

I / CAN

Career Resources

Resume Guide

2025



A word cloud of resume-related terms in various shades of blue and green. The words are arranged in a circular pattern. The largest word is 'resume'. Other prominent words include 'work experience', 'education', 'accomplishments', 'professional brand', 'relevant information', 'canada', 'qualifications', 'professional associations', 'volunteer experience', 'get started', 'prioritizing your efforts', and 'layout'.

accomplishments
professional brand
education
resume
work experience
get started
prioritizing your efforts
canada
relevant information
qualifications
professional associations
volunteer experience
layout

This material is designed as supplementary reading material for New Arrivals from Ireland.

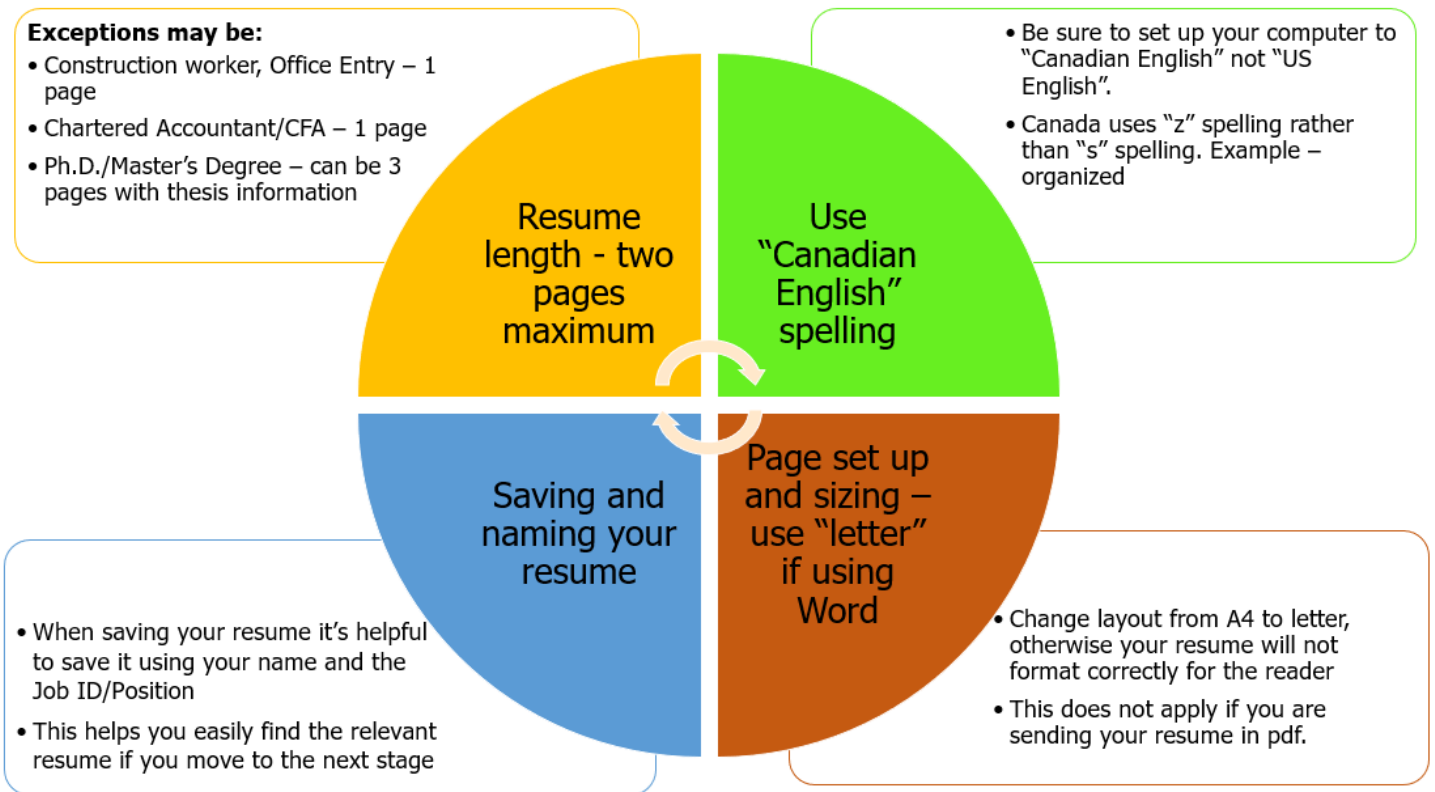
New Arrivals have a broad range of qualifications, knowledge and experience in many functional disciplines. Certain guidelines may fit your profile, others may not. Ultimately, it is your choice to select the guidelines that best suit your situation and to design a cover letter and/or resume that best represents you in the marketplace. Note that employment processes in Canada may be different than what you have experienced in the past.

Acknowledgements: This guide was first developed by Gerry O'Connor. It has been adapted and updated by Rhonda McDowell, I/CAN Career Resources

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TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED



RESUME LAYOUT Read through the guide then take a look at our sample resume on the last page of this guide.



