

Resume Information

Why do you need a resume?

A resume is a marketing tool that outlines your skills, qualifications, and work experience in order to apply for employment opportunities. A resume is the first item that a potential employer will see. In some cases, more than a hundred people can apply for the same job, and an employer can spend initially less than a minute going through each resume.

Therefore, it is vital that you invest time in preparing your resume, ensure that you customize each resume for each job that you are applying for, and that you emphasize your relevant skills and accomplishments.

General Tips

- Be concise, positive, and honest.
- Keep it professional and easy to read.
- Make sure it is typed, if possible using a laser printer.
- Use white, off-white, ivory, or grey paper.
- Use standard font size which is 11 to 12, and standard fonts, which are Times New Roman, Garamond, and Century School Book.
- Ensure accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar, including correct spacing (1 space after a period/semi-colon/colon/before and after a dash).
- Adopt a formatting style and use it consistently throughout the resume.
- Bold headings.
- Customize each resume, particularly the first page, ensuring that details concerning education, skills, and experience are relevant to the duties in the job advertisement.
- Try not to exceed two pages.
- Bold your name and make it slightly larger than your address.
- Avoid using personal pronouns (I, me, my).
- Whenever you post or drop off a resume, do not fold it; instead, try to put it in a large envelope, always including a cover letter with the resume.

There are three types of resumes, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of Resumes

Types	Description	When to use this type
Chronological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details employment experience in chronological order, starting with your most recent position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When you have had a continuous period of employment with no gaps and/or if work experience is relevant to the position you are applying for.
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Details transferable skills you have rather than the positions you have held. ▪ Employment history still needs to be included, but without including specific information about what you did. 	<p>When you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have had little work experience. ▪ Are planning to make a career change. ▪ Are applying for different jobs. ▪ Have had a break or interrupted employment. ▪ Have had a varied work history.
Combination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses elements of a chronological and functional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Same reasons as functional resume.

Preparing a Resume

Step 1: Research

Try to find resumes in the line of work that you are looking for. Student Support Services has links to various career and job websites (see College website at: www.stjosephsece.ns.ca) or here are some detailed below:

CareerLab

<http://www.careerlab.com/>

College Grad.com

<http://www.collegegrad.com/>

Monster.ca

<http://www.monster.ca/>

Susan Ireland.com

<http://susanireland.com/index.html>

If you are preparing a resume for Early Childhood Education, see also *Early Childhood Education Resume Guide*.

For job descriptions you can also go to the Nova Scotia Occupation Summary's "Job Bank" prepared by Human Resources Development Canada at:

<http://jb-ge.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/>

Step 2: Create a Master Resume

You may want to create a master resume with all the details of your education, training, employment history, together with volunteer experience.

Contact Information

Your resume will start with your contact information:

- Name (use full name, avoid nicknames)
- Street address
- City/town
- Province
- Postal code
- Telephone number with area code (ensure that the phone has an answering machine; and make sure the message on the machine sounds professional)
- E-mail address (make sure e-mail address sounds professional)

Summary or Highlights

After your name and address you may want to use a heading such as:

- Summary of Skills
- Highlights of Qualifications
- Highlights of Skills

Here, in bullet format, highlight specific skills as they relate to the job position or career field that you are applying for. Closely reading the job advertisement may help you to determine which terms to use and the order in which the bullet points should go. You should have four to six bullet points.

For example:

- Able to work independently and in a team.
- Considerable skills in teaching and lesson planning.
- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Extensive customer service skills.
- Computer skills: Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, e-mail, and Internet.

Tip: Though the 'Summary' or 'Highlights' section appears at the start of your resume, you may want to complete the main body of the resume first and then return to this section. Also, your bullet points will alter according to the job for which you are applying. For example, if you are applying for a sales position, you will be detailing your skills in customer service and not in working with children.

Main Body of the Resume

Next detail your complete education, training, work, and volunteer history; with each category start with your most recent position. Include the following information:

- Name of organization.
- City/town.
- Time period:
 - years and/or months and years that you worked at particular places (both paid and volunteer);
 - year/s that you graduated with a specific qualification/s;
 - year/s that you obtained training certificate/s; and
 - year/s that you received award/s.
- Duties that you performed at particular jobs and in volunteer positions (if possible try to go back to the original job description/s).
- Interests and activities.
- Names of professional associations that you belong to.

