

# Resume Writing

## Student Employment Assistance

The job process can be very frustrating and time consuming. The DMACC Student Employment Assistance department is here to help. The goal of the department is to create a smooth transition from school into a successful career by assisting and educating on effective job search skills.

Located at the Ankeny Campus, Building 1, Dave and Jacki are happy to help with any aspect of the job search process. Areas of assistance include: job posting registration, part time job openings, resume critiques and revisions, cover letter writing, mock interviews and completing online applications. Videos, handouts and websites are all available and free for your use.

Contact Dave (964-6463 or [ddreimers@dmacc.edu](mailto:ddreimers@dmacc.edu)) or Jacki (964-6215 or [jlboldt@dmacc.edu](mailto:jlboldt@dmacc.edu)) for assistance.



# The Resume

## What is it?

A brief summary of your background, education and skills advertising what you can do for an organization.

## Who should have one?

Everyone currently looking for employment or considering a future job change.

## Can I use the same one again?

No. This is the most common mistake job seekers make. Resumes should be tailored to specific jobs and will vary between industries. A good resume will highlight your specific qualities and strengths.

Your resume is designed to:

- Showcase your unique skills, abilities, and experiences.
- Create the first impression an employer has of you.
- Summarize your educational background, employment and related experiences, special skills and interests, and any other information that you feel helps define you professionally.

**IT SHOULD BE NOTED: A RESUME WILL NOT GET YOU A JOB; IT'S THE TOOL TO GET YOU AN INTERVIEW.**

## Basic Resume Guidelines

- Make it neat and easy to read. Use a crisp font, such as Arial, Helvetica, or New Times Roman in size 11 or 12, and an uncluttered format.
- List the most important items first (Is your employment or experience more closely related to the job?). Always remember that whatever comes first on your resume receives the employer's attention first.
- **SELL YOURSELF.** Create a good first impression by highlighting skills and abilities appropriate to the position for which you're applying.
- Use **action verbs** to describe and emphasize your strengths, accomplishments, and specific job responsibilities. Articulate transferable skills and competencies acquired through your past work experiences.
- Check and re-check your resume to be certain there are no spelling or grammar errors. Have your resume critiqued by a friend or the student employment department.
- Avoid excessive narrative. Instead paint a picture of who you are using brief, descriptive words that make an employer want to interview you to learn more about your skills. Writing a resume is not an essay assignment. **Replace sentences with short, concise phrases.**
- Show employment in months and years worked.
- Omit personal pronouns --- "I," "me," and "my" are not appropriate. Do not include a photograph or other personal data.
- Make certain your resume is always current -- never send out an outdated resume.
- Use high quality bond paper. You can purchase conservative colored resume paper (white, cream, or gray) at an office supply store, copy center, or big box stores.

## Contents of Resume

The contents of a resume will vary based on the applicant, their personal experience and employment and the industry to which you are applying for. Common areas include:

### The Heading:

#### **Name**

Street Address

City, State and Zip Code

(Area Code) Phone Number

E-mail Address

- Do not use the word “resume” as a heading. Use your name as the heading and be sure to make it stand out. Your name should be the largest/most noticeable item on your resume. Examples: Use **bold**, ALL CAPS, and/or larger font size.
- Include a complete present address and/or permanent address where you can be reached if needed.
- Include telephone numbers with area codes. List your cell phone number if this is the easiest way to reach you. (Make note of your voicemail message if you expect to receive calls. It should be appropriate and professional.)
- Include your email address if you check it regularly. Make sure your email address is appropriate. Open a new email account if needed.
- Do not abbreviate. EXCEPTION: Two-letter state abbreviation is acceptable. Be consistent throughout.

### Objective:

List the type of position you are seeking. **This section is optional.**

- Use an objective only if it enhances your employability. Statements that indicate strengths (see below) are also acceptable and sometimes preferred by employers.
- Make certain your objective matches the position for which you are applying. Describe type of employment desired.
- You may wish to add the type of employer/industry of interest and the contributions you can make.

#### SAMPLE OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

- Entry-level position in the field of insurance requiring knowledge of the insurance industry, computer/analytical skills, and potential for leadership.
- Professional position in marketing with the opportunity to use sales ability and strong communication skills.
- An accounting specialist position with a small to medium-sized organization that requires dependability, commitment to quality, and effective communication skills.
- Challenging position as an administrative assistant or office manager utilizing strong organizational skills, computer knowledge, and attention to detail.
- Position in travel and tourism requiring effective customer relations and knowledge of the travel industry.

