

## RESUMES:

# 3 RESUME FORMATS: WHICH ONE WORKS FOR YOU?

### Takeaway Points

- There's no absolute right or wrong way to write your resume.
- The widely used chronological resume format emphasizes your career progression by focusing on the dates and job titles you've held.
- Unlike chronological, a functional format highlights what you can do, rather than when you did it.
- The most flexible resume format is a hybrid style that combines a chronological-type format with a summary of qualifications at the top and a results-oriented tone.

By: Team Pongo

When you're writing your resume, you need to present the information in a way that best showcases your qualifications and helps the employer notice what you have to offer. Each of the three most common resume formats—Chronological, Functional, and Combination/Hybrid—highlights your background in a different way.

#### What is a resume format?

A resume's "format" is based on the headings you use (such as Professional Summary, Experience, and Education); the order in which they appear; and the dates of employment for each position. Each format serves a particular purpose.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL

This widely used resume format emphasizes your career progression by focusing on the dates and job titles you've held, followed by your education. Contrary to its name, a chronological resume actually lists your work history in reverse chronological order, starting with your current or most recent position and going back through each position you've held for the past 10 or 15 years (or beyond that, if applicable).

#### This format will work for you if:

- You've been in the same industry or field for a number of years and plan to stay there.
- Your current or most recent position is related to your desired position, and emphasizes important skills you can offer prospective employers.
- You have no major gaps in your work history.

#### FUNCTIONAL

Unlike the chronological format, a functional resume highlights what you can do, rather than when you did it and for whom. In other words, it defines your value by focusing on skills, not job history. A functional resume calls attention to your specific areas of expertise and lists them under such headings as "Accounting Skills," "Marketing Skills," or "IT Skills." Work History and Education are listed after the skills review, but usually with less detail.

#### This format will work for you if:

- You've changed careers frequently or have significant employment gaps in your work history.
- You're looking to re-enter the workforce after a prolonged absence.
- You're just entering the workforce out of high school or college.

However, there is one drawback to using a strictly functional resume: Employers can't get a feel for your career progression (and may assume you're trying to hide something).

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*“The most flexible resume format is a hybrid style that combines a chronological-type format with a summary of qualifications at the top and a results-oriented tone.”*

### COMBINATION/HYBRID

You guessed it: This format combines elements from both the chronological and functional formats. It balances the focus on your skills and accomplishments with your work history, including employment dates and job titles.

#### This format will work for you if:

- You’re looking for a significant career change or promotion in your current field.
- You want to emphasize a broad array of skills and accomplishments, while sticking with the traditional chronological listing of past jobs that employers are accustomed to seeing on resumes.

#### So what format is best for you?

The most flexible resume format is a hybrid style that combines a chronological-type format with a summary of qualifications at the top and a results-oriented tone. Employers who prefer chronological resumes would be quite pleased with that format.

But there’s no absolute right or wrong way to write your resume. Just remember that your main goal is to make sure an employer can look at your resume and quickly understand the value you can bring to the business. Consider your current job search goals and employment history, and choose a format that best gets your message across in a clear, consistent, and readable way.

### CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

**J ANE ADMINISTRATOR**  
367 West Main Street, Northborough MA 01561  
 508-393-4238 • 508-393-4628 • janecadmin@yourdomain.com

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**OBJECTIVE**  
 Transfer the high-level administrative management, donor tracking, and grant writing skills gained in corporate and volunteer settings to a fundraising and event-planning role in a non-profit organization

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**EXPERIENCE**

**Executive Assistant**  
 February 2001 to March 2006  
 Major Insurance Corp., Boston, MA  
 World headquarters of a Fortune 500 insurance carrier serving 48 countries

- Organized daily calendar and travel schedule for busy executive in charge of facilities operations at multiple global sites
- Screened, prioritized, redirected, or responded to confidential correspondence

**Administrative Assistant**  
 September 1999 to February 2001  
 Financial Services, Inc., Boston, MA  
 Sales and marketing department of a full-service financial planning and advisory center

- Provided comprehensive administrative support to four sales managers
- Created and edited PowerPoint presentations incorporating graphics and video
- Updated content on company web site

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**EDUCATION**  
 University of Massachusetts, 1999  
 Amherst, MA  
 Bachelor of Arts English

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**SKILLS**

- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Project; web content management systems; various database applications
- Fluent understanding of Spanish language and culture, familiarity with Portuguese

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**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**  
 West Middlesex Schools, Framingham, MA  
 PTO President (2006-2008)

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## Did you know?

Pongo's Resume Builder chooses the best resume format for you, and creates a resume template to suit your unique career profile.

