

Teacher Resume Writing 101



Employers use a resume as a quick guide to decide whether to follow up with a potential applicant. Employers usually key in on 3 areas of focus: certification, eligibility for employment and experiences working with children.

Be sure to check for typos, grammatical, punctuation errors and other imperfections like coffee stains. Use the spell check feature on your word processor and ask a friend to review the resume to find any mistakes you might have missed. Your resume should be printed on a good quality plain white paper. Avoid using colored paper.

While you should go to great lengths to write an exceptional resume, you should not write a resume that is exceptionally great in length. One page is best, but if your extensive work history warrants a two-page resume, then go ahead and create a document that reflects the full range of your experience as it relates to education and accomplishments. Keep your resume legible—don't reduce the font size in an effort to cram everything onto one page.

The dates and titles on your resume need to be accurate. School districts will typically verify work history.

Don't include copies of transcripts, letters of recommendation or awards, etc. unless you are specifically asked to do so. If you are called in for an interview, you may bring these extra materials along with your portfolio.

Limit all critical information to one page if possible.

CRITICAL INFORMATION SHOULD BE EASILY LOCATED IN 15 SECONDS

There is no particular format for the resume. However, it is important to note that the resume should showcase critical information easily as well as focus on eligibility for employment.

Try combining information such as work history to keep everything on one page.

PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

The objective is that all information can easily be matched to an application on file. Information needs to be current. Don't include information on your marital status, age, race, family or hobbies.

- Use "official" name(s) on resume. Nickname can be put in quotation marks.
- Multiple last names should be included. Former last names can be included in parenthesis.
- Distinguish between home and cell phone numbers.
- E-mail address is very important. If you don't already have one, create a professional e-mail address that includes your name, such as maria.smith@example.com.

OBJECTIVE

Your objective needs to be simple and to the point. If you include the name of the school or school district, be sure to change it prior to sending it to a different school/district.

SUBJECT AREAS

Only list the content area(s) for which you are eligible.

HIRING STATUS

Current hiring status should be very clear.

EDUCATION

The most important information for a candidate in an alternative certification program like Michigan Teachers of Tomorrow is that the minimum requirement of a Bachelor's degree has been awarded. Include University and degree date. Do not include all other universities from which a degree was not received. (You will need to provide official transcripts from all universities/colleges attended at the time of hire.) Be sure to include all majors/minors.

WORK HISTORY

Summarize all work history beginning with current employment and list backwards. State more than the job description jargon from your company's Human Resource manual. Present specific accomplishments and achievements that would be beneficial to a principal.

Teacher Resume

Writing 101 *(continued)*



Don't include the reasons you are no longer working at each job listed on your resume. The phrases "company sold," "change of career," "relocated," "moved closer to home," are unnecessary. Instead, focus on your accomplishments while you were there.

- Employers are looking for "gaps" in employment history
- Employers are looking for job responsibilities that transfer to the teaching profession
- Do not focus on job responsibilities for each particular place of employment especially if it is not relevant for the teaching
- Stay-at-home moms need to briefly put that information on the resume to alleviate any concerns about gaps in work history
- Experiences working with children
- List any relevant work experiences with children other than your own.
- Teaching experience in a private school
- Substitute teaching
- Boys Scouts/Girls Scouts
- Tutoring experience
- YMCA swim coach

JOB-RELATED SKILLS

Personnel managers are most interested in your experience from the last ten years and experiences that will impact student learning in the classroom. Focus on your most recent and most relevant career experience and highlight activities within that history that is related to teaching.

- Strong technology skills
- Strong customer relations/communication skills
- Training new employees
- Supervising 10 employees
- Graduate teaching assistant

REFERENCES

Best are supervisory in nature. Friends and family are usually less important.

Reference list can be put on a second page, or they can be excluded at this time and simply make the statement on the resume that they are 'available upon request'.

References listed do not replace the individual reference forms that most school districts will require once you have been selected for a position.

Include current contact information including email address, position and relationship to applicant.

The Whys and Hows of Resume Writing



Resumes are one- to two-page summaries (depending on your background) of your qualifications with the goal of impressing prospective school districts and principals. The sole purpose of your resume is to make a good first impression in order to gain an interview.

THE SOLE PURPOSE OF YOUR RESUME IS TO MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION IN ORDER TO GAIN AN INTERVIEW.

A resume is a personal document that outlines your past work experience, education, and achievements, along with listing your current objectives. It is your business card. Your resume has the potential to open doors and help you secure an interview, and just as quickly, it can close doors. How you write, format, and develop your resume is critical to your success in securing a teaching position.

