

# Best Practices for Writing a Functional Resume



Posted by **Carlee Nilphai** • Jun 23, 2020

When writing a resume, you list your work experiences and skill sets to make you stand out as an excellent candidate for a job in your industry or field. But...what do you include on your resume if you're changing career directions or going back into the workforce after a long gap?

In this case, you're going to want to write a functional resume.

A functional resume is a type of resume that lists abilities, skill sets, and experiences, rather than a traditional listing of a candidate's work history in chronological order. If you think this type of resume would be ideal for your current job search, consider these tips when crafting your next one.

## **Include a resume summary.**

Nowadays, most experts will advise you to leave a summary off of a traditional resume and focus more on the description of your work experience in the list form - Forbes advises using a summary when tying together disparate experiences with a set of key transferable skills, which is perfect when making a career change. But when submitting a functional resume, it's a good idea to include a statement of purpose or a short paragraph explaining why you are a good candidate for the position.

## **Talk about special projects or side gigs.**

If you are trying to break into a whole new industry, you might think you don't have enough experience that is relevant to the positions you are applying to. Instead of just submitting a resume with irrelevant work history, think about listing any special assignments you have done or side gigs you have worked on either in your last job or as a personal project. If you were in banking but want to break into marketing, think about any company campaigns you helped to promote or discuss how you helped customers with questions about banking. This will show that you didn't just count money, but you actually have a knack for promoting ideas. Anything you can think of that would make you look like a candidate with diverse abilities should definitely be on your resume.

## **Organize your resume by theme.**

Functional resumes should be organized by themes. In this case, a theme on your resume would be things like customer service, organizational skills, written or oral communication, and delegation. Underneath each category should be a list of experiences you have had that have made you better in that area or work. For example, under oral communication, you

should discuss any presentations you have given or meetings you have led. If you have strong delegation skills, mention any experiences you have had managing a team environment. Thinking about what skills a candidate for the position you are applying for should have can help you figure out which themes you should highlight on your functional resume.

**Always include a strong cover letter.**

As daunting as they can be, [cover letters are an important partner to the resume](#). When applying for any job, you need to strongly emphasize why you want the job and why you are an excellent candidate for said job. A functional resume is especially great for this, and when accompanied by a well-written cover letter, it is even better. Ensure that your resume and cover letter complement each other, showing your potential employer that you are more than just a well-constructed resume. They allow you the chance to explain in detail why you are applying for the position and express your desire to work in the industry.

Whether you're a newbie to the workforce or making an alternate career move, a functional resume is a great way to list your abilities, no matter your work experience.