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CAREER ZONE

'Profile' – Short and Snappy Image Management

The most critical element of your resume is the Profile. This is the 3 to 5 lines in either paragraph or bullet format that highlight, for the reader, your foremost strengths and background and how you will help solve their company's problems. This is most often the only part of your resume that's read in an initial screening, so not including it or not doing a good job promoting yourself in it will quickly lead to elimination from the competition.

Current trends of note include listing between three and five 'key words' related to your target that capture your strengths, and placing them either underneath the heading or after your Profile. Additionally, instead of calling this section 'Profile', it's now acceptable to give yourself a title like "Marketing Trainee" or "Junior Analyst" – something that clarifies your objective. This focuses how the resume screener reads your resume and eliminates the need to include an outdated objective.

Raise the flag – Inventory your 'Education' and Relevant 'Training' As a new grad, highlight your degree or diploma upfront. Include awards, scholarships, names of applicable courses and grades received and your grade point average (if good — otherwise leave out). You can also incorporate specific accomplishments that relate to your target like a thesis or a project completed.

Work-Relevant Highlights – 'Selected Accomplishments'

One of the latest trends in resumes is to incorporate between two and five key accomplishments upfront that directly relate to your career focus and enhance your candidacy. The advantage of doing this is they can come from any time and anywhere in your background — school, volunteer or work experience, sports, etc.

'Related Work and Volunteer Experience'

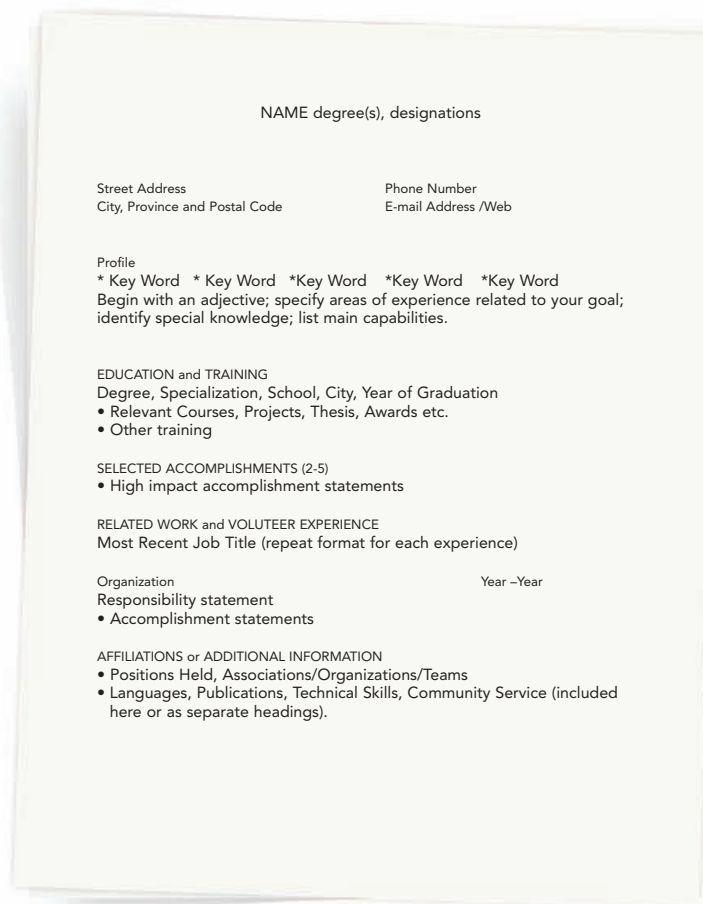
As a recent grad, you may not have had jobs that are directly relevant to your career focus, though you've likely had experiences that align with your key strengths, the ones you want to use in your career. You don't have to stick to a listing of your summer and seasonal jobs in this section. Instead consider incorporating any experiences you've had that enhance your candidacy. If you've had volunteer roles that have provided you with related experience or skills then include them in this section.

You can also list such things as internships, job shadowing and other work provided you're upfront about your role and their relevancy. It's important to state the names of employers/organizations, your job title or role, and dates worked.

Put the Emphasis on 'Accomplishments'

Don't fall into the trap of simply copying your job description after each work heading. Clearly indicating what you have achieved is an important way to differentiate yourself from others. Most people simply list job duties without qualifying what they did. Adding in the actions taken and results achieved enables employers to better understand what you can do for them.


Formatting the Main Components of Your Resume



'Additional Information' and 'Affiliations'

The final section of your resume indicates any relationships and other relevant experience you have such as associations you belong to, volunteer work not previously included, or other activities you want to emphasize. Be sure that any "interests" you include highlight your capabilities as they relate to the job opening and will add value to your application.

Keep your resume to no more than two pages and don't end your resume by stating "references available upon request". It's now understood you have references, so don't take up unnecessary space by including this.

Remember, your resume is all about demonstrating to an employer how you meet their needs. It will continue to be a work in progress but this doesn't mean rewriting it every time you apply to a job. We encourage you to update it with new information on a regular basis, or as a legitimate need arises. If you've done your homework and focused your search you will be targetting employers who need what you have to offer. 

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