



Help! I don't have a resume. What do I need to know?

1) What is a resume?

A resume is your chance to make a great first impression with potential employers and not just a cut and dry list of relevant work experience, educational background and technical skills. According to Merriam-Webster, one definition of resume is "a set of accomplishments," and this is what everything in your resume should sound like: an accomplishment! At its core, a resume is simply a self-promotional marketing piece that presents you and your experience in the best possible light. It is the gateway to every job interview.

2) Why do I need a resume? Can't I just fill out an application?

Many high-end salons and spas will require a resume. Even if they don't require one, they will only be favorably impressed when you produce a professional resume to go along with your application. Anything that helps you stand out from the crowd of recent cosmetology school graduates as a driven young professional is a very good thing!

3) How do I begin writing a resume?

A template or sample resume is a great place to start. Ask a friend or instructor if you can see a copy of the resume that landed them a dream job and use that as a starting point. The Internet is also full of sample resumes and resume-building sites that will give you a template to fill out. However, you can feel free to think outside the box a little. You have chosen a creative profession, so don't be afraid to take a template or sample and make it your own (as long as it contains the basics such as relevant work experience, your educational background, your technical skills and contact information). Remember, if it's not original, then it can't possibly be a good representation of you!

4) Why do I need to begin my resume with an "Objective" or "Career Goal"?

It's certainly not required. However, the "objective" or "career goal" is an opportunity to set yourself apart from other applicants. It allows prospective employers to see your heart and whether it is a match with their needs. Short, sweet and on target, your objective/goal should correspond with your employer's needs. If a salon owner wants to hire a young stylist and train them to be a master stylist who will stay with the salon for years, then make sure your objective includes things like learning the ropes and becoming one of the top-earners at a salon.

5) How long should it be?

Generally, a resume should be no more than one (1) page in length, and there should be plenty of white space so that it doesn't look overwhelming and unorganized.

Emphasize your strengths rather than including every possible resume section. If you do not have community service experience but have attended lots of industry events, skip the community service/interests section and emphasize industry experience instead.



6) What should I avoid putting in my resume?

Make sure that all the contact information on your resume is current and appropriate. The email address partygirl@beautymail.com may not make as good of an impression on a potential employer as clarecouture@beautymail.com. You may wish to leave out references to your age, religious or political affiliations, marital status or other personal data.

One thing you definitely want to leave out: typos! Have a teacher, friend or family member review your resume carefully before sending it out.

7) How creative can I get?

Be creative with format, but keep it clean, classy and easy to read. Your resume should be a single piece of paper. However, if you are an artistic soul, graphics may be appropriate.

8) What kinds of things make me stand out?

Winning a competition like Beacon is a great way to distinguish your resume from that of other applicants! Have you won any awards for perfect attendance or outstanding effort? Were/are you a member of a sports team or community organization? Have you entered any competitions or shows? Include this type of information on your resume to help you stand out!

Also, don't forget to make a note on your resume that says, "Portfolio available upon request." Not everyone will have a professional portfolio of before and after photographs of their work, but you will because you have gone through the Beacon entry process!

9) What if I've never had any "real" paid jobs—just self-employment, volunteer or odd jobs?

Have you volunteered in your community? Worked in a family business? Been a baby sitter for younger siblings or neighbors? Did you style the hair and do the makeup of half of the senior class for prom? These are all activities that show that you are responsible and a hard worker! Don't exaggerate your experience, but do present it in a professional and positive light.

10) What if I don't quite have a degree or credentials yet?

You can say something like:

ABC Beauty School—anticipated graduation in June 2008.

Cosmetology License anticipated June 2008.

Will take state license exam in June 2008.