1. Contact Information

- Contact details are important, they should be visible and easy for the reader to find on your resume.
- Don't include your contact information in the header, include your contact information in the main body of the Word document - Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) find it difficult to read information that you place in the document header and footer.
- Contact details include your city (there is no need to include your full address), local phone number where you can be contacted, your email address, and your LinkedIn profile if it is up to date.
- Remember to activate and regularly check your voicemail. When recording your personalized voicemail, speak slowly. As a job seeker, your voicemail is an extension of your professional brand, create a good impression for employers and recruitment firms that may be considering your application. Regularly check your email.

2. Career Summary

- A major section in your resume is the "Career Summary/Profile". Canadian employers want you to showcase what makes you stand out as an applicant among many i.e. relevant to the role you are applying for, spell out your skill set, your individual competencies, knowledge, and impact.
- Sometimes, you will be asked to include your "Career Objective". Recruitment firms often want you to define what kind of position you are looking for. This helps the recruiter and people you network with to understand where to place you and how they can match you to opportunities. List career objective areas of interest in priority order.
- Typically, you would include either a Career Profile/Summary or a Career Objective, not both. What is important is that you understand they are not the same thing. As part of your job search strategy, it can be helpful to prepare both your profile and your objective meaning you can quickly adapt when needed.

Examples:

CAREER PROFILE

Nationally award-winning marcom professional with 10 years of experience leading corporate marketing and internal communications for multimillion-dollar companies across diverse industries. Respected leader of creative teams, multimedia divisions and corporate communications departments. Strong attention to detail, trend forecasting and market knowledge. Experienced in Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and MS Office.

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To secure a long-term career growth opportunity with a high-quality employer consistent with my qualifications and experience. Key areas of interest include:

- journalism
- public relations
- internal and external communications
- web design and management
- social media
- creative writing

3. Relevant Work Experience and Selected Accomplishments

- Canadian employers are generally not interested in employment gaps in your resume. They respect gaps caused by the economic downturn in Ireland plus the desire to travel plus requirements to take care of an ill parent. Their focus is “how effective will you be in this future role”.
- Assume that your resume will be read by a recruiter that has little or no knowledge of Ireland. Locations should be identified as “Cork, Ireland”, not just “Cork”. Avoid using acronyms.
- Your overall resume (qualifications and work experience) should support what you say in your Career Profile/Objective. In the past, if you worked in unrelated temporary positions (e.g. worked in a bar or restaurant; pumped gasoline), there is no need to include these positions as career chronological history, particularly if they distract from the overall nature of your career goals. On the other hand, such positions might impress an employer particularly if you worked hard to earn money to graduate. Plus, these jobs might showcase your transferrable skills. Ask yourself, did I develop skills, work values, and functional experience that could be transferred to the job I am applying for? If the answer is yes, this could support your application. It’s your call.
- If you worked for a small organization in Ireland, consider including the web address for that organization so that the recruiter can obtain more background information. Alternatively, copy a few sentences from that organization’s website and include this information beside the organization’s name.
- If you worked for a multi-national in Ireland, highlight your experience working on matters outside Ireland.
- Employers in Canada want to learn about your accomplishments, it’s not enough to list your job duties. You need to showcase your achievements and accomplishments in this section. Start with an action verb in the past tense (e.g. managed, supervised, monitored, analyzed, produced). Sample accomplishments:
 - Developed operations reports for management to facilitate company operating performance.
 - Expanded client base by 78% in three years by consistently delivering goal-surpassing marketing results and ensuring complete client satisfaction.

4. Relevant Education/Qualifications/Skills

- Highest qualifications will suffice, unless other qualifications are relevant to the position.
- Avoid abbreviations for educational institutions e.g. “UCD”, “NUI”; “UCC” “DCU”. The ATS or person(s) reading your application may not know what you mean. Spell out the name in full.
- Highlight 5-8 key modules or professional training areas in your educational qualifications that support the job you are applying for or the areas of employment you are interested in i.e. from your Career Objective.

- Highlight your technology skills including work-specific databases e.g. drafting, accounting, payroll, facilitating video conference calls with team and customers. If you include these in Work Experience section you do not need to repeat them in this section.

5. Additional Information

- Keep it relevant. Examples may include Professional Associations, Awards received, Volunteering, Community involvement.
- Offers the recruiter broad information about you personally, including your interests. Can provide excellent background information to determine your “fit” within the organization with other people already working within the organization.
- If your work is regulated by a professional body (e.g. Engineering, CPA, Human Resources) note this to indicate that you have been a member of the professional body and you are aware of the regulator for qualifications assessment with the intention to complete accreditation courses that apply in Canada or in your Province, as required.
- Your participation in team sports activities can emphasize that you are a “team player”, an important component in building the organization team.
- Avoid citing “travel” as a hobby area – this may imply that you are travelling though Canada on your way back to Ireland at some point in the future.
- Highlight volunteer work you have been engaged in. Avoid organization name abbreviations that will not be understood by a Canadian interviewer. If not well known, refer to volunteer organization as a “national” or “regional” organization. Volunteerism is not limited to recent volunteer activity – claim any volunteer activity that you have done in the past. “Volunteerism” is a well-respected and valued principle in Canada.