## Education:

### **Des Moines Area Community College, Des Moines, Iowa**

Associate of Applied Science Degree, Hotel and Restaurant Management

Anticipated date of graduation: May 2009

GPA: 3.76

Classes completed: Human Relations in Business, Small Business Management

### **Other College(s) attended, City, State**

Pursued Associate of Arts Degree, General Business

Completed general courses in design and communications

(List completed degrees if obtained)

### **High School, City, State (if still appropriate to list)**

Diploma, Date of graduation (optional)

- List the institution name, city, and state on the first line, followed by your degree, major, and date of graduation on the second line. Even if you have not graduated yet, list the anticipated date of graduation.
- Include special courses or workshops if related to the position sought.
- Include your grade point average (GPA) if it is a 3.0 or above.
- Include high school information if it is significant. Recent high school graduates would include this but typically it is dropped once a student completes a few terms of a higher degree.

## Experience:

### **Name of Company/Organization, City, State**

Job title, dates of employment (including months)

- Describe duties in brief sentences that begin with action verbs.
- Do not use personal pronouns.

### **Name of Company/Organization, City, State**

Job title, dates of employment

- List the name of employer, city and state, position or job title, and dates of employment on the first two lines. The position, title, and dates can be first if you wish to emphasize the actual job title, rather than the employer's name.
- Describe your functions, skills you gained, and the impact you had in work experiences. An effective method is to use bullet points for each sentence.
- Emphasize your job responsibilities and achievements using descriptive/action words. (See Action Word List)
- Do not pass up jobs that you feel are unimportant. They may showcase your work ethic, willingness to go above and beyond the job, promotions, etc.
- Include significant volunteer experiences or unpaid internships.
- Include any military experience.

## Skills/Computer Literacy:

List software packages you are skilled in using or office equipment you operate. List personal strengths you possess that are attractive to an employer.

- Include this section to enhance your resume by highlighting additional skills or computer competencies not previously mentioned.
- These could include foreign language skills, computer software proficiency, CPR/First Aid certification, etc.
- Do not include personal interests or activities in the skills section.
- Optional. Include this section only if appropriate and applicable to the position.

## Other Possible Categories:

- **Honors/Awards.** List any honors you have earned such as Dean's List, honor roll, and scholarships based on grades.
- **Activities.** Include college, professional, community, volunteer, or high school activities. Be sure to highlight offices held or contributions made.
- **Community Service or Volunteer Involvement.**

## References

References should not be listed on your resume, but included on a separate reference sheet. Include 3-4 work or education related references on a separate sheet of paper. You may include a personal reference if you supply more than 4.

- Include each person's name, job title, organization, complete work address and phone number. Home phone numbers and email addresses are optional.
- Use the same heading on your reference sheet that you provided on your resume. Use the same type of paper as well.
- Do not send your references until instructed to do so. One option is to include the phrase "References Available Upon Request" at the bottom of your resume.

## Did you know?

Hiring managers spend an average of 30-45 seconds reviewing a resume. Make sure yours is neat and easy to read. The reader should be able to skim your resume and quickly pick out the areas of most importance.

## Action Word List

Abstracted	Classified	Directed	Founded	Lifted	Predicted	Schemed
Achieved	Coached	Discovered	Gained	Listened	Prepared	Screened
Acquired	Collaborated	Discriminated	Gathered	Located	Presented	Set goals
Acted	Collected	Dispatched	Gave	Logged	Prioritized	Shaped
Adapted	Comforted	Displayed	Generated	Made	Produced	Skilled
Addressed	Communicated	Dissected	Governed	Maintained	Programmed	Solicited
Administered	Compared	Documented	Guided	Managed	Projected	Solved
Advertised	Completed	Drafted	Handled	Manipulated	Promoted	Specialized
Advised	Complied	Drove	Headed	Mapped	Proposed	Spoke
Advocated	Composed	Edited	Helped	Mastered	Protected	Stimulated
Aided	Computed	Eliminated	Identified	Maximized	Proved	Strategized
Allocated	Conceived	Empathized	Illustrated	Mediated	Provided	Streamlined
Analyzed	Conducted	Enabled	Imagined	Memorized	Publicized	Strengthened
Answered	Conserved	Enforced	Implemented	Mentored	Published	Stressed
Anticipated	Consulted	Enlightened	Improved	Met	Purchased	Studied
Applied	Contracted	Enlisted	Improvised	Minimized	Queried	Substantiated
Appraised	Contributed	Ensured	Inaugurated	Modeled	Questioned	Succeeded
Approved	Converted	Established	Increased	Modified	Raised	Summarized
Arranged	Cooperated	Estimated	Indexed	Monitored	Ran	Synthesized
Ascertained	Coordinated	Evaluated	Indicated	Narrated	Ranked	Supervised
Assembled	Copied	Examined	Influenced	Negotiated	Rationalized	Supported
Assessed	Correlated	Exceeded	Initiated	Observed	Read	Surveyed
Assisted	Counseled	Excelled	Inspected	Obtained	Reasoned	Sustained
Attained	Created	Expanded	Instituted	Offered	Recorded	Symbolized
Audited	Critiqued	Expedited	Integrated	Operated	Received	Tabulated
Augmented	Cultivated	Experimented	Interpreted	Ordered	Reduced	Talked
Authored	Dealt	Explained	Interviewed	Organized	Referred	Taught
Bolstered	Debated	Explored	Introduced	Originated	Related	Theorized
Briefed	Decided	Expressed	Invented	Overcame	Relied	Trained
Brought	Defined	Extracted	Inventoried	Oversaw	Reported	Translated
Budgeted	Delegated	Facilitated	Investigated	Participated	Researched	Upgraded
Built	Delivered	Fashioned	Judged	Perceived	Responded	Utilized
Calculated	Designed	Financed	Kept	Perfected	Restored	Validated
Cared	Detected	Fixed	Launched	Performed	Revamped	Verified
Charged	Determined	Followed	Learned	Persuaded	Reviewed	Visualized
Chartered	Developed	Formulated	Lectured	Planned	Scanned	Won
Checked	Devised	Fostered	Led	Practiced	Scheduled	Wrote
Clarified	Diagnosed					

