

RESUME WRITING **GUIDE**

**ROSS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
OFFICE OF STUDENT
AND PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

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Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine's Office of Student and Professional Development has prepared this guide to assist you in creating a professional resume. This is one of the first steps toward obtaining a position in the veterinary field upon graduation, and is also sometimes needed when applying for certain externships during your clinical year.

THE RESUME

Your resume is a marketing tool that highlights your academic and professional achievements, and contains information such as (but not necessarily limited to) contact information, employment experience, extracurricular activities, and professional development. The resume should be informative, concise, easy to read, and well organized. Because the resume focuses on your accomplishments, it should contain clear details regarding when and where each of your endeavors took place.



THE KEY ELEMENTS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Your contact information includes your name, address, telephone number and email address. This information should be listed at the top of your resume. Unlike the other key elements of the resume, the heading, "Contact Information," should not be used.

Do:

- ✓ Double check this information to ensure accuracy. Transposing the digits in a phone number is very easy to do and an error that others might not catch when reviewing your CV.
- ✓ Ensure that the telephone number listed on the CV is routed to a working answering machine or messaging system. Your answering machine should have a professional outgoing message in the event you are not able to answer the phone.
- ✓ Remove hyperlinks associated with your email address.

Do Not:

- ✗ Use fancy templates that allow you to place your contact information on the bottom of your resume.
- ✗ Use the header function in your word processing software. Type your contact information into the body of the document.
- ✗ List an unprofessional email address.

EDUCATION

Education is an essential feature of your resume and it should be at the forefront of this document. List your educational experience in reverse chronological order, beginning with your most recent or current educational experience. Be sure to include the dates in which your degrees were obtained or, if you did not receive a degree, the dates of attendance.

Do:

- ✓ List the name of each school, followed by the location (city and state, or country)
- ✓ List the degree received
- ✓ List the GPA if it is above a 3.5
- ✓ List any honors received (*See "Honors and Awards")
- ✓ List the date the degree was received or the date it is expected.

Do Not:

- ✗ Abbreviate school names
- ✗ Include high school studies
- ✗ List the number of credits you've earned at an institution if it resulted in a degree. The degree speaks for itself.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Weigh the impact of an Honors and Awards section before adding it to your resume. If you have only one Award or Honor, it would be best to incorporate it under another category, such as Education. If, however, you have several scholarly, professional, or civic awards, you may list them under this heading. Be sure to include the year each honor was attained.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Your extracurricular activities can demonstrate that you are a well-rounded candidate with a proven willingness to go above and beyond. Veterinary-related extracurricular activities also provide you with veterinary experience that you may be lacking in your professional experience. Furthermore, this type of experience can demonstrate your interest in providing service to your profession and/or community.

Do:

- ✓ Describe your activities and accomplishments. Be descriptive, but brief.
- ✓ Mention if you had a leadership role with the organization and describe briefly the responsibilities associated with that role.

Do Not:

- ✗ Simply list the name of an organization.
- ✗ List every single extracurricular activity in which you were involved. A list of 20 unrelated activities can be quite overwhelming to the reader. Focus, first and foremost, on listing the activities that relate to your goal.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Employment experience should be listed in reverse chronological order.

Do:

- ✓ List the name of each company, followed by the city and state.
- ✓ List the dates you started and ended working for each company.
- ✓ List your position title.
- ✓ Provide a bulleted list of the work that you did and the accomplishments you had at each position.
- ✓ Use a variety of action verbs to describe the work done in each position. Action verbs add power to your skill statements and accomplishments.
- ✓ Bring transferrable skills to the forefront if your prior work experience appears to be unrelated to the veterinary field.

Do Not:

- ✗ Use the words "duties include" or "responsible for" when writing your skill statements. Begin with an action verb and state what you actually did in each position, not what was expected of you.

MILITARY SERVICES

You may add this section to your resume if it is applicable. Be sure to include your branch of service, rank, place and dates.

AFFILIATIONS

This section can be used to list professional or civic affiliations. Do not list organizations that are already located elsewhere on your resume. List dates, offices held, and committee responsibilities, if any.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You may use this section to list other pertinent information that relates to your professional goals. This includes proficiency in a second language.

