



Create a Stellar Resume – Keep it Simple, Concise, Orderly and Factual

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Writing a resume should be one of the first steps when considering a career move. It's the key that can open new doors to your success, since companies use resumes extensively to screen for potential candidates.

Forrer & Associates has simplified the resume writing process to ensure that your resume stands out from the multitude that hiring managers receive daily. We will guide you through resume writing but expect you to write your own resume. Simply follow our step-by-step guide and send it to your Forrer & Associates recruiter for review. We only accept resumes created in Microsoft Word.

What your resume can do for you

Your resume serves to highlight your accomplishments and responsibilities, and helps you get your foot in the door of the company where you want to work. Hiring managers will look at your education, certification and work history summaries to determine whether or not you're a match for the open position. Your resume also reflects your writing skills as well as your attention to detail and overall professionalism. Finally, it serves as a guide during the interview.

Types of resumes: Chronological or Functional

The chronological resume presents skills and accomplishments associated with each position and company by date, listing the most recent job experience first. This format highlights a progression of skills acquired over a defined time period.

The functional summary resume lists categories of expertise, with detail about skills and accomplishments grouped together. This format highlights accumulated skills. However, hiring managers often perceive the functional format negatively because it can mask lapses in employment by glossing over work history. Because this format lacks a linear order, it also runs the risk of portraying the candidate as not having a history of steady employment or lacking career progression.

Of these two types of resumes, Forrer & Associates only presents chronological resumes. If you follow the format listed below for a chronological resume, you'll be well on your way to creating a resume that will open doors for you.

Items to include in your resume:

1. Name

- List your complete name with a middle initial (put any nickname in parentheses).
- Certification: list this next to your name, e.g. CPA, CFA, CIA, CISA. (Acronyms are appropriate to use in this section).

2. Education

- List the university name, location, degree, honors or GPA (if above 3.0) and year of graduation.
- Be explicit: Don't use abbreviations. Spell out everything, don't assume the hiring manager knows a certain acronym.
 - List Bachelor of Science, Accounting, rather than B.S., Accounting.
 - Your GPA must be the exact decimal as it appears on your transcript, otherwise your academic credential check may be rejected.

3. Certifications

- List the name and state. (The date of certification and license number are optional items.)
- Spell out the certification rather than using acronyms.
 - For example, Certified Public Accountant, State of Georgia rather than CPA.

4. Experience

- List the following pertinent information for this section:
 - Name of the company
 - Location of the company
 - Length of employment in months and years
 - Summary of the company, including revenues and industry
 - Your job title
 - Clear and concise bullet points detailing your responsibilities
- List your current or most recent job first, then list in reverse order all the positions you've held since receiving your undergraduate degree.
 - It's also appropriate to show any applicable training, such as an internship, that you held while obtaining your degree.
- Specify some of the most important and technical aspects of your current job, and special projects or accomplishments. For example:
 - Primary topics of focus include: (i) consolidation under FIN 46R, (ii) derivatives and hedge accounting (interest rate, foreign currency and commodities) under SFAS 133 and (iii) securitizations and other asset transfers under SFAS 140, including QSPEs
 - Technical support provided in many other areas, including: (i) APB 18 applicability, (ii) debt restructurings and refinancings, (iii)

- EITF 02-3 application, (iv) revenue recognition, (v) SFAS 91 costs and (vi) SFAS 115 classification
 - Responsible for all corporate and most subsidiary technical accounting matters, such as hedging of foreign currency exposures (SFAS No. 52 and 133), factoring of receivables (SFAS No. 140) and purchase accounting related items
 - Rolled-out a live quarterly CPE training program, using internal subject matter experts to train the rest of the department and other CPAs in the company
- Career progression – It's important to show progression throughout your career, e.g. the period of time that you worked as a staff employee, a senior staff employee, a manager or senior executive.
- Listing career setbacks – If layoffs and corporate downsizing have caused gaps in employment or forced undesirable job changes, it's best to link it to the situation. For example, "Due to a corporate downsizing, bankruptcy or corporate merger, my position was eliminated." or "I had to take a position in another department."

Other important items (relating to experience):

- It's OK to list acronyms of well-known industry programs, agencies and financial tools, such as GAAS, GAAP, SEC, etc. These "buzzwords" are easy for hiring managers to pick out when scanning resumes and quickly identify you as someone skilled in high-impact areas of the financial world.
- Proportion: give appropriate attention to positions according to their length or importance.
- Only your current position should contain bullet points with greater detail. Your past positions can include a summary of responsibilities.
- Clarity of dates: Make your tenure with the company crystal clear, as well as the time spent in each particular job at the organization.
- Military service. Describe your length of service, branch of service, special training, medals, discharge and/or reserve status. Employers are impressed by those who've spent time serving their country because the qualities that military service instills are also valued on the job.

5. Computer skills

- If applicable, include a description naming the specific software programs that reflect your experience. For example:
 - Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access, SAP and J.D. Edwards ERP systems.
 - Exposure to SAP and J.D. Edwards ERP systems (These include programs you have worked with, but not on a regular basis.)

6. Language skills

- Fluent in (list language)
 - List this only if you can speak and write the language.

7. Professional associations

- Spell out and list the acronym. For example:
 - Member of the Georgia Society of Certified Public Accountants (GSCPA)
 - Member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).

8. Community activities

- List those that show leadership, such as:
 - Member of the United Way campaign team, 2004; or
 - Quality Care for Children, Board of Directors, 2003 to present.

9. References

- State only: Available upon request.
 - Provide the recruiter with four references: two peers and two supervisors, and make sure they will say positive things about you when contacted by the recruiter or a prospective employer.

What items should you exclude?

- Career objective or summary of qualifications: In most cases, the recruiters will match your objective based on a personal interview and/or a completed five-star assessment form (developed and used exclusively by Forrer & Associates). An objective won't vault you into a position unless you're qualified for it.
- Personal interests: Focus on your professional life on your resume, leave hobbies and activities outside the workplace, where they belong.
- Personal information such as marital status, your date of birth, and number of children.
- Salary requirements: This is best left for negotiations by your Forrer & Associates recruiter.
- Do not include newspaper articles, samples of your work or letters of recommendation with your resume.

As a final overview, perform these quality control measures:

- Review visual format and font:
 - Aim for readability, clarity and a pleasing, easy-to-follow format.
- Check for spelling, grammar and punctuation:
 - Run a spell-check on the final draft and ask someone else to review your resume to catch any errors you may have missed.

- Keep your resume to two pages:
 - A good rule of thumb is 10 years of experience per page. If your resume is any longer, it appears to be too much reading.

With the right resume as a start, job hunting will be much more productive. If you pair your resume with the five-star assessment developed by Forrer & Associates, you'll soon be on your way to obtaining your desired position.