

Section VIII—Get a Job! How to Write a Résumé

Summer's almost here and you'd like to work, but there's a little piece of paper standing between you and the job of your dreams. Read on to learn how to fill that sheet of paper with words that will win you a working wage!

> WHAT'S A RÉSUMÉ?

When your future employer asks you for a résumé, it helps to know what he or she means.

A résumé is a brief list of facts about you. It must contain:

- > your name, address, phone number, and/or e-mail address
- > your goal or reason for applying for work
- > your educational experience—where you attend school, any special courses you have taken, when you intend to graduate
- > your work experience—any jobs (including baby-sitting and volunteering) you've held or continue to hold right now
- > your special skills—any languages you speak; sports or extracurricular activities you enjoy; hobbies or passions
- > the name of an individual who can give you a character reference

And there's one more rule about a great résumé: It should fit on one page. Let's look at each item that a résumé requires, so that writing yours will be a breeze.



> HERE I AM

One thing your employer must know above all: how to reach you to say you're hired! He or she may also need to reach you in an emergency, so it's important to be accurate and complete.

- > Type your full name centered at the top of your résumé.
- > On the following line, type the city or town, state name, and ZIP code in which you live.
- > On the next line, type your address, including your apartment number.
- > Finally, below your name and address, type your phone number (including cell phone, if you own one) and complete e-mail address.

> GOING FOR THE GOAL

Why do you want a job? What can you add to a workplace? What do you want to achieve, besides earning extra cash?

Ask yourself these questions and try to answer in a single sentence. You might say:

I am a responsible, flexible person who works well as part of a team.

(or)

I enjoy working with children and look forward to helping them develop their skills.

(or)

I look forward to using my lifesaving skills to safeguard people on the city's beaches.

Write a few drafts of your goal until you feel that it states why you want this job and why you're the best candidate for it.

> IT'S YOUR EDUCATION

List the name and address of your high school, as well as the year you intend to graduate. If you have taken any summer courses or weekend classes, list the dates and details on a line below your high-school info.



> MAKE IT WORK

Even if you are applying for your first paying job, you've probably had some experiences that can be called "work." Think about it: If you baby-sit; care for an elderly relative; help your parents with a family business; if you've volunteered at school, church, or in your community, all of these count as "work experience." Be sure to include them—they show you're responsible.



> SPECIAL SKILLS

What makes you stand out? Do you speak another language besides English? Do you have an awesome collection (and encyclopedic knowledge) of comic books? Have you earned an honor at school or worked on the crew of a school production? On a résumé, these things come under the category of "special skills." List honors, awards, and activities that you think might make you well-suited for this job. In any case, they might catch an employer's attention and make for a great conversation during your interview.

> WHO WILL VOUCH FOR YOU?

Think of a teacher, a family friend, or a community or church leader who knows you well. You're not looking for a celebrity to say you're great—but an individual who can say that he or she has known you for a number of years and can recommend you as a worthy employee. Then, before you do anything else, contact your potential reference(s). Let them know that you hope to get a job, and ask if he or she would be willing to offer you a reference. And don't forget to bring your résumé—because the person you're asking may have some excellent suggestions on how to improve it.

WRITE A WINNING RÉSUMÉ

DIRECTIONS: FILL IN THE BLANKS IN THE RÉSUMÉ BELOW, ACCORDING TO THE TIPS YOU JUST REVIEWED.

Example:

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
TEL: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Goal:

I want to learn more about the retail music industry and music sales.

Educational experience: (high school, graduation year)

Additional courses: (summer, weekend, certification)

Work experience: (include volunteering)

Special skills: (sports, languages, hobbies)

References: (Never give someone's name as a reference without asking the person first.)
