

Tips For Creating Your Résumé

CONSISTENCY

Be consistent throughout your résumé in regards to font selection, headings, and formatting. You want to make it as easy as possible for your reader to quickly determine what information about you is important and compelling, and being consistent in your formatting will help your readers immensely.

FONT

It is best to use a common font, such as Helvetica, Cambria, Times New Roman, or something similar. Unusual fonts can distract from the information that you are trying to convey about yourself. 11- or 12-point font is preferable, and while it is okay to make your name slightly larger than the rest of the text, don't make it exponentially bigger.

HEADINGS

Use headings to establish what aspects of your education and experience you will discuss in your résumé. Common headings are "Education," "Professional/Work Experience," "Volunteer Experience," and "Honors/Awards."

ORDER OF INFORMATION

List your name and contact information first. Most scholarship / grant opportunities rely heavily on email, so be sure to include an active email address that you check regularly. Use a professional-sounding email address. Using something like coolkid1995@gmail.com or an email that includes explicit language can make you sound immature or unprofessional, and this could have a negative effect on how your reviewers read your application.

Community service and school activities are very important because they show your energy and your commitment to working with others. List and describe any leadership positions that you've held and what sort of involvement you had with the group. A section titled "Hobbies" may be good to include because it can provide a fuller picture of who you are.

If you have received any awards then you should absolutely bring attention to them.

FORMATTING

Again, be consistent. List your experiences from most to least recent, and include dates when appropriate. Do not assume that your reader is familiar with any abbreviations; for example, it is better to list "Students Acquiring Knowledge through Enterprise" instead of "S.A.K.E." If you list any responsibilities under your experiences, start your sentences with strong, active verbs. Use present tense for any ongoing activities, and use past tense for any past activities.

A full-page résumé is more impressive than a multi-page résumé that has large and frequent spacing that seems to be included simply to reach multiple pages. However, if you have enough experience to fill two-three pages, then this is also compelling.

PROVIDING ACCURATE INFORMATION

Never exaggerate your accomplishments on a résumé. Also do not imply that you have spent more time or more effort in a community project than you have. Saying that you have worked for the Red Cross, when you actually gave blood once, is not ethical.

CHECK YOUR WORK

Proofread! It is often helpful to go line-by-line with a ruler and examine as closely as possible for any errors. Remember that in extremely competitive scholarship application pools, reviewers are looking for any reason to dismiss unqualified applications. Don't give a reviewer a reason to dismiss your application because you forgot to proofread.