

Resume Guidelines

- **Do not use a resume template!** “One size fits all” does not work with resumes - your resume should be tailored to fit you.
- On your first draft, list all post high school work experience, education, training, volunteer work, activities, and interests. (See reverse side for additional suggestions.) Include everything you can think of at first. You can edit it later. Include dates in years (and months are sometimes useful). In rare cases, some high school information should be included if it is especially impressive and/or relevant.
- Express everything in the best light possible: indicate how well you have performed. Quantify where possible (Supervised staff of ten; Improved sales by 15 per cent, etc.).
- List your work experience and education in reverse chronological order (current information first).
- List job responsibilities in order of importance to career goals, with the most important listed first. Resume sections (Education, Employment, etc.) should also be listed in order of importance. Stress skills, accomplishments, and knowledge wherever possible.
- Your resume should be written in a journalistic style: concise, clear, informative, and specific. Use brief **action verb phrases** to describe accomplishments. (Some action verb examples: Analyzed, Assisted, Conducted, Designed, Developed, Initiated, Maintained, Performed, Planned, Presented, Programmed, Provided, Supervised, Tutored, etc.) A resume is a “formal” piece for writing. Therefore, most abbreviations are inappropriate, and many will be confusing to the reader. It is all right to use the acronym for an organization, but usually only after you have spelled out the name. (Computer languages are an exception to this rule.)
- Think about what will set you apart from other candidates. If you were an employer, why would you hire you? **The purpose of a resume is to convince an employer to interview you.**
- A good resume will “invite” the eye to read it. It will be well laid out and spaced. Use indentation, capitalization, boldface type, “bullets,” etc. Avoid underlining and italic typefaces - electronic scanners can’t “read” them. **Graphically stress or highlight your strong points - for example: education, job titles, skills, etc.** Use a serif typeface and a 12 pt. font for your text. Headings may be larger.
- The most impressive part of many VTC students’ resumes is a skills section that is usually placed beneath the education section. Most of the skills listed have been obtained through VTC courses, and are directly applicable to the types of positions the student is looking for. (In other words, these skills should **tell employers what you can do for them.**)
- If you are in your twenties, your resume should be one page. If you are older, and can fit everything that is important on one page, without having it look crowded, this is preferable. If not, limit it to two pages. Place your name and “Page 2” at the top of the second page.
- Use a letter quality printer. Choose high quality paper. Get enough for your cover letters also. And don’t forget about envelopes.

