job title in each place you worked
- A brief summary of duties performed at each job
- What schools / colleges / training facilities you attended
- Education: diplomas, degrees, certificates, college credits you earned and when you earned them
- References – names of persons who can be contacted to provide additional information about you to an employer if the employer considers it necessary.

You should also consider defining a “career objective” – in what professional capacity you currently (in the short term, or ultimately, in the long term) wish to be employed. Resumés often begin with such statements of “objectives,” so it would be wise for you to take some time to consider, then write down, how you would define your career objective.

Creating Your Resumé

Middletown Thrall Library has a variety of books on writing resumés. These books are in the **650.14** area of our adult non-fiction collection. A librarian can direct you to that area. Once there, you will find general guides on writing “a great resumé” as well as more specific advice on writing different styles of resumés.

Some of these books are intended for certain persons (e.g. “high school students,” “college students and recent graduates,” “former military personnel”). Other books focus on specific types of jobs (“high-tech careers” and “advertising” among many others). You will need access to a word processor, such as Microsoft Word or Open Office Writer, to type your resumé. If you have never done this before, you should allow yourself some extra time, if not several days, if possible, to familiarize yourself with the computer keyboard and a word processor program.

You can also visit websites providing resumé tips and examples through Thrall’s own website: www.thrall.org/jobs

Thrall provides free access to word processors to the public. If interested, please inquire at Reference.

Printing and Saving Your Resumé

Once finished using a word processor, you can print one or more copies of your resumé. Printing costs \$.20 per page at Thrall. To print, click **File** then **Print** in the word processor. Click “OK” when ready. You cannot use your own paper.

You can also “save” your resumé onto a disk or a USB flash drive.

Since floppy disks do not hold much information and are likely to fail as you take them from one computer to another, getting a USB flash drive is highly recommended.

USB flash drives can hold hundreds to thousands of files and are more reliable than disks. USB drives can cost as low as \$5 to \$10 and are sold at stores carrying consumer electronics and computer products. Reference also sells USB drives.

To save your file, click **File** then **Save As**. Give your file a name (such as **resume.doc**). Be sure to save your file as a “**Microsoft Word 97/2003/XP**” (**.doc**) as any other format might not be readable by other persons.

Another way to keep your resumé file available when needed is to mail a copy of the file to your own e-mail account. Once there, you can always retrieve your resumé and print it out whenever necessary.

Sending Your Resumé to a Job Search Site or Employer Website

After saving your resumé to a disk or USB flash drive, you can send your resumé file to job search sites and websites of employers, if you are conducting your job search on the Internet. How you send your resumé depends on how each website accepts your information.

Some websites simply allow you to “upload” the file (send it to their computers) through a simple “attach file” or “browse for file” form that appears on their websites. To find the file, go to “My Computer” when the File prompt appears, and, if you have a floppy disk, select the **A:** drive. If you have a USB Flash Drive, look for drive **E:** or **F:** (or even **G:** on some computers). Select the file, click “OK,” then finish entering other information requested at the job search website.

Other websites require you to “copy and paste” your resumé into an input box. To do this, try to follow these steps:

- Click the “Minimize” button in the web browser so you can see the icon for the word processor program.
- Once you see the word processor icon, click on it twice to bring up the word processor.
- Open your resumé file by clicking **File** then **Open**. Go through “My Computer” in the File box to find your file (A:\ for floppy disks or E:\ or F:\ or G:\ for USB flash drives)
- Once your resumé appears in the word processor, click **Edit** (on the top menu) then **Select All**. All the text in your resumé should be highlighted.
- Click **Edit** again and then click **Copy**.
- After you click Copy, minimize or close the word processor.
- Return to the web browser by clicking on the web browser’s button on the bottom of the screen.
- Once the job site reappears, click in the input box where you need to paste.
- Once the cursor (flashing vertical line) appears in the box, click **Edit** (in the web browser’s top menu) then **Paste**.

If you experience any problems, please speak with someone at Reference.

E-mailing Your Resumé

Sometimes you need to send your resumé to a person or employer website through e-mail. If you do not have your own e-mail account yet, ask for our free e-mail account guide at Reference.

Once you have established your own e-mail account, begin a new message and get to the point you are ready to send your file, look for the “Attach” or “Add Files” button or link on your e-mail page. Once you find it, go through “My Computer” in the File box to find your file (A:\ for floppy disks or E:\ or F:\ or G:\ for USB flash drives). Highlight your file, then click “OK” to add it to your message. Once that is done, you can finish your writing e-mail message and click **Send** when ready.

Some Final Suggestions...

Never keep your resumé only on a disk! If that disk goes bad (a common occurrence) you will need to type your resumé all over again. Keep one or more printed copies handy. Consider sending a copy of your resumé to your e-mail for safe keeping and easy retrieval. Check your spelling and grammar. Use the **TAB key** in the word processor when indenting (instead of using spaces): this keeps things neatly aligned. No clip-art, fancy fonts, or colors: keep it **simple and professional looking!**

Remember to use standard terminology when describing previous jobs and job titles. Specify your skills completely and accurately (e.g. “word processing + Microsoft Word” instead of “typing”).

These last two tips are essential when searching for jobs online, since the only way you might be found (by an employer) in a database of thousands of other applicants is by the very words you choose to describe your experience. Choose those keywords carefully. Plan to update your resumé whenever necessary. It might seem like a lot of work, but it will be worth it!