## Resume Formats

You can emphasize your qualities and skills or your experience and education based on the style of resume you choose to use. There is no right or wrong method in writing your resume. Determine what works best for you in relation to the position you are applying for.

**Chronological:** A listing of your work experience and education history in reverse chronological order.

- Used to show growth, promotions or experience in a related job field
- Excellent for individuals entering the job market for the first time or for individuals changing jobs within a given industry

**Functional:** Organizing your experience according to specific skills or functions.

- Highlights your strengths and abilities (transferable skills) rather than showing growth in one field
- Used for individuals changing careers or reentering the work force after a period of absence
- Very effective for those with a long work history

## Scanned/Online Resumes

Technology has changed the job market and the majority of job applications now occur online. Online resumes are received by email, through a company website, or through an Internet job board. Scanned resumes are prints resumes turned into electronic resumes by an employer. The electronic versions are put into a software system that allows searching with specific keywords. Unfortunately for the applicant, many resumes do not arrive at the organization in the same format you sent them.

In order to effectively apply this way, you should:

- Avoid as much formatting as possible (bullets, italics, etc.) A good rule of thumb is to avoid anything you can't do through the use of your keyboard.
- Left-justify the text
- Avoid line or columns
- Use common sizes and fonts.
- Save the entire resume as a .pdf file & send the file as an email attachment or upload it to the company's website (if applicable). \*PDF stands for a portable document file. It creates a picture of the document and sends it exactly as it is captured.

## Sample Chronological Resume:

### Dennis M. Ellis

819 Harbor Place Middlebrook, IA 55555 (555) 555-9534 dellis@msn.com

**Objective:** To utilize my dental hygiene background with a position in a small to medium-sized organization that requires dependability, commitment to quality, and effective communication skills

**Education:** **Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa**  
Associate in Applied Science Degree, Dental Hygiene  
Graduated: May 2006  
GPA: 3.5

**Professional Experience:** **Dental Hygienist**  
Ankeny Family Dentistry, Ankeny, Iowa  
January 2007 – Present

- Collect data, organize information and develop patient care plan
- Counsel patients on prevention and treatment of dental disease
- Provide patient services including removal of stains and deposits from teeth, x-rays, and sealants
- Keep accurate patient records

**Dental Assistant**  
Des Moines Dentistry, Des Moines, Iowa  
January 2006 – January 2007

- Assisted dentist serving patient as needed
- Sterilized instruments prior to patient care
- Accurately poured patient molds
- Maintained and organized patient records

**Administrative Assistant**  
Lifestyle Fitness, Des Moines, Iowa  
February 2002 - July 2004

- Maintained daily records
- Utilized customer service and human relations skills
- Updated and detailed customer records and account balances

**References:** Available Upon Request

# Jane Doe

## Current Address:

619 N. 56<sup>th</sup> St.  
Ankeny, Iowa 50021  
(515) 555-5555  
jdoe@dmacc.edu

## Permanent Address:

38 N. Walnut St.  
Newland, Iowa 55555  
(563) 555-5555  
jdoe5@hotmail.com

## Objective

To obtain a position in photography with the opportunity to utilize my technical skills and creativity on a daily basis

## Education

### Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa

Photography Diploma, Anticipated graduation August 2009

GPA: 3.75

Related Coursework: Alternative Photo Processes, Studio Photography, Travel Photography