Do Not:

- ✗ Include personal information such as your age, weight, race, and marital status.
- ✗ Include your place of birth or your current personal health status.
- ✗ Include your social security number.
- ✗ Include a reference list or the statement "References available upon request."
- ✗ Include salary history or salary requirements.

FORMATTING TIPS

- Use traditional fonts such as Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial or Tahoma.
- Use the same font and point size for every heading. Keep your headings consistent.
- Use the same font and point size for the information within the body of your resume.
- As a general rule, select a font sizes between 10 and 12. You may use 14 for headings.
- Use bullets and bold to add texture to the resume. Bold headings, organization or institution names, and job titles. Effective use of these formatting tools makes reading the resume easier on the reader's eyes. However, if too much bold and too many bullets are used, you will achieve the opposite effect.
- Remember that the reader of your resume will read from the top of your document to the bottom. Be sure that the most relevant information is toward the top of your resume.
- If your resume is more than one page, be sure to place your name and the appropriate page number on the following page(s).
- Make sure your resume is balanced. Adjust spacing to ensure that there is not too much extra white space at the bottom and that your resume does not have the Leaning Tower of Pisa effect.
- Do not label your resume "Resume", "Curriculum Vitae" or "CV".
- Use present tense when describing an activity or position you currently hold, and past tense when describing an activity or position that has ended.
- Try to avoid placing dates on the left margin as doing so places more emphasis on the dates than the activity.

PROOFREADING TIPS

- Print your resume in order to properly proofread it. Do not rely on spell check.
- Double check your telephone number and dates.
- Read the content backwards.
- Put the resume down and proofread it again the following day.
- Once you have thoroughly proofread your document, have two trusted individuals proofread it again for spelling, grammar, and content.

Once you have completed your resume, you can submit it to Kristie Dacey in the Office of Student and Professional Development for further review and feedback at Professionaldevelopment@rossu.edu.

RESUME FAQs

Q I've worked as a veterinary technician for many different doctors. How do I include this information without repeating myself?

If you have had the same professional title throughout your career, do not repeat the same skill statements over and over. Write something different for each one. Think about the differences between the organizations within which you've worked. Whatever you do, do not write the same statement for each position.

Q I haven't participated in any veterinary-related extracurricular activities and my work experience is not related to the veterinary field. What can I list on my resume besides education?

If you didn't get involved in any extracurricular activities while you were in school and your employment history is not in the veterinary field, pay extra attention to highlighting your transferable skills. For example, if your entire employment history has been in the retail industry, do not focus on your use of a cash register, focus on your interaction with people and your customer service skills. For each position, focus on the traits, skills and accomplishments that can relate to the veterinary field.

Q Should I use every heading in this guide?

No. This document is meant to be a guide. If there is a heading that does not pertain to you, do not use it. For instance, if you do not have any military service, do not list that heading.

Q Must I list the headings in the order in which they appear in this guide?

As mentioned in the formatting section, readers will read your resume from top to bottom. Make sure the most relevant information appears at the top of your resume. For most students and graduates applying within the veterinary field, Education will be most important. From that point on, it will vary from person to person. For instance, if you have extensive work experience in the veterinary field but you have very few veterinary-related extracurricular activities, it would be in your best interest to list your work experience before your extracurricular activities. If your work experience is limited to retail sales but you have a great deal of extracurricular activities that show experience and commitment to the veterinary field, list your extracurricular activities first.

Q Can I rename or add other headings?

Yes. For example, instead of "Employment Experience" you can label that section "Professional Experience." Honors and Awards can be listed as "Honors" or "Awards." Affiliations can be listed as "Professional Associations" or "Civic Associations." You may also choose to include a Professional Profile or Summary section at the beginning of your resume, which can be tailored to both your strengths and the needs of the position to which you are applying.

Q Can I use templates or layouts I find online?

There are many different ways to format and structure a resume, and some are better than others. When considering a template or layout that you have found online, keep some of the formatting tips from this guide in mind. It is best to keep your resume format simple and easy to read, without fancy shading, shapes, pictures, or colors.



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