It's time to **make friends** with your resume.

Creating the perfect resume may seem like a daunting task. How do you truly represent yourself – all your wonderful accomplishments, your many talents and your winning personality – on a single sheet of paper?

Hard to believe, but it is possible. Just think of your resume as your agent. It acts on your behalf to open doors to potential employers. It highlights all of your skills, education, experience and accomplishments. It just needs to know the right things to say.

That's where this guide comes in. Inside, you'll learn about the different types of resumes, what to include on your resume and, importantly, what to keep to yourself. Follow these simple guidelines and you'll be shopping for new work attire in no time!

Experience
education
skills

At HireElements, we witness the do's and don'ts of resume writing every day. As talent acquisition specialists, it is our job to find the right candidates for our clients — and the right employers to fulfill the goals and aspirations of our candidates.

Resume writing is important, but it's only the first step in finding the career path that's right for you. If you'd like to learn more about how HireElements can help you reach your potential, contact us today.

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GETTING IT
Write

An insider's guide on how to put your resume to work

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TYPES OF *Resumes*

There are three basic types of resumes: **chronological, functional** and **combination**. The right resume for you depends on your personal circumstances, as well as the position you are interested in.

Chronological Resume:
A chronological resume is the most familiar format. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current, or most recent, job listed first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see the positions you've held and the timeframe of each position.

This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history, or for those who have had career growth and are applying for jobs in their current field.

Functional Resume:
A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than your chronological work history. In this format, a job objective is given, followed by experience in skill clusters.

A functional resume may be a good choice for individuals who possess very diverse experiences that don't add up to a clear-cut career path; college students with minimal experience and/or experience unrelated to their chosen career field; career-changers who wish to enter a field very different from their previous experiences; and those with gaps in their work history, such as homemakers who wish to return to the workplace.

Combination Resume:
A combination resume combines a chronological resume with a functional resume. The first part of the resume describes skills and job functions, followed by employment history.

This resume format is great for individuals who want to highlight how their skills are relevant to the potential position and also provide the chronological work history that employers prefer.

WHAT TO *Write*

Once you've chosen the format that works best for you, it's time to create the content. Make sure to include the following essential information:

Contact information – Located at the top of the resume, contact information should include your name, mailing address, email address and cell phone or home phone numbers.

Tips: *Update your outgoing phone message so it sounds professional, and check your messages daily during your job search process. You may also want to rethink your email address – CrazyGrrl247@email.com may have been cute in college, but it may be off-putting to potential employers.*

Objective – Make it easy for recruiters to understand the type of position you want. Use this section to be as specific as possible, and tie it in to your education or previous work experience.

Tip: *Make sure your objective is concise and relevant to the position for which you are applying.*

Education – Include your degree, the name of the college from which you graduated and your GPA, if it is above a 3.0. Also include any licenses or certifications you have earned.

Tips: *If you have been out of college for more than three years, move the education section toward the end of the resume and enhance your related work experience section. Don't list high school if you graduated college, and remember to include study abroad experience if applicable.*

Experience – List your job responsibilities and your accomplishments to highlight your performance in previous work experiences. Quantify results whenever possible, and always include dates.

Tip: *Your title alone doesn't describe your job responsibilities, so take the time to craft your achievements. Demonstrating your achievements makes it easier for hiring managers to visualize how you will contribute to their organization.*

Internships – Format internships in the same way you format your experience. This section should also focus on your accomplishments. Internships can be listed as a part of your work experience or as a separate section.

Tips: *Describing who you interacted with and reported to shows collaboration and teamwork. Be prepared to explain the type of work you did.*

Volunteer/Activities – If you are using these activities to highlight relevant experience, format the same way as you format internships. Otherwise, items can be listed.

Tip: *Include specific details that are relevant to the position you are applying for.*

Skills – Highlight any other items that are relevant to the position. Skills such as certifications, designations, awards, licenses, computer expertise and languages can help strengthen what you bring to the table. Use bullet points to highlight your accomplishments.

Tips: *List Microsoft Office and technology skills, such as Publisher or HTML, and be specific about your knowledge.*

THE *Seven* DEADLY SINS OF RESUME WRITING

Making one of these mistakes can take your resume from the "return call" pile to the recycling bin in one fell swoop! Check and double-check your resume to avoid these common mistakes:

1 Grammar and punctuation errors – Closely proofread your resume to ensure that there are no typographical or grammatical errors. Mistakes in your resume may hurt your credibility. Also, be consistent with the use of periods. Either use them on all bulleted items or do not use them on any.

2 Lengthy or hard-to-read formats – Your resume should be one page in length – no exceptions! Use basic fonts like Times New Roman or Arial, as most electronic scanners will recognize these fonts and accept them. Your font size should be 10 or 12 points. These fonts and sizes make it easy for recruiters to read.

3 Buried information – Most large employers use technology to scan the resumes they receive for key words that relate to their job openings. Include words in your resume that are relevant to the position for which you are applying.

4 Bad references – Ensure your references are aware that you are applying for employment and are using them as references. Be sure their contact information is up to date.

5 TMI (too much information!) – Do not include personal information on your resume. Items such as height, weight, age, sexual orientation and religious background are not relevant to your qualifications.

6 Salary history or expectations – Do not place salary information in your resume. If a potential employer requests this information, add an addendum to your resume package.

7 Wrong company information – Make sure you include the right company and hiring manager's name in your resume package. Hiring managers hate getting form letters – especially those that are addressed to another company or person!