To help you organize the information, include information under specific headings, such as:

- Education or Education and Training
- Training
- Computer Skills
- Work Experience or Employment History or Professional Experience
- Volunteer Experience or Volunteer Activities
- Awards or Achievements or Accomplishments
- Professional Membership or Professional Affiliations

Education and Training

The following provides definitions so that you can know whether to select the heading 'Education' or 'Education and Training':

Education – This includes diplomas, degrees, etc.

Training – This includes official short courses including First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certificate training. Two to four hour workshops are not included though they can go under a heading such as 'Professional Development.'

If you find that you have many qualifications under both 'Education' and 'Training,' you should include the information separately under the individual headings.

If you find you have a couple of qualifications under 'Education' and 'Training' then use the heading 'Education and Training,' ordering the qualifications chronologically, starting with the most recent first.

With qualifications, when your graduation is in the future, list the name of the qualification and educational institution, followed by parenthesis showing the date that you will be graduating (e.g., expected May 2004 or graduating May 2004), or note the year that you started to present (i.e., 2003 – present).

Format: Place the name of the qualifications first (left margin) and then detail the name of the educational institution, date/s, etc.

Computer Skills

When describing your computer skills, provide the names of the word-processing and database or other software packages that you know (i.e., Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Excel, Access, etc.). Also include e-mail and Internet if you know how to use them. For some jobs that require higher levels of computer skills, you should detail the versions of the software packages you know (e.g., Microsoft Word 98, WordPerfect 5.1 (DOS), 6.0, 6.1 and 9.0, etc.).

Tip: You could include your computer skills as a bullet point within your 'Summary' or 'Highlights.'

Work Experience or Employment History or Professional Experience

When identifying your duties or responsibilities, think about your skills and accomplishments. Here is a list of questions to help you.

Have you:

- Planned or developed or implemented an event or procedure?
- Initiated an idea?
- Written reports, letters, or other correspondence?
- Worked on special projects or activities?
- Supervised or managed?
- Worked independently or in a team?
- Provided good customer service?

When you think about accomplishments, also think about particular situations, the actions that you carried out, and the final results. Also, try to detail specific skills you used and activities that you completed by asking yourself such questions as:

- What age group did you work with?
- How many people did you supervise?
- When delivering presentations, how many people did you present to?

Start your sentences with action words (See Table 2 for examples), e.g., prepared different crafts; planned and delivered circle time; developed various activities, including circle time and small group. You may want to bullet each sentence. Remember to use present tense for current accomplishments or skills and past tense for past experiences.

Format: Place your job title first (left margin), and detail the name of the work place, location, etc.

Table 2: Action Words

Accommodated	Chaired	Created	Exceeded	Invented	Purchased	Stimulated
Accomplished	Changed	Critiqued	Executed	Investigated	Rectified	Strategized
Achieved	Clarified	Customized	Explored	Lectured	Recommended	Strengthened
Acquired	Classified	Decided	Extracted	Led	Reconciled	Structured
Acted	Coached	Delivered	Facilitated	Lobbied	Recruited	Succeeded
Addressed	Coded	Delegated	Fashioned	Managed	Redesigned	Summarized
Administered	Collaborated	Demonstrated	Forecasted	Marketed	Reduced	Supervised
Advised	Collated	Designed	Formulated	Mediated	Referred	Surpassed
Advocated	Collected	Detected	Founded	Mentored	Refined	Surveyed
Allocated	Combined	Developed	Generated	Moderated	Rehabilitated	Systematized
Analyzed	Communicated	Devised	Guided	Monitored	Renegotiated	Trained
Anticipated	Compiled	Diagnosed	Identified	Motivated	Remodeled	Translated
Appointed	Completed	Directed	Illustrated	Negotiated	Reorganized	Upgraded
Appraised	Composed	Discovered	Implemented	Operated	Repaired	Wrote
Approved	Computed	Dispatched	Improved	Organized	Represented	
Arranged	Conceptualized	Drafted	Improvise	Originated	Researched	
Assembled	Conducted	Edited	Incorporated	Performed	Reshaped	
Assessed	Confronted	Educated	Increased	Persuaded	Resolved	
Assigned	Consolidated	Effected	Influenced	Planned	Restored	
Assisted	Contracted	Empathized	Informed	Predicted	Restructured	
Attained	Constructed	Enabled	Initiated	Presented	Reviewed	
Audited	Contributed	Encouraged	Innovated	Presided	Revitalized	
Authored	Controlled	Enforced	Inspected	Prioritized	Scheduled	
Balanced	Communicated	Engaged	Inspired	Processed	Shaped	
Brainstormed	Cooperated	Enlisted	Instituted	Produced	Simplified	
Budgeted	Coordinated	Ensured	Integrated	Projected	Shaped	
Built	Corrected	Established	Interpreted	Programmed	Sold	
Calculated	Corresponded	Evaluated	Interviewed	Promoted	Solved	
Cataloged	Counselled	Examined	Introduced	Publicized	Spoke	

