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By Indeed Editorial TeamUpdated February 22, 2021 | Published February 25, 2020Updated February 22, 2021Related: Chronological Resume DefinedIn this career advice video, Sinead explains what a chronological resume is, how it is formatted and the benefits of using a chronological resume. There are several different types of resumes, and each resume type provides different benefits for different people. Two common resume styles are chronological resumes and functional resumes. In this article, we explore the difference between functional and chronological resumes as well as when you should use a chronological resume and when a functional resume would be most appropriate. What's the difference?: functional resume vs. chronological resumeChronological and functional resumes are two of the most commonly used resumes among job candidates. However, there are several differences between these two resumes, and knowing these differences can help you determine which one is best for your situation.Chronological resumeA chronological resume is the most popular resume used today and is formatted using the chronological order of a person's work history. For example, if a person is currently working at Sam's Marketing as a marketing executive, they would begin their career history with this position and work their way back through time. Included in the career history descriptions would also be the most notable duties performed as well as accomplishments or other relevant information pertaining to the specific position. This would be repeated throughout the job history section of the resume to cover all relevant previous positions as they relate to the job being applied for.A chronological resume also often includes a career summary or career objective at the start of the resume to state the applicant's purpose or career goals. Most people will also include their educational information as well as any skills, certifications or other qualifications that make them an ideal candidate for the position being applied for.Related: Listing Professional Experience on Your ResumeFunctional resumeA functional resume is a resume that focuses on a person's skills and abilities rather than their work history and the duties performed at each previous job. Most functional resumes begin with a skills summary or objective and then immediately go into the accomplishments or skills that an individual possesses as they relate the position they are applying for. Most functional resumes include skills that are highlighted or bolded followed by two or three examples of how or when that skill was used in a person's work history. The goal of a functional resume is to take the focus off of an individual's previous jobs and instead emphasize the person's relevant skills.Functional resumes often still include mention of previous jobs, but rather than listing them in detail you would simply put the position title, company name and dates that you worked in that position. This type of resume will also typically include education history as well.Related: 10 Resume Writing Tips to Help You Land a JobWhen to use a functional resumeThe following are times when you should consider using a functional resume rather than a chronological resume:You are re-entering the workforce after time offYou are interested in changing career pathsYou have a job history with several different types of jobs rather than progressive jobs in the same fieldYou have a gap in your work historyYour work history does not meet all of the criteria that a job listing asks forA functional resume is best in the above situations because it allows candidates to emphasize the skills and accomplishments they have that are relevant to the position being applied for despite a lack of related work experience. For example, if someone wanted to apply for a position as a social media manager after spending much of their career as a writer, they may not have previous work history that directly relates to social media management. However, the candidate most likely does possess good communication, content writing skills and marketing skills, all of which are relevant for a social media manager position.When to use a chronological resumeYou should consider using a chronological resume to apply for jobs if you:Are applying for a career in a similar fieldHave a steady work history with minimal gapsHave a strong career progression and want to demonstrate that to hiring managersAre applying for positions in the same industry as your previous jobsWant to display your work-related promotionsHave recent work history that is closely aligned with the experience requirements for the position you are applying forThis type of resume emphasizes a candidate's work experience, and as such should be used when that work experience speaks to a person's qualifications for a position. Using a chronological resume enables you to effectively demonstrate your work-related successes as well as portray that you have a relevant work history.Related: How to Write a Professional Resume: Getting StartedTips to consider when using a chronological or functional resumeRegardless of which type of resume you choose to use when applying to jobs, consider the following tips when creating your resume:Keep your resume to one page in length. Many recruiters and hiring managers look at hundreds or more resumes when trying to fill an open position. This means that they must limit the time spent on each resume, which often results in looking at the first page of a resume and moving on if it doesn't meet