

Email Subject Line: When To Use A “Functional” Resume Format

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Headline: Use a “Functional” Resume To Focus on Skills

Summary:

Question: I have worked as an accounting clerk in the advertising field for several years. Right now I am making a career change to be more involved with clients directly to help them get their needs for advertising and promotion serviced. But so far employers I've applied to haven't even responded to my resume. Any way to highlight my skills so that companies get the message I'm better with people than with numbers?

Ruth Chang*, Vancouver, B.C.

Landing Page copy

Headline: Use a “Functional” Resume To Focus on Skills

Dear Mark,

Question: I have worked as an accounting clerk in the advertising field for several years. Right now I am making a career change to be more involved with clients directly to help them get their needs for advertising and promotion serviced. This is much more satisfying to me than crunching numbers. But so far employers I've applied to haven't even responded to my resume. I guess it's too focussed on the jobs I've held, which have mostly been in accounts payable and receivable. Any way to highlight my skills so that companies get the message I'm better with people than with numbers?

Ruth Chang*, Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Ruth,

Thank you for including a copy of your resume along with your e-mail. With your permission, I have re-worked it into a “functional” format. This means that I have put the emphasis on your transferable skills and abilities, rather than on job titles as found in a traditional “reverse chronological” resume.

Shifting from the chronological to functional style can work well in the following instances:

- when you are a recent graduate from school and do not have a great deal of work experience that you can boast about
- when you have been out of the workforce for some time and/or there are significant gaps in your work history that you don't want to be easily seen
- when you are changing careers and wish to demonstrate your competencies in your new field

Note that employers tend to expect a reverse chronological resume, and may be alert to the fact that your functional version is being used to smooth something over – especially

if you've been in the work force for more than three or four years. That being said, below is an example of how your revised resume might look. All the best with your search efforts!

Functional Resume Sample

<p style="text-align: center;">RUTH CHANG, B.A. 885 Robson St., Vancouver, B.C., V8T 4N6 (604) 555-8744 r_chang99@hotmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To contribute my experience in graphics design, communications and administration to an account executive position in advertising.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SKILLS AND ABILITIES</p> <p>Advertising and Public Relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Effectively performed advertising duties for small public relations firm. Worked directly with art department, production, traffic and accounting departments.- Gained experience in many creative aspects including story board layout and the development of marketing strategies for clients. <p>Detail Oriented Team Player</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Thoroughly researched sales and industry guidelines for annual advertising convention held last year in Victoria, B.C.- Demonstrated ability to work well in a team setting, and assist others to meet their deadlines. <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Experience in business writing and accounting procedures within various departments.- Recognized by firm for ability to communicate effectively with clients and keep them up- to-date on their accounts. <p style="text-align: center;">EDUCATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BACHELOR OF ARTS University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C. 2000 – 2003</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WORK HISTORY</p> <table><tr><td>Accounting Assistant, Delouche Promotions Inc, Vancouver, B.C.</td><td style="text-align: right;">2005 - Present</td></tr><tr><td>Part-Time Accounting Assistant, Orono Advertising Vancouver, B.C.</td><td style="text-align: right;">2003 - 2005</td></tr></table> <p>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Keep aware of industry trends by reading publications such as <i>Marketing Today</i>- Awarded Most Valuable Player at university basketball meet in 2002- Completed Saint John's First Aid Course in December of 2000	Accounting Assistant, Delouche Promotions Inc, Vancouver, B.C.	2005 - Present	Part-Time Accounting Assistant, Orono Advertising Vancouver, B.C.	2003 - 2005
Accounting Assistant, Delouche Promotions Inc, Vancouver, B.C.	2005 - Present			
Part-Time Accounting Assistant, Orono Advertising Vancouver, B.C.	2003 - 2005			

* Name and contact information in the above example are fictitious so as to preserve the privacy of the reader who submitted this question, upon her request.