

Resumes for Getting a Job in Washington—Ten Basic Tips

1. **PURPOSE OF THE RESUME:** The purpose of the resume is not to get you a job, but to get you an interview. The resume is the first stage of the initial employer/employee contact.
2. **THE LENGTH OF THE RESUME:** A resume (particularly in Washington, D.C.) should be no more than one page in length. If your resume is more than one page, SHRINK IT. A resume is not a comprehensive, detailed history of your life and career—that is a curriculum vitae typically used in academia, the legal profession and other fields. A resume should be a summary of your skills and experience. If necessary, limit job descriptions to one or two sentences, stressing your accomplishments. Your resume should be easy and quick to read.
3. **PAPER COLOR:** White or ivory colored paper is recommended. It is important to avoid bright neon colors or any colors that appear loud and unprofessional. It is not the color of the resume that makes a candidate stand out, it is the clarity of his/her resume.
4. **PROOFREADING:** It is important to have three different people proofread your resume for mistakes. The most common mistakes are spelling errors, inconsistency and gaps in dates. Ask current or past employers, your colleagues, and your mother or father to critique it for common errors.
5. **RESUME STYLE:** In Washington, D.C., it is important to list your resume with experience first. This is the first item people will look for. Education and Skills should follow. It is also important to list education first if experience is limited. Remember to list internships; this allows recent graduates to show some experience and familiarity with the public policy profession. Make sure your resume uses only one or two clear fonts of a reasonable size (8 point is too small, 16 point is too large). The key is to keep it neat and simple.
6. **SHOW DATES AND LOCATIONS:** It is important to list dates and locations for all jobs, internships, etc. Make sure that dates showing large gaps or overlap are justified. Do not forget to note the dates of educational degrees, graduate studies, etc.
7. **AVOID LONG SENTENCES AND LARGE BLOCKS OF TYPE:** The reader's first glance at your resume is usually a brief one. Make sure your resume is easy to understand. Avoid acronyms, long sentences or vague language. You do not want someone to have to sit and think about what you are trying to convey.
8. **TAILOR YOUR RESUME:** Customize your resume to emphasize your skills related to a particular job. For example, if you are seeking a political job, you should indicate all relevant political experiences (College Republicans, campaign experience, etc.). If it is a research position, emphasize research-related experiences, and so on.
9. **LOCAL ADDRESS:** It is very important to have a local address for D.C. employers. If you do not have one, try to list a friend's or relative's address in the area who can easily relay a message in a timely fashion. Typically, employers are looking to fill a position within a month and need to start the interview process immediately. You may not be considered at all if it appears that you'd need a long delay to relocate. It is also important to list your e-mail address.
10. **WHAT TO LEAVE OFF**
 - For an entry-level position, omit an "objective" to avoid limiting your employment opportunities.
 - Unless you are right out of school, it is not customary to put your high school on your resume.
 - Also, there is no need to put "references available upon request" on your resume. It is understood that you will furnish references when asked.

SAMPLE RESUME- ENTRY LEVEL

Susan B. Anthony
215 West Hills Drive
McLean, VA 22908
(703)608-4336
antons@aol.com

EDUCATION

- 1991-1995 Northwestern College Kings, New York
Bachelor of Science: Communication Studies
Minor: Spanish Literature
Dean's List, 1993-1995
- 1993-1994 University of Madrid Madrid, Spain
Fall Semester. Coursework included economic study of Latin America
and Spanish cultural history.
- EXPERIENCE**
- Sept. 1995- Present The Center for Educational Advancement Washington, D.C.
Assistant to the President
Responsible for tracking current events in education policy.
Researched and issued informational requests to government officials,
educators, media and public. Wrote weekly education newsletter.
- June 1995- Sept. 1995 The Heritage Foundation Washington, D.C.
Intern, Resource Bank
Wrote summaries of publications for *The Insider* newsletter's
educational, legal action, and foreign policy sections. Restructured
Resource Bank Library containing information on 400+ policy groups.
Performed some administrative duties.
- Jan. 1995- Sept. 1995 Kings County Republicans Kings, New York
Volunteer
Informed local community of upcoming political events. Served as
liaison to the Northwestern College campus on upcoming political
events occurring on campus. Participated in monthly policy discussions.
- Sept. 1994- Nov. 1994 Committee to Re-elect Senator Bob Hope New York, New York
Volunteer
Helped coordinate and distribute campaign literature. Assisted in
writing press releases and organizing media events. Planned political
forum for candidates and the media.

ACTIVITIES

- 1992-1995 Delta Delta Delta Sorority. Alumni Chair 1994-1995
1992-1995 College Republicans
1993-1995 S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Eat) local shelter, volunteer
1992-1995 Northwestern Women's Varsity Tennis; co-captain 1994-1995

SKILLS Fluent in Spanish; Windows '95, Macintosh, Page Maker, Internet

SAMPLE RESUME-MID/UPPER LEVEL

John Smith
555 North West Street
Washington, D.C. 20036
H: (202) 555-1111
W: (202) 555-2222

EXPERIENCE

- Senior Litigation Counsel, Smith, Barney, & Lathem**, Washington, D.C. 1/94-Present
- Assisted in maintaining national practice protecting property owners.
 - Drafted briefs, including sections for petitions to the U.S. Supreme Court.
 - Analyzed property rights issues facing Congress and educated members of Congress about these issues.
 - Maintained client relationships and evaluated potential clients and claims.
- Associate, James, Harris, & Kleinknecht**, Lexington, Kentucky 1/90-1/94
- Second-chaired trials, including preparing chronologies, preparing jury instructions, researching and grafting trial motions and preparing documents for use at trial.
 - Drafted briefs and argued motions (including dispositive motions) encompassing attorney malpractice, bankruptcy, consumer protection statutes, and other aspects of discovery.
 - Took depositions and conducted all aspects of discovery.
- Law Clerk, U.S. Supreme Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit**, Kansas City, Missouri, 1/89-1/90
- Drafted and researched opinions and bench memoranda concerning complex state law issues from securities regulation to First Amendment.
 - Analyzed and researched legal issues.
 - Offered advice on oral argument, requests for hearing en banc, and other issues.

EDUCATION

J.D.	University of Missouri	Kansas City, MO	1989
B.A., History	William Jewell College	Liberty, MO	1986
	Full scholarship, graduated magna cum laude		

OTHER

- Washington Shelter for the Homeless, Volunteer 1994-Present
- University of Missouri Young Republicans, Member 1986-1989
- Bush for President Campaign, Volunteer 1992
- Speak fluent Spanish and Italian