

## Should a Resume be a one-size-fits-all Document?

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Resumes, like the people they represent, come with myriad situations and complexities. Each resume needs to take its own specific form. The resume format you present to a potential employer can make or mar your introduction. Typically your resume should highlight your credentials while downplaying your unrelated experience. An employer must be able to immediately discern your qualifications and the value you can add.

The long preferred resume format by recruiters is the chronological resume because the career history is easily discernible. Resume sample & example show chronological format presents sequential work history in reverse order, starting with the most recent experience first. Due to the emphasis on employment history, chronological format is most preferred by recent graduates and mid-level professionals accounting for nearly 90% of all resumes. Functional format is the second most popular resume style, next only to the chronological one. Resume sample & example reveal that functional resumes deemphasize employment history, while highlighting other skills that are imperative to the targeted job.

Resume sample & example further reveal functional resumes often lead with summary section giving you an opportunity to tell employers what they really need to know in a manner that is both concise and easy to understand, while leaving work history for the end of the resume. You can use this section to pull together and highlight the most relevant aspects of your professional history, academic information, specialization areas, and other abilities. Resume sample & example state functional resumes can be a great tool for bringing attention to those things that are the most relevant to the position you are seeking, especially if they are not reflected by your most recent positions.

Therefore, functional resumes have been the format of choice for job applicants who want to effectively conceal information about their backgrounds. The problem with this technique is most hiring managers are accustomed to looking at an applicant's chronological progress. And as this format includes significant responsibilities or accomplishments, irrelevant of when they occurred in your career, the functional format has been subject of dispute among experts since time immemorial.

Resume sample & example dictate if your career has been on the fast track or steadily improved, you wouldn't want to use a functional resume. Nevertheless, as a rule, it is useful to remember that if one does part from the simple chronological format, there should be a significant reason for doing so. Possible usages include summarizing lengthy experience, hiding or compensating for red flags, or helping to sell your transferable skills if you are seeking a relatively significant career change. The more complex job seeker may have five or six jobs within a short timeframe, a significant gap in recent years, or an unclear or unimpressive career path. In such cases, the chronological format falls short in minimizing the red flags.

For some job seekers, a hybrid or combination resume may prove to be most effective. The hybrid format presents reverse chronological work history, preceded by an accomplishments or general experience section followed by a career overview. This format focuses on accomplishments and transferable experience gained, while trimming the details of the unrelated experience, thus giving employers what they want to see.

## Sources

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## ON THE NET

Resume Types: Chronological, Functional, Combination, Targeted  
[search.about.com/od/resumes/p/resumetypes.htm](http://search.about.com/od/resumes/p/resumetypes.htm)