their criteria. Keeping your resume to one page or less ensures that recruiters can see your entire resume quickly.Align your resume content to the left. Aligning the content of your resume to the left is the most common way to format a resume and can increase your resume's professional appearance.Use easy-to-read fonts. Using an easy-to-read font ensures that recruiters can clearly read and understand your resume without having to spend excess time trying to decipher the content. Common resume fonts include Calibri, Times New Roman, Trebuchet MS and Arial Narrow.Only include relevant information. Whether you are using a functional or chronological resume, you should only include relevant information that directly relates to the job you are applying for. Even if you are particularly proud of a certain achievement or skill, if it isn't directly related to the position or specifically mentioned in the job listing, it's best to leave it out of the resume.Related: Functional Resume DefinedIn this career advice video, Sinead explains what a functional resume is, how it is formatted and when a functional resume could be used. Resumes & Cover LettersWhat Is a Functional Resume?By Indeed Editorial TeamPublished 22 July 2021If you have limited or no relevant experience needed for a job, applying with a functional resume is an excellent strategy. The functional resume focuses on your key skills instead of your employment history. Knowing how to write a functional resume and when to use it can help boost your chances of employment. In this article, we describe what a functional resume is, list guidelines for writing one and identify the unique qualities of functional resumes.What is a functional resume?A functional resume prioritises skills, unlike regular resume formats, where experience gets more attention. Instead of starting with your past jobs listed in the usual chronological order, a functional resume starts with your key skills and includes minor details about previous employment. While not as popular as the chronological resume, the functional resume is useful for job candidates in unique circumstances. For example, professionals switching to a new industry may prefer functional resumes, as it draws employers' attention to transferable skills ahead of their limited relevant experience.How to write a functional resumeFollow these guidelines to write a functional resume that leaves a good impression on recruiting managers.1. Craft a resume headerThe resume header is the first section of your functional resume and contains the following information:Name and job titleContact numberProfessional online profile link/personal websiteEmail addressWhen creating the resume header, type the name in a bold, visible font. Ensure the other details in the header are legible and structured to achieve a professional look.2. Write a powerful resume summaryThe resume summary convinces the hiring manager to read the rest of your resume. Summarise your top skills, professional accomplishments and career goals. Getting the resume summary right is critical to the success of your application. When you have little relevant experience, leading with your achievements and abilities can help you grab a hiring manager's attention.For greater success, include skills and achievements that relate to the job in question. Read the job description to understand the requirements and write qualifications and experience that make you an ideal candidate.3. Create a skills sectionYour functional resume needs a skills section that shows those competencies that make you qualified for a role. Categorise your skills and include three to five bullet points to provide evidence for the skill. List achievements that demonstrate your mastery in a particular area to demonstrate your suitability to employers.4. List professional experienceIt's necessary to list your past jobs when crafting your functional resume. However, you don't have to list the dates as in a chronological resume format. Include the employer's name, location and other details, like your responsibilities and accomplishments. The employment history section comes after the skills summary on functional resumes.5. Highlight your educationIncluding your educational history on a functional resume is optional, but it can help boost your prospects of getting employed. Write the institution's name, location, educational qualifications earned, grades and related achievements. Add your educational history to a functional resume if it can increase your chances of employment.6. Include additional informationSome applicants like to create an additional resume section to list other relevant information that doesn't fit into the major categories. You can include additional skills, qualifications, languages and volunteer work. Some candidates include a separate "achievements" section to highlight their accomplishments in previous roles.Related: 6 Universal Rules for Writing Your ResumeDifference between a functional and chronological resumeThe functional resume emphasises skills and qualifications, while the chronological resume format highlights an individual's work history. In a functional resume, the skills section is the most prominent, with the experience section limited to a few details. When writing a chronological resume, you list your previous jobs and corresponding duties. For a functional resume, you list key skills and choose relevant responsibilities from previous jobs as proof.What are functional resume skills?Functional resume skills are transferable skills that you've acquired over time and hope to