How important is the resume format? The average principal, human resource director, or recruiter spends only 10 seconds looking at a resume. That's 10 seconds you have to convince them to meet you. In many schools and districts, recruiters and principals are so overwhelmed with resumes, they are actually looking for a reason not to interview you. There is no room for anything but a flawless, compelling document that reflects who you are and what you've accomplished in the most beneficial light. You must have a professionally crafted resume to stand out amongst the hundreds of other applicants.

Your resume is competing for the ultimate prize of getting an interview. Any resume can list employment dates and job position titles, but only the best ones speak the language employers want to hear. You have to show principals that you are a cut above the rest of the crowd by providing concrete examples of your successes — especially success as it would relate to a classroom. It is not enough to show that you are a good candidate, you must show that you are the best candidate for the specific position you are applying for.

What Not to Do: Avoid these 10 Common Resume Mistakes

**MICHIGAN
TEACHERS**
—of Tomorrow—

It may seem like an exaggeration, but the vast majority of resumes are much weaker than they could be because of a few simple mistakes. While spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are by far the most common, simple oversights such as forgetting a name or failing to put contact information happen frequently. Every day, school districts receive many resumes from great applicants that simply do not communicate greatness. Don't let yours fall flat! Spell checking a document is always a good idea, but it is not enough. You and several of your friends need to review the resume.

1. CARELESS ERRORS

Careless errors are those simple, common mistakes that are made by applicants on a regular basis. These mistakes are often glaring and result in your resume being discarded before it is ever read. Spelling, grammatical and typographical errors dramatically undermine your desired impression as the best candidate for the job. While using a spell checker is great, too often words like principle and principal can be substituted for each other. Use a second set of eyes! Using a thesaurus to substitute "big words" for common words is not a good idea, especially if you are not 100% sure of the word's meaning.

2. LENGTH: TOO LONG OR TOO SHORT

Keep your resume to one or two pages. Too short and you don't tell them enough. Too long and they won't read it. If you don't have a lot of career experience then one page should be long enough.

3. UNRELATED OR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Keep your resume professional and to the point.

4. NO COVER LETTER WITH A RESUME

Be sure to include a cover letter letting the principal know why you are sending a resume and what you hope to achieve by sending the resume. Try to direct the letter to someone in specific, such as a principal or Human Resource recruiter. Be sure to review our resources on cover letters.

5. ADDRESSES WRONG PERSON

When sending a resume, always take the time to verify the address and the name of the principal or hiring official before sealing the envelope. For every ten resumes a principal receives, one will have the wrong name on the cover letter or have his or her name spelled incorrectly.

6. E-MAIL ADDRESS

Hotleggs@example.com, Cutiepie@example.com, and 124jim12@example.com are all fine e-mail address between friends, but not on a resume. You need to list an e-mail address on your resume, and it needs to be appropriate. If you do not already have one, develop an email address that is professional and easy to read. MollyMiller@example.com, or TeacherJim@example.com are good examples of e-mail addresses that would be appropriate. Avoid mixing numbers and letters!

7. RESUME LACKS FOCUS

A sharp focus is an extremely important resume element. Given that principals typically screen resumes in less than ten seconds, a resume should show the employer at a glance what you want to do and what you're good at.

One way to sharpen your focus is through an objective statement. Your objective statement can be very simple and straightforward; it can simply be the title of the subject area(s)/positions you're applying for. You can embellish your objective statement by adding language describing how you'll benefit the principal or how you are the best fit for that particular district. If you have education related experience, a "Philosophy of Education" can replace the "Objective" statement.

What Not to Do: Avoid these 10 Common Resume Mistakes *(continued)*

8. RESUME IS DUTIES-DRIVEN

Resumes should consist primarily of high-impact accomplishment statements that sell your qualifications as the best candidate. Accomplishments are the points that increase reader's interest, stimulate a request for a job interview and really help sell you to a principal.

Never use expressions such as "Duties included," "Responsibilities included," or "Responsible for." Instead, focus on accomplishments that set you apart from other job candidates. In each job, what special things did you do to set yourself apart? Describe or list activities that communicate how these accomplishments will help a principal. How did you do the job better than anyone else? What did you do to make it your own?

9. RESUME BURIES IMPORTANT SKILLS

Principals are looking for certain skills. It is important to highlight skills and experiences throughout the entire resume, not just listed at the bottom. It is critical to always consider who your audience is and what your audience is looking for. Skills that may have seemed important in your current job may not be important to a principal.

10. RESUME IS NOT BULLETED

If your resume contains significant history, use a bulleted style to make your resume more reader-friendly. Use bullets consistently. Some teachers bullet most of their resume but don't bullet the certification section. Often candidates will list the overall scope and responsibilities for each job in an un-bulleted section before beginning a bulleted section describing accomplishments. If you are going to use bullets, it's best to bullet consistently throughout the resume.