### FUNCTIONAL RESUME

**JANE ADMINISTRATOR**  
397 West Main Street, Northborough, MA 01532  
508-393-4248 • 508-393-4248 • janedadmin@yourdomain.com

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**OBJECTIVE**

Apply the administrative management, donor tracking, and grant writing skills gained in corporate and volunteer settings to a responsible role in a non-profit organization

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**PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**

Administrative professional with 7 years' experience in high-level organizational management, event planning, fundraising, and project management. Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese languages and familiar with Hispanic culture. Able to navigate challenging situations while marshalling limited resources and building consensus among diverse stakeholder groups. Business skills complemented with lifelong interest in providing advocacy and support for underserved populations.

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**EXPERTISE AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

**FUNDRAISING & GRANT WRITING**

- Exceeded annual fundraising goals by at least 15% during three-year tenure district as PTO president
- Wrote and edited grant proposals, bringing in more than \$50K in grants

**ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

- Reorganized and updated volunteer, donor, and contact management databases, producing streamlined processes at substantially lower cost
- Managed volunteer staff of more than 100 parents for multiple annual events
- Administered monthly print and e-newsletter campaigns to 2,500 recipients
- Established and maintained databases for outside vendors and service providers and merged past years' donor registrations
- Managed content updates on organizations' web sites

**EVENT PLANNING**

- Seamlessly coordinated catering, accommodations, sales presentations, and entertainment for for up to 500 attendees at four offsite corporate events per year
- Built consensus among school administration, educators, and parents regarding planning, scheduling, safety, catering, and staffing needs for all PTO events

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**EXPERIENCE**

**PTO President**  
September 2008 to June 2008  
West Suburban School System, Framingham, MA

**Executive Assistant**  
February 2001 to March 2006  
Major Insurance Corp., Boston, MA

**Administrative Assistant**  
September 1999 to February 2001  
Financial Services, Inc., Boston, MA

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**EDUCATION**

**University of Massachusetts, 1999**  
Amherst, MA  
Bachelor of Arts English

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**SKILLS**

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Project; web content management systems; various database application

### HYBRID RESUME

**JANE ADMINISTRATOR**  
397 West Main Street, Northborough, MA 01532  
508-393-4248 • 508-393-4248 • janedadmin@yourdomain.com

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**OBJECTIVE**

Transfer the high-level administrative management, donor tracking, and grant writing skills gained in corporate and volunteer settings to a fundraising and event-planning role in a non-profit organization

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**MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Exceeded annual fundraising goals by at least 15% during three-year tenure as PTO president for West Middlesex schools
- Wrote and edited grant proposals, bringing in more than \$50K in teacher grants
- Reorganized and updated volunteer, donor, and contact management databases, producing streamlined processes at substantially lower cost
- Seamlessly managed four offsite corporate events per year, including catering, accommodations, sales presentations, and entertainment for up to 500 attendees

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**EXPERIENCE**

**President, Parent-Teacher Organization**  
September 2008 to May 2008  
West Middlesex Schools, Framingham, MA

- Managed volunteer staff of more than 100 parents
- Collaborated with school administrators and educators on planning, scheduling, safety, catering, and staffing needs for all PTO meetings and events
- Administered monthly print and e-newsletter campaigns to 2,500 recipients
- Established and maintained databases for outside vendors and service providers and merged past years' donor registrations

**Executive Assistant to Operations Director**  
February 2001 to March 2006  
Partners Mutual Insurance, Boston, MA  
World headquarters of a Fortune 500 insurance carrier serving 48 countries

- Organized daily calendar and travel schedule for busy executive in charge of facilities operations at multiple global sites
- Screened, prioritized, redirected, or responded to confidential correspondence

**Administrative Assistant**  
September 1999 to February 2001  
Charles Financial Associates, Boston, MA  
Sales and marketing department of a full-service financial planning and advisory center

- Provided comprehensive administrative support to four sales managers
- Created and edited PowerPoint presentations incorporating graphics and video
- Updated content on company web site

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**EDUCATION**

**University of Massachusetts, 1999**  
Amherst, MA  
Bachelor of Arts English

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**SKILLS**

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Project; web content management systems
- Skilled using various database applications for donor and grant application tracking
- Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese languages, with cultural understanding of various Hispanic cultures

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**Pongo Resume** is a premier, full-service online resource for job seekers. The Pongo Resume web site provides all the tools, templates, and support you need to write professional resumes and cover letters, ace tough interviews, and secure a great job. Pongo users generate over 100,000 resumes per month. Privately held and headquartered in Northborough, Massachusetts, Pongo Resume currently has more than 5 million registered users and averages over a half-million unique visitors per month.