

What Should You Put in an Accountant Resume?

In today's competitive job market, it can be difficult to find a job even if you are the most experienced accountant. Having a good accountant resume is the first step you can take to help make sure that you'll stand out from your competitors. This article will take you step-by-step through each section of the resume and tell you what you should include, and what you should leave out.



What's in an Accountant Resume?

There are several major sections you should include in your accountant resume. They are your name and contact information on your profile, your professional and work history, your educational background, any licensing or certification you've obtained such as that of certified public accountant, and any other relevant information such as computer skills, multilingual skills, or other activities. A sample resume appears at the end of this article, for your information.

To begin, make sure that each section includes information relevant to the accounting position you want to obtain. Leave out extraneous information not necessary to the position.

In addition, when it comes to writing a resume, less can be more. Sentences that are action oriented and begin with a verb are to be encouraged and need not be complete. This "shows" the reader what you do, instead of telling. For example, saying, "Implemented accounting procedures necessary to department efficiency" in a job description is perfectly acceptable.

Name and Contact Information

This is pretty self-explanatory, but let's go through it very briefly to make sure you only include relevant information.

This section should contain your name, mailing address, e-mail address, and landline phone and/or cell phone number. Put your name in capital letters at the top of the page with your mailing address immediately underneath it, followed by e-mail addresses and phone number(s) on their own lines.

Some candidates make the mistake of including information in this section under the more general "personal information" and even include things such as height, weight, and general health status. This isn't necessary and in fact makes your resume look rather amateurish. Simply include straightforward contact information and nothing else.

Profile

Next comes your profile. A profile is simply a summary of your job experience and expertise condensed into one short paragraph; alternatively, you can also just do a short bulleted list of your major talents and achievements. For

example, you could say something like, “15 years’ experience in the accounting field. Versed in all major accounting systems. Efficient and highly organized, with strong attention to detail. Excellent written and verbal communication skills.”

Within your profile or immediately thereafter in its own section (with this or similar heading: “Objective”) you can also include a brief job objective that states what your particular goals for your prospective employer are. One example might be: “Seeking position as senior accountant, so as to make use of and further expand upon my extensive accounting skills and experience.”

Skills

It’s helpful to your prospective employer if you very briefly break out the skills you bring to the table, listed in bullet format. No description is necessary, just a simple listing.

Professional or Work History

The next section on your resume is your professional or work history. With this, as with other sections in your resume, brief, “punchy,” action oriented phrases are preferable to complete sentences.

Within your work history, start with your most recent position first and work backward. When you detail your work history, start with your job title or position, then provide a brief overview in paragraph format of the duties performed on that job. A simple sentence or two is fine, something to the effect of, “Analyzed provider cost reports to determine which could be reimbursed by Medicare.” Followed that up with specific duties listed in bullet format for easy reading.

Include three or four relevant previous positions you’ve held in the accounting field, providing as much detail as needed. Remember that job descriptions should be results-oriented, should use bullet points so that they’re easier to read, and should only include information that’s relevant to the position you want with this particular resume. Do not include extraneous or unnecessary information, as this only clutters up your resume and makes it harder to read. (And if it’s harder to read, it may very well be overlooked altogether.)

Education and Licensing

Briefly list college and postgraduate degrees, and certifications such as CPA or CMA certification. The education you list here should be relevant to the accounting industry and again should be as briefly stated as possible while providing all relevant information.

In Conclusion

An accountant resume needs to be specifically geared to the accounting field. It needs to be written as briefly and simply as possible while providing all relevant information. Use bullet points and action oriented language to catch

and hold the reader's attention, and for easy reading. Don't include any extraneous information. Instead, keep things brief and to the point.

Sample Accounting Resume

The following is a sample accountant resume similar to the one you want to produce with your own information:

(Contact information appears at the top but is not labeled as such, since it's very evident that that's what it is. All other sections are labeled appropriately.)

JOHN SMITH
XYZ Lane
Anytown, NV 123456
E-mail: jsmith@my_isp.com
Phone: (000) 123-4567

PROFILE

CPA with 10 years' experience. Extensive background in performing audits and analyzing data, with solid skills related to accounting systems within the financial field.

GENERAL SKILLS

Versed in various accounting-related programs, including Lotus and Excel.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Accountant and Analyst for Medicare Reimbursement Services Company, Anytown, Nevada.

May 2000 to present

- Determined costs to be reimbursed by Medicare based upon current Medicare standards.
- Developed and implemented new billing policies and practices, which made billing system and payments much more consistent and trackable.
- Provided audit adjustment reports.
- Analyzed and then documented indirect costs for better control.
- Regularly reviewed company charges, liabilities, expenses and revenue.

Second and third job positions listed subsequently ...

- Duties listed in bullet format

EDUCATION AND LICENSING

- Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Accounting, University of Nevada, 1993
- CPA Certification, 1994