apply to a new role. The skills on your functional resume can be a mix of hard skills, soft skills and technical abilities. The consensus is that applicants list relevant skills on their functional resume. Try to browse the job description for required competencies, and provide skills that are closely related.Functional resume skills are typically transferable, meaning they are useful across different job positions. This can convince an employer of your ability to handle new roles even if it's your first time.Related: 10 Best Skills To Include on a ResumeDo functional resumes really work?Here are situations where using a functional resume is ideal:Applying for jobs with significant employment gapsIf you've been out of employment for long for any reason, emphasising your skills is an effective tactic to convince an employer to employ you. While including a few details about your work may affect your prospects, it's still better than a prospective employer fixating on the gaps in your work experience. Using a functional resume in this situation helps focus the attention of the recruiter on your capabilities and away from your work history.Switching careersWhen switching careers, the likelihood that you have responsibilities specific to the new career to include on your resume is low. A functional resume allows you to highlight your transferable skills. Therefore, it's your best way to highlight key role-relevant skills you are bringing to the position.Applying for jobs with little work experienceA functional resume works for applicants with limited relevant work experience. It allows for creativity in describing employment history and spotlighting key skills. You can opt to list responsibilities and accomplishments from varied roles held in the past to show how you're competent.Applying for jobs with a non-linear work experienceIf you've held different odd jobs in the past without an overarching theme, you may prefer a functional resume. With a functional resume, you can shift attention away from your past jobs and their duration to the skills you acquired. This is important for those with an eclectic employment history or who have held several jobs in the past.Functional resume templateFollow this template to write a well-formatted functional resume:Resume header[Full name][Home address][Email address][Mobile number]Resume summary/objective[Two to three sentences outlining your experience, skills and work-related achievements][List professional values/goals and objective for seeking employment][Skills section][List skills under different categories or themes][Include 3-5 bullet points under each skill showing accomplishments and responsibilities that exemplify the skill][Quantify results and use numbers to show impact]Work experience[Employer name and location][Job title (optional)][Year of employment]Education[Name and location of institution][Duration of study][Name of the field of study and certification][Results (optional)]Achievements[Relevant professional awards or honours]Additional information section[Languages][Relevant interests or hobbies][Volunteer experience][Publications]Related: How to List Interests and Hobbies on Your ResumeExample of functional resumeHere's an example of a functional resume for a sales professional:Samir Khan53 Ang Mo Kio Singapore 11153k2008@gmail.com8334 3478SummaryDriven sales professional with experience in driving sales efforts for diverse clients. Searching for opportunities to leverage skills in sales and business strategy to achieve business growth. Achieved an average of \$250,000+ in quarterly sales for three consecutive years and bolstered profits by 20%.SkillsSalesCreated sales strategies that increased revenues by 20%Analysed sales data to generate insights for improving sales effortsExceeded sales quota by 30%Rapport buildingDeveloped and sustained relationships with current and prospective customersMade over 50 cold calls daily to reach out to customer leadsBuilt rapport with business owners and other relevant entities in the designated territoriesTeamworkCoordinated a 12-member team to execute a sales campaignDeveloped sales strategy in collaboration with team membersAwarded "Best Team Lead" for four consecutive quartersWork ExperienceBlaise Merchants Corp, Singapore (2017)EducationSingapore Management University (SMU), 2012-2016Bachelor of Science in Marketing (3.9 GPA)AccomplishmentsAwarded "Sales Rep of the Year"Tips for writing a functional resumeHere are tips to remember when writing a functional resume:Consider your optionsA functional resume is usually your last resort if a chronological resume cannot suit your needs. Many employers prefer chronological resume formats, as it's easier to scan and presents your experience easily. You can use a combination format that combines the chronological and functional resume formats for maximum effect.Include a compelling cover letterA cover letter can be an effective tool for making your case for a job after submitting a functional resume. In your cover letter, describe your different parts. This makes it easier to scroll to a specific section to find certain information, which is important for recruiting managers that may have limited time to spend on each application.Include keywordsBrowse the job description and note any keywords used. Then include these keywords in your resume to impress the hiring manager and scale through the Applicant Tracker System (ATS). If you can't find keywords in the job ad, sprinkle job-relevant skills and competencies on your resume.

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