



Resumes for Social Workers

Layout and Formatting

- There are a few basic resume types. **The CDC recommends a “chronological” resume for most purposes.** Career Changers with years of experience may find a “Skills” or “Hybrid” resume useful – but these tend to work best for seasoned professionals, and may be a turnoff to some Human Resources personnel.
- **Aim to fit your resume on 1 page.** If you have too much content for one page, you may use a second page if the experiences you are presenting are **relevant** to the job or internship you are applying for.
- **Avoid using templates as a basis for your resume.** They can be difficult to alter and be garbled by an employer’s viewing software or printer, and often don’t use space efficiently.
- **Use CAPS, bolding, underlining, bullets, and indentation** to direct the reader’s attention and separate different sections of the resume.

Introductory Statement

- “Objective” statements are often considered unnecessary if your resume is accompanied by a cover letter.
- If you have relevant experience to offer, you may substitute a “Profile” or “Summary” that briefly frames your experiences in terms of your career goals and the position you are applying for.

Education

- List degrees in **reverse chronological order** (most recent first).
- List the **official names** of the schools you have attended (e.g. – Loyola University Chicago), the city and state the school is located in, the name of your degree (e.g. – Bachelor of the Arts, English), and the year of your graduation or “Expected Graduation.”

Experience

- List experiences in **reverse-chronological** order (most recent first). Show the name of the organization, your title, and dates of involvement (mm/yyyy) for each experience.
- Use bulleted phrases (not paragraphs) to describe each experience. **Short, active, statements (that usually begin with verbs) are preferred to full sentences.**
- Current positions should use present-tense verbs, previous positions should use past-tense verbs.
- Describe your experiences in terms of actions, responsibilities, and, where possible, outcomes.
- Your phrases should **demonstrate skills and capabilities**, not describe physical activities (e.g. “directed client calls to appropriate personnel” – versus “answered phones”). **Ask yourself not only “what did I do?” but also, “why was it helpful or important?”**
- Use a professional, active voice when writing your bullet points. **Do not use the words I, me, or my.**
- Consider the ordering of your bullet points for each experience – display the most **relevant** points first.

Skills

- A skills section is **optional**, and could also be labeled “Technical Skills, Language Skills, Skills and Certifications, etc.” depending on what is most appropriate for you.
- “**Skills**” are specific capabilities, **not personal qualities** (e.g. – “outgoing, organized, efficient, etc.”), which should be **demonstrated** through your experiences.
- If listing multi-lingual skills, rate yourself in terms of proficiency in writing, reading and speaking.
- Technology or software skills can be helpful to list if they are specific and not shared by the population at large. For example, use of a specialized database is worth noting, “Internet search” is not.