CEAT
Career Services

Writing Career Objectives

Whether to include a career objective on a resume is an often-asked question among job seekers; and opinions on the issue vary among employers and even within organizations. Human resources professionals usually prefer applicants to include career objectives on their resumes. Including an objective assists the human resources department in routing the large quantity of resumes received to the proper places within an organization and indicates where the resume should be filed for future review if current positions are not available in the area specified by the objective. Hiring managers, however, are usually indifferent because they are better able to assess the qualifications included within your resume and how those qualifications would best benefit their organization.

The final decision on whether to include a career objective is yours. Before making that final judgment, however, you should to develop a complete understanding of a career objective's function and of the different formats for career objectives.

The Purpose of a Career Objective

Including a career objective on your resume can serve three functions:
1. Provides you with a reference point in constructing your resume so that you select only the most important and relevant information about yourself to include in the resume.
2. Indicates a connection between the type of position you are seeking and the type of position an employer is offering.
3. Assures a prospective employer that you have career goals and direction.

Every resume you submit for consideration of employment should be targeted to that specific position and employer, including the career objective. Even if you have several different career options in mind, remember that one general resume will not be an effective self-marketing tool for every position. Create several different versions of your resume with different objectives.

Types of Objectives

- Statement of Professional Position - simply states a professional title.
    Examples:
    -Mechanical Engineer
    -Project Manager

- Statement Reflecting Functional Area - refers to the fact that you are seeking an "entry-level" position and provides your area of interest.
    Examples:
    -"An internship in electrical engineering"
    -"A Co-op opportunity in industrial engineering and management"
    -"An entry level position in chemical engineering"
    -"An entry-level environmental position"
    -"An entry level position in pharmaceutical research"

- Statement of Functional Skills and Preferences - indicates your preferences with regards to geographic location, employment sector, organizational size, and/or other characteristics in addition to identifying your practical skills.

  Examples:
  -"A position in a large, high tech organization requiring network design skills."
  -"A sales position with a large-scale energy company in the Southwest United States."
  -"A career in engineering technology with an emphasis on mechanical and manufacturing engineering."

- Short Term / Long Term Format - specifies both your short term goal and your long term ambition.

  Examples:
  "-Short Term Objective: A summer internship in environmental maintenance and regulation at a national or state park.
  -Long Term Objective: Graduate education in environmental policy leading to an administrative position with the EPA."

- Seeking / Offering Format - serves the same purpose as the statement of functional skills and preferences, but is more direct.

  Examples:
  -"Seeking: A supervisory position in telecommunications
  -Offering: Practical experience in communications and management gained through military service; proficient in analyzing and resolving network system problems."

Tips For Writing Objectives

- Be specific. Employers won't waste their time trying to figure out what job fits you. Employers are seeking people who know what they want. Be sure you tell them.
- State only one desired work type in a single objective. Stating multiple functional areas of work interest conveys indecisiveness and a lack of career direction.
- Avoid using cliché phases such as,
  - "a challenging and interesting position,"
  - "opportunity for advancement,"
  - "dealing with people"
  - "a progressive organization."
  Remember that your resume should distinguish you from the other applicants and that every resume writer is seeking a situation that can be described by at least one of these phrases.
- Develop an objective, and resume, that is employer-focused rather than self-focused. Use your objective to state the contributions you can make to the position, not simply what you expect from an employer.