

Constructing a resume can be a daunting task. It's best to start with an outline, and then fill in the gaps with accomplishments and responsibilities, skills and publications. Over the years, I've seen fabulous candidates not get phone interviews because their resume doesn't reflect how great they really are. I've put together some tips below, as well as an outline to follow. Not only is the resume content crucial, but appearance is just as important. As the saying goes "first impression is everything" – you want a hiring manager to see your resume and contact you immediately. In a tough job market, you have to work extra hard to stand out and your resume has to be top-notch.

Following the guidelines below will put you on the right track to your next position. I look forward to your comments and suggestions....and best wishes in landing your dream job!

Kerry

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General Guidelines on Writing a Scientific Resume/CV

- Your resume or CV is your main marketing tool – you have to make sure that it looks great. If you're a scientist, don't limit your resume to one or two pages. Remember, you're a scientist (not an accountant), and you'll be underselling yourself if you limit yourself.
- The most important part of the resume is your current experience. This piece should be in the first section after your name – it should include both accomplishments & responsibilities.
- Include all of your publications, presentations, awards, honors, technical skills, and education.
- Pick a font (style and size) that's easy on the eyes – Arial, Verdana, Times New Roman, Helvetica, are good ones. Depending on the font style, go with 10 or 12 point for content and maybe 14 point for titles.
- Save and send your resume as a pdf file. (Opening a word doc -- with all of the red underlining for spell check -- is not flattering.)
- Be sure to check out the "properties" section of your resume & make sure that it looks ok.
- Resume or CV? This is a common question – I would recommend a hybrid of the two. You definitely want to include your main functions and achievements, and you also want to include your publications. Remember, your CV is your autobiography, and you want hiring managers to see your story. You never know what might interest a potential employer (you may have gone to the same university, worked at sister companies ten years ago, or share a common research interest.)

How to Write a Scientific Resume for Industry

- **Contact Information:** include name, home address, home email, home & cell phone number – make sure this information is accurate.
- **Objective:** it can be included, but sometimes can be limiting.
- **Summary:** also optional, 4-5 lines summarizing your experience.
- **Professional Experience:** this should be the highlight of the first page, and should be front and center. This section is the first part that employers want to see – **ie, what are you doing now?** Ensure that your current position is described in present tense, and *past positions are described in past tense*. Also ensure that you either have periods at the end of each line...or you don't. Be consistent, you don't want half your bullets with periods at the end. This section of the resume should follow the following format (most recent position first.) Examples of accomplishments and responsibilities can be on the following page.

ABC Pharmaceuticals

Senior Scientist

Accomplishments:

--include 3-6 bullet points

Responsibilities:

--include 3-6 bullet points

June 2006 – present

April 2008 - present

Scientist I

Accomplishments:

--include 3-6 bullet points

Responsibilities:

--include 3-6 bullet points

June 2006 – March 2008

XYZ Biotech

Post-doctoral Fellow

Accomplishments:

--include 3-6 bullet points

Responsibilities:

--include 3-6 bullet points

June 2003 – May 2006

- **Academic or Other Experience:** under this section, you can list your functions in grad school or perhaps you're now in business development and you used to be a scientist. This is a great place to put other, relevant experience.
- **Technical Highlights:** this can include lab skills, computational highlights, etc.
- **Education:** include schools, degrees, dates with most recent degree listed first.
- **Honors & Awards:** employee or team awards, society honors, etc.
- **Associations:** include dates that you were a member, especially if you're no longer a member.
- **Personal Information:** this is optional, but can make you stand out from other candidates.
- **Publications, presentations, etc.:** it's best to include all of them.
- **References** – these can be provided later in the process – for now, "provided upon request" is fine.

Accomplishments vs Responsibilities

You need both for a great resume. Responsibilities are “main functions” – what do you do on a day-to-day basis? These are not to be confused with accomplishments which are special achievements – one time occurrences.

Examples of Accomplishments:

- Improved the overall yield from 5% to 32% by telescoping steps and improving the final crystallization.
- Discovered a new catalyst which eliminated the formation of toxic impurities.
- Established basic molecular and animal model experiments, as one of the founding employees of the company.
- Significantly reduced number of processing steps, improved yield of the intermediate, and also reduced number of solvents.
- Successfully commercialized new product line that generated over \$2M in revenue in 2009.
- Reduced cost of expression by 40% by implementing new protocols.
- Established a new group within the organization that covers a broad expertise from early target validation to drug candidate identification & optimization.

Examples of Current Responsibilities: (in present tense)

- Design and validate cell-based and functional assays for therapeutic antibody projects.
- Develop molecular design infrastructure for multiple parallel discovery projects.
- Define discovery strategies for computational molecular design and analysis of experimental data for iterative design.
- Lead a team focused in molecular modeling, bioinformatics and software for lab automation.
- Establish bridges between early genomics information flow and downstream process for lead optimization.
- Investigates inorganic and biochemical compounds through computational methods.
- Drives development of new technologies for rapid parallel synthesis and analytical data delivery.

Examples of Past Responsibilities: (in past tense)

- Analyzed serum, plasma, and biological tissues from pre-clinical animal studies for biomarker evaluation.
- Developed a strategic planning process to support business needs.
- Led a team to identify, prioritize, and progress GPCR projects for three therapeutic departments.
- Generated potential commercial routes and cost estimates for new biologically active molecules.
- Managed and guided delivery of analytical chemistry services to Chemistry Department.