### Newland High School, Newland, Iowa

Diploma, May 2008

## Work Experience

### JD Photography, Des Moines, Iowa

Assistant, June 2008 – Present

- Maintain and update client records and orders
- Edit and enhance photographs with provided software
- Assist photographer with setting and client needs

### Dahls Foods, Newland, Iowa

Checker/Stocker, November 2006 – May 2008

- Operated cash register, accepted payments
- Bagged groceries for carryout
- Stocked and faced merchandise
- Assisted customers with questions and products

## Skills & Strengths

Adobe Photoshop  
Strong communication skills  
Dependable  
Organized  
Life long learner  
Creative

## References

Available Upon Request

## **Sample Functional Resume:**

### **Besty Marie Smith**

215 Queen Street  
Rich, Iowa 55555  
(515) 555-5555  
bsmith@dmac.edu

#### **Objective**

To obtain a full time position as a head counselor at a summer day camp

#### **Skills and Abilities**

Responsible Childcare Worker

Coordinated and monitored youth activities to ensure maximum safety for children

Completed Emergency Care and Child Health, Safety and Nutrition courses at Des Moines Area Community College

#### **Creative Childcare Worker**

Created and implemented new activities

Developed summer curriculum at Camp Olson YMCA

#### **Leader**

Directed camp family visit days, organized weekly activities

Received 3 Counselor of the Week awards

#### **Team worker**

Effectively communicated ideas and strategies with peers

Collaborated with directors and peers on new ideas and daily activities

#### **Education**

Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa

Early Childhood Education diploma, May 2007

#### **Experience**

Camp Olson, Longville, MN

Camp Counselor, May 2007 – present

Tender Heart Day Care, Des Moines, Iowa

Childcare worker, September 2006 – May 2007

#### **References**

Available upon request

**Sample Reference Sheet:**

**Besty Marie Smith**

215 Queen Street  
Rich, Iowa 55555  
(515) 555-5555  
bsmith@dmacc.edu

**References:**

**Mr. John Smith**

Camp Director  
Camp Olson  
2500 Park Ave.  
Longville, MN 12345  
(555) 555-5555  
John.smith@msn.com

**Mrs. Trisha Young**

Program Director  
Tender Heart Day Care  
1543 86<sup>th</sup> St.  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
(515) 555-5555

**Mrs. Diane Hansen**

Instructor  
Des Moines Area Community College  
2006 S. Ankeny Blvd.  
Ankeny, Iowa 50021  
dhansen@dmacc.edu

## Resume Rubric

How does your resume stack up against the competition? Are you on your way to an interview? Test yours against the following criteria and make changes as necessary.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
<b>Appearance</b>			
<b>Format</b>	One page & not overcrowded; Attractively spaced with no major white spaces; Headings are bold & stand out; Easy to read & select areas of importance; Phrases with no personal pronouns	One page & somewhat crowded; Sections are separated; Some white areas of blank space; Headings are bold; Takes time to select areas of importance; Sentence format; Personal pronouns included	More than one page; Large white areas of blank space; Headings do not stand out from text; Difficult to read & determine area of importance; Sentence format; Personal pronouns included
<b>Visual Appeal</b>	Polished & professional; Appropriate fonts & point; Appropriate alignment; Consistency throughout	Visually acceptable; Fonts are appropriate, but only one size used; Some areas indented; Minimally consistent	Visually unacceptable; Inappropriate fonts & sizes; No alignment changes; Distracting
<b>Spelling &amp; Grammar</b>	0 errors	1 error	2 or more errors
<b>Resume Content</b>			
<b>Sections</b>	Includes Heading, Objective, Education & Work Experience (Skills if appropriate)	Missing one major heading	Missing more than one major heading
<b>Heading</b>	Includes name, complete address, city, state, zip, complete phone number & appropriate email	Missing one area of contact information; Inappropriate email address	Missing more than one area of contact information; Inappropriate email address
<b>Objective</b>	Specific to position & job related skills	Only specific to position	Generic & general
<b>Education</b>	Includes school, location, degree, graduation date (in month/year); Listed first if most appropriate; Includes GPA if 3.0 or above	Missing one area of information; Listed after experience when most relevant	Incomplete information; Listed inappropriately; GPA is listed & is under 3.0
<b>Experience</b>	Includes job title, location, employment dates (month/year); Uses action verbs to describe duties & skills; Industry language included when appropriate	Missing one area of information; Some use of action verbs; Limited use of industry language	Incomplete information; Duties & tasks not described; No use of industry language
<b>Skills</b>	Included when appropriate; No personal information included; Related to specific position	Unrelated to position or industry; Personal interests & information included	Generic & general; Includes personal information