

# Writing a Technical Resume

If you are in the technical or engineering profession, or looking to enter these fields, there are several areas which your resume should be focused on. Here are several useful tips.

## Customise your resume

The common mistake that technicians and engineers often make is to copy a ready-made resume from career guidebooks, thus failing to highlight the important aspects of their technical or engineering career. Remember to tailor your resume according to the job and industry that you are applying for.

## Know who you are writing for

Although the position is technical in nature, the first person to see your resume may not be the manager with technical or engineering background. Often, your resume will be reviewed by gatekeepers -- the Recruitment Manager or HR Manager who may not have in-depth technical knowledge. With this in mind, it would be useful to start your resume with a summary of Skills where you list your relevant technical skills, matching technical terminologies with those used in the advertisement. This summary will help the Recruitment or HR Manager to identify quickly if you have the required technical knowledge and expertise.

## Know what to highlight

Always include what is relevant and marketable. Pay careful attention to the job requirements stated in the advertisement or job posting; then select skills and experience that are appropriate for the position. Use specific technical terms and be clear about the responsibilities that you handle, using words such as maintenance, repair, trouble-shooting, design, etc. Remember to include the operating systems, machinery, equipment or computer software that you have used.



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Highlight the work that you have done in specific industries and the number of years you were in that industry. Explain briefly the products or services that your previous employers were offering. Include details of your involvement in specific projects, the customers whom you came in contact with (especially for engineering/technical sales positions), and the contractors, governing bodies and approving institutions that you had liaised with. If you were in a supervisory or management capacity, state the number of staff who was reporting to you.

## Experience first

In the technical and engineering fields, it is often more important for the recruiter to know what you can do rather than the paper qualifications that you own. As such, put your experience first in your resume, before your educational qualifications. Highlight achievements rather than job description and where possible, quantify these achievements. In doing so, remember to use action words (e.g. planned, managed, initiated, conceptualised, etc).

If you are a fresh graduate and do not have much experience, focus on your industrial attachment and projects that you undertook during your studies.

## Non-technical or Soft Skills

Today, recruiters not only look for technical skills, they also want someone with soft skills, e.g. project management, supervisory/leadership, communication and presentation skills. Remember to demonstrate such skills in your resume.

## Proof-read it

No matter how confident you are with your writing skills, always proofread your resume a few times to check for typo-errors, omissions and inconsistencies. Ensure that your resume is neat and legible, avoiding fanciful typefaces and small fonts. Let a trusted friend or family member go through your resume for a final proofread.