Volunteer Experience or Volunteer Activities

Volunteer work is not just rewarding, but it allows you to acquire skills in different areas while providing network contacts for potential employment opportunities. At the same time, detailing your volunteer activities helps to strengthen your resume.

As with your work or professional experience, you will need to apply the same principles to volunteer experience, noting responsibilities or duties using action verbs.

Format: Place your volunteer job title first (left margin), and detail the name of the organization, location,

etc. Proceed according to established format used under work experience.

Awards or Achievements or Accomplishments

This can include scholarships, prizes, and achievements. They are listed chronologically, starting with the most recent.

Professional Membership or Professional Affiliations

This includes any professional associations that you belong to. Again, list chronologically, starting with the most recent.

Final Part of the Resume: References

Unless the job advertisement asks for references, the general rule is to use the following statement at the end of your resume:

- References available upon request

You will need to provide a list of references on a separate page (see Table 3) and take that with you when called for an interview. If the job advertisement does not ask for references, they should still be listed on a separate page.

Whatever the employment position, you will need three references. The first two should relate to the job or career field. That is:

- If you are applying for an Early Childhood Education position, the first two references could be Instructor/s and or Practicum Advisor/s and or Contact Teacher/s, etc.
- If you are applying for a sales position, the first two references should be people that have seen you work in the area of sales.

The third reference could be a professional or a personal reference.

Always ask the permission of the referee before you use his/her name, plus remind the referee each time you use his/her name. Supply his/her with a recent resume.

As described earlier, references are placed on a separate page. Put your name and address at the top, in the same format as in the resume. Then list the referees under the heading, 'References.' You will need to find the job title of the person, their work address, phone, fax number (if available), and e-mail address (if available).

Table 3: Reference model

Your Name Street address City/town Province and postal code Phone E-mail Address
References Name of person Their title (e.g., Instructor) Place of work Street address

City/town
Province and postal code
Phone
Fax (if available)
E-mail (if available)

Step 3: Check Details

Take the time to check that you have the correct name and spellings for your qualifications and the names of organizations that you worked for, and the year you worked for them. Taking the time now will save you time in the long run.

Step 4: Customize your Resume

You will need to tailor your resume to the job that you are seeking. Therefore, you will have different resumes for different job positions. To customize your resume, look at the position that you are applying for. If you do not have a position, try to find a job advertisement in that career field. Study the advertisement to identify what skills and qualifications are required. Look at your master resume and start to move the headings and information around. You may want to alter your main headings to reflect the position you are seeking.

Alternative Titles could be:

- Related Professional Experience
- Related Volunteer Experience
- Early Childhood Education Work Experience
- Relevant Experience
- Special Projects
- Teaching Experience
- Technical Expertise

Remember that information on the first page of the resume should relate to the job that you are applying for. For some positions, you may want to reduce your resume to one page.

For example –

Sales Associate Position Advertisement

Qualification required: Grade 12

Skills required: Able to operate cash register; set up displays of merchandise in windows or display cases; process money, cheque and credit/debit card payment; and provide advice and assistance to customers.

