



NORTHWESTERN STATE Counseling & Career Services



QUICK GUIDE TO RESUME WRITING

WHO GETS THE JOB is not always the one who can do the job best but who knows best how to get the job! Hence, each detail of this process should have your meticulous attention since people are often screened out on the basis of a poor letter or resume.

PEOPLE DON'T READ RESUMES, they skim them. So think of your resume more as a piece of advertising than as a comprehensive data sheet. Use margins and good spacing which makes it easy for scanning.

DON'T USE A LOT OF DATES OR NUMBERS. That makes it hard to skim. Place dates at the end of a paragraph when describing experiences. Sure, they are important to you, but they are hard to read.

USE ACTION VERBS. Don't use "responsible for..." Instead of "I did", "I was", and "I am", use verbs like "initiated, created, developed, supervised, managed, instructed, counseled, negotiated, maintained, ..." etc.

EMPHASIZE SKILLS, especially those which transfer from one situation to another. The fact that you coordinated a student organization leads one to suspect that you could coordinate other things as well.

DON'T USE NEGATIVE WORDS. Don't apologize for lack of experience or weaknesses. Be positive, capitalize on strengths, and leave out the negative or neutral words. If your health is "excellent" then don't say "not bad". Avoid negative prefixes or suffixes.

RESUMES SHOULD BE ONE OR TWO PAGES. Never more. Anything longer is an autobiography, not a resume. Don't overwhelm employers with information.

EXPOUND ON YOUR RELEVANT EXPERIENCES, condense jobs or experiences which are not directly related. This means that you slant your resume to the type of job you are seeking. Hence, you will need more than one resume if you're applying for different types of jobs.

EXAMPLE: If you are applying for a Child Care Counselor job, devote more space

to your experience as a camp counselor. But if you're applying for a job as Manager Trainee, condense that and emphasize your organizational and supervisory abilities.

EXPECT A PHONE CALL if they are interested. Most employers call to make an interview. Seldom will they write. Hence, make sure they have your phone number.

Northwestern State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies. Employees or potential employees should contact the EEO Officer at 318-357-6359. Students should contact the Dean of Students at 318-357-5286.