

How to Write a Civilian Resume with Military Experience

This packet is intended for the veterans who have returned to college and are searching for a job in the civilian environment. No doubt your military career is studded with accomplishments, but you need to figure out how to

Before You Start

Find your civilian job objective

You can't effectively market yourself for a civilian job if you don't have a clearly defined goal. Before writing your resume, research occupations and pinpoint a specific career path. If you find that you cannot set only one goal, you can have multiple resumes.

Collect Data

Before writing your civilian resume you need to assemble your factual data. Collect data on your work history, education, volunteer work, school activities, and your experiences in the military. Details about what kinds of military experiences to have in your resume will be elaborated on later in this packet.

Building Your Resume

Create a resume that employers will want to read

Now that your objective is defined, you are ready to write an eye-catching resume. The purpose of a resume is to convince the employer that you have valuable skills and experiences that will benefit the company. Know what the employer wants and write your resume to their needs and job postings. **Research** what types of skills and experiences employers are seeking. What aspects of your military and civilian background are most relevant to this field/position?

Basic Resume Content

1. **Heading** This usually looks best if it is centered in the top middle part of the page. It includes:
 - Your full name. You can use all capital letters and use a bold, large, font to make it stand out.
 - Your complete address.
 - Telephone numbers: home and cell phone should be listed. Do not include your phone number for a resume you are posting on a public website, such as LinkedIn.
 - Email address. Use an email address that does not include any language or references that could be perceived as unprofessional or inappropriate for the workplace.

2. Qualifications A statement summarizing your basic qualifications and skills without identifying a particular job target.

Examples of demilitarized accomplishment statements:

- Excellent organizational and computer skills.
- Supervised warehouse operations including receiving merchandise and delivery of merchandise to various unit locations.
- Supervised over 40 personnel and coordinated with subcontractors.
- Maintained oversight of security personnel at a location responsible for storage of \$33m perishable and non-perishable products.

3. Education/Training The general rule is to put those experiences from your background that best qualify you for the job. For recent graduates, this would be your education. After three to five years of experience, consider placing education after related experiences. List your most recent degrees first and continue in reverse chronological order.

This section may contain:

- Degrees, certificates or licenses awarded.
- Names of location (city and state only) of schools and programs
- Year degree was received or is anticipated. Do not list all years attended.
- Grade-point average or placement in your class, if it is high.
- Honors
 - May be included as a separate major heading, or as a subheading under education.
- Related Courses
 - May also be a subheading of education. Four to eight courses could be listed, with the more advanced and related courses first. These should be courses in fields of

4. Related Experience/Employment

❖ Your military career has offered you excellent opportunities for training, practical experience and advancement. Present your accomplishments so the average civilian understands the importance of your achievements.

There are various ways of presenting your experience:

- All related experience (paid, volunteer, internships, etc.) could be placed in this area.
- Several distinct headings identifying the kind of experience could be used, such as “Military,” “Medical,” or “Teaching.”
-

5. Activities You may include high school, college and community activities.

- Activities demonstrating job related skills (leadership, organizational, communication) may need brief descriptions.
- If you were involved in many activities they could also be listed like the example below:

Activities

- President, Senior Class
- Chairperson, Senior Prom
- Debate Club
- Editor, Class Newspaper
- Intramural Basketball and Volleyball!

6. Community Service/Volunteer

- List, and or describe activities.

7. Computer Skills

- List hardware, software and programs for which you have proficiency and will be required in the workplace.

Highlight Campus Involvement & Community Service

- ❖ Your military background consists of many experiences that an employer will find attractive. You will also want to be sure to highlight non-military experiences

ADDITIONAL POINTS

1. Keep in Mind: One Page Limit

- ❖ It is so common to see military resumes span five pages or longer. A resume that long will not be read by a prospective employer. **Your resume should be limited to one page.** As you make the decision about which information to include, ask yourself, "Will a hiring manager care about this experience?" Only include information that will help you obtain an interview.

2. If You Were In Active Combat, Do Not Specify Details

- ❖ Defending your country is among the most admirable pursuits, but the truth is actual references to the horrors of combat leave many employers squeamish. While you might have worked in a short-range air defense engagement zone, this experience might not relate to your future goal. Tone down or remove references to the battlefield.

3. An effective resume will be one that y

PRINTING/HIGHLIGHTING

1. Leave about a one inch margin on all sides.
2. Use capital letters, underlining, bold print and indenting to emphasize important information. Do not, however, use more than two or three indentations. Do not use multiple font types.
3. Keep paragraphs short (single spaced descriptions) and double or triple space between headings.
4. Use high quality white, off-white, beige or gray paper with matching envelopes.
5. Have copies made by a professional printing company, or make your own computer copies on a quality printer.

COVER LETTERS

1. The purpose of a cover letter is to get the potential employer to read your resume and to invite you for an interview. The cover letter will not only expand on some of the information in your resume, it will give you an opportunity to let the employer know more about you and why you are the best candidate for the job.
2. Type a different cover letter for every resume you send.
- 3.

OFFICE OF CAREE

President, Business Administration Club

Vice President, Community Service Organization

COMPUTER SKILLS Adobe Photoshop