One-page resume highlighting the following under the different headings.

Summary of Skills: Bullets will indicate experience in customer service, good communication skills, and ability to process money.

Related Work

Experience: Details your previous work experience as it relates to the position, providing information on duties and responsibilities that you have had.

Employment

History: Your work history in chronological order without detailing any specifics about duties.

Education and

Training: Bullet points of your qualifications.

References Available

Upon Request

For information on completing a resume for an Early Childhood Education position, please see

Early Childhood Education Resume Guideline.

Just as with an essay, put your draft resume away for a couple of days and then look at it again with fresh eyes and consider the following:

- Would my resume grab the employer's attention?
- Could my wording be improved?
- Have I presented my skills and abilities adequately?
- Does my resume look concise and is it free of spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors?
- Have I been consistent with my formatting and style with information in each heading?
- Are all my headings in the same format?

Step 5: Proofread

Make sure to proofread your resume for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. It is also good for you to get it reviewed and proofread by someone else. If possible, take it to a Student or Employment Counsellor. The more people who see your resume, the more likely that spelling mistakes or typos and awkward phrases will be identified and corrected.

Early Childhood Education Resume Guideline

Personal Data:	Name (use full name and avoid nicknames) Address (including postal code) Phone (If you do not have an answering machine, leave another number where messages can be left; remember to check it regularly and make sure message on the machine sounds professional) E-mail (If you have an e-mail address, include it; and make sure address sounds professional)
Selected skills and qualifications:	Possible titles that can be used: Highlights of Skills or Highlights of Qualifications or Early Childhood Education Skills Summary or Highlights of Early Childhood Education Skills List in bullet form 5 or 6 lines on your skills and qualifications as they relate to Early Childhood Education (ECE), but also general skills (i.e., communication, organization, type of computer skills etc.).
Education: <i>(Diplomas, degrees, etc.)</i>	List, with most recent education first (for each, include name of institution, city, province, and year). For information on ECE Diploma program you may want to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Course outline (names of key courses); ▪ Practicum placements (include name of institution, city, province, and year); and ▪ Summary of practicum activities (in bullet form, list activities that you carried out at the placements).
Training:	List, with most recent training first: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First aid and CPR training (include name of institution, city, province, and year); and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other training (include name of institution, city, province, and year).
Employment:	<p>If you have worked in ECE setting you may want to list these, starting with the most recent, under a heading such as: Related Professional Experience or Related Employment Experience</p> <p>With each employment, include name of workplace, city, province, and year, plus in bullet form the duties that you carried out.</p> <p>Then under another heading include your other employment experience, starting with most recent. Possible headings here can be: Other Employment Experience or Other Professional Experience or Employment History</p> <p>You can list the name of workplace, city, province, and year/s. In addition, you can add in bullet format duties that you carried out.</p>
Related Volunteer Experience	<p>If you have no paid work experience in an ECE setting, but have had volunteer experience, you may want to include this first before other employment experience. Possible headings can be: Early Childhood Education Volunteer Experience or Related Volunteer Experience</p> <p>List, starting with the most recent, volunteer activities that you have completed. Include name of organization, city, province, and year. List in bullet form the activities that you carried out.</p>
Other Volunteer Experience	<p>If you have performed other volunteer work you can place these under the heading: Other Volunteer Experience</p> <p>List, starting with the most recent, volunteer activities that you have completed. Include name of organization, city, province, and year/s. List in bullet form the activities that you carried out.</p>
Volunteer Experience	<p>If you have not carried out any ECE-related volunteer work then you can detail your volunteer work under the heading: Volunteer Experience</p> <p>List, starting with the most recent, volunteer activities that you have completed. Include name of organization, city, province, and year/s. List in bullet form the activities that you carried out.</p>
Extracurricular / Interests	You can list these under the following headings: Extracurricular Activities or Interests
Awards	List awards with most recent first (include name of institution, place, location and year). Possible headings: Awards or Recognition or Recognition and Awards
Professional Membership	If you are a member of professional organizations, you can include these under the heading: Professional Memberships . List, starting with the most recent, and include name of organization, city, province, and year/s.
References	Heading to use: References Available Upon Request