Common Questions...

“I don’t know where to start” - How do I build out my Career Objective?

- If you have difficulty developing your list, or if you are not sure what you want to do, use areas identified in advertised positions in which you are interested.
- Alternatively, meet with a consultant in a well-established and reputable search firm, and seek “any long-term career opportunity with an employer that may be a good fit for my qualifications, experience”. You may be surprised that search firms have good long-term career opportunities that you are not currently aware of.
- If you are interested in multiple career options that are very different e.g. “teacher” and “business”, do not include both areas on the same resume. This will confuse employers as to what you want to do. In this scenario, develop separate resumes, one for a teacher role and a different resume for a business role. In the teacher resume, expand your teacher qualifications and experience and minimize your business elements. In the business resume, maximize your business profile and minimize your teacher profile.
- Make your list as broad as possible to capture employer interest.
- Your list may be used by search firms when they enter your information into their search databases. If you miss a key area, you will not be included in their search.

- Your list is not restricted to areas where you have prior experience. You can include areas in which you are really interested but do not have prior experience. Canadian employers will consider you for functional areas in which you have a passionate interest and will provide training.

Should I Prioritize Education Section or Work Experience Section?

- The best approach is to decide if your Education or your Work Experience is the stronger asset that will appeal to an employer in relation to your Career Objective.
- Some candidates have excellent Education credentials e.g. CFA/CA/MBA/First- class honours degree and/or very specialized technical education but may be light in employment experience gained to date. In this instance, the recommendation is that you insert your Education section first before the Employment section.
- Other candidates have stronger Employment experience rather than Education (e.g. education limited to a non-specialized undergraduate degree or high-school graduation or a Certificate program). In this instance, the recommendation is that you insert your Employment section first before the Education section.
- Recruiters read many resumes – you want to catch their attention early with your strongest asset.
- Remember, this is your resume so structure it in a way that you are most comfortable with.

“I send out hundreds of resumes” - Why am I not hearing back from recruiters or employers?

- Some New Arrivals make the mistake to email their resume to anybody and everybody, hoping for the best. You may be lucky to land your resume with the right employer at the right time. However, job-search emails work well in Ireland and Australia, but not necessarily be an effective use of your time and effort in Canada. Canadian employers want to meet you personally to make sure that you are a good “fit” within the organization. With this understanding, keep sending emails but don’t rely on this method alone. Keep the focus on personal inter-face contact with employment leads. For more on building connections check out the ***I/CAN Networking Guide***.

Do you have an example of a resume I can see?

- Yes we do! On the next page is a one page resume intended to give you some ideas about how to structure your resume and the type of content that is helpful. Remember, this is an example. You can use this to get you started but your own resume should reflect your specific experience, education, and accomplishments. This is a one page resume, yours may run to two pages if your experience and qualifications require it.

Brian Smith

Vancouver, BC • Phone: 555-555-5555 • brian.smith@example.com • LinkedIn Profile

CAREER PROFILE

Nationally award-winning marcom professional with 10 years of experience leading corporate marketing and internal communications for multimillion-dollar companies across diverse industries. Respected leader of creative teams, multimedia divisions and corporate communications departments. Strong attention to detail, trend forecasting and market knowledge. Experienced in Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and MS Office.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marketing Communications Manager, 2018 to present, ABC COMPANY, Vancouver BC
Multimillion-dollar company selling automotive supplies and parts
Manage corporate marketing & communications, overseeing a \$2.3M budget and 8-member team.

Selected Accomplishments:

- Developed and launched integrated, multi-channel print, catalog, web and direct marketing campaigns that propelled sales from \$3.2M (2015) to a projected \$9.5M by 2021 year-end.
- Led market launch of 21 new products. Identified opportunities, researched new product possibilities, collaborated with engineering team and created campaigns generating \$2.6M in annual sales.

Marketing Supervisor, 2015 to 2018 DEF COMPANY, Cork, Ireland
Full-service advertising, marketing and PR agency
Developed marketing programs for a variety of business-to-business clients.

Selected Accomplishments:

- Expanded client base by 78% in three years by consistently delivering goal-surpassing marketing results and ensuring complete client satisfaction.
- Earned commendations from client executives for communication deliverables that targeted desired audiences and articulated the value of products and services

Copywriter, 2011-2015 GHI COMPANY – Dublin, Ireland
Leading advertising, direct marketing and communications agency
Copywriter responsible for journal ads, direct mail campaigns and sales collateral for diverse clients and projects.

Selected Accomplishments:

- Served as primary copywriter on advertising campaigns for multimillion-dollar accounts and successful product launches.
- Assumed a lead role in pitch team meetings due to strengths in presentation and negotiation skills, and helped close major accounts (\$500K to \$1M+ initial contracts).

EDUCATION/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Marketing Certificate 2011 Sallynoggin College of Further Education, Dublin, Ireland

Bachelor of Arts (Communications) 2006-2010 University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland