

Show Yourself Off in an Entry Level Resume

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Writing entry level resumes can be a great opportunity to creatively present yourself to the corporate world. Lack of experience is nothing to be ashamed of. Be confident in showcasing your skills and qualities. This applies to new graduates, older workers returning to the work force, or someone who is trying to transition into a new career. An objective or summary of qualifications will help. It is most likely the first thing a prospective employer will read, so make it count. Follow that with a brief professional summary to highlight your achievements and transferable skills. Anything that illustrates how you would be a good fit for the position is appropriate to include. For example, you should list any skills you have obtained through volunteer work, social organizations, or experiences that demonstrate your interpersonal skills.

Writing an entry level resume is one of the bigger challenges faced by job seekers, whether you are a new graduate, an older person seeking to return to the work force, or someone who is just trying to transition into an entirely new career path. With little or no relevant experience in the new field, it can be hard to know what and what not to include in your resume.

An objective or summary of qualifications is important here, even more so than if you were writing a resume for a position in which you already have extensive experience. Without having an industry track record to point to, it is important to show a prospective employer what you hope to achieve and what you believe you have to offer – all within the very small amount of space allotted this section. It is most likely the first thing a prospective employer will read so make it count.

Next on an entry level resume should be a brief professional summary to highlight some of your most outstanding achievements and transferable skills. Don't make this more than 5 or 6 lines long; a bullet-pointed list for these is not a bad idea. If you are a recent graduate, academic achievements can go here (honors, an exceptionally high GPA, etc.) Include your most outstanding professional accomplishments, even if you don't see them as necessarily relevant to the position for which you are applying. They can give a potential employer a good idea of your skill level, work ethic and general mindset.

Remember, anything that may help illustrate how you would be a good fit for the position is appropriate to include. For example, you should list any skills you have obtained through volunteer work, social organizations, etc. These kinds of experiences can serve as a demonstration of your communication and negotiation skills. You may be surprised at how much experience you have, even if you've never been an active member of the work force.

Next, include your work history (again, if you have no work history to speak of, volunteer work and positions held in social organizations will work. Anything applicable can and should be used.) If you are looking to transition into a new career, the important things to consider are which achievements from your prior career would be most relevant and transferable to your new career choice. For example, if you are attempting to land an entry level position as a copywriter but your prior work experience is as an administrative assistant, be sure to play up any writing you did in the previous position, like writing up reports. However, be careful not to stretch the truth in order to make it fit the new job description – it is very unprofessional to do so and your potential employer will see right through it.

Your cover letter is always an important consideration, particularly as part of an entry level application. It presents you with the opportunity to sell yourself to an employer, so don't pass this opportunity up by writing an over-generalized cover letter. Just like in your resume, you should highlight your strongest skills and achievements. Think of it as another chance to convince the person reading your application that you would be a good fit for the position.

Whatever your reason is for needing to write an entry level resume, this can be a great opportunity to exercise some creativity and learn how to best present yourself to others. Lack of experience is nothing to be ashamed of – let them know that you believe you have something to bring to their company and be confident in showcasing the skills and exceptional qualities you possess.