



Writing Objective Statements

Ready Reference ♦ E-5

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Should I include a career objective on my résumé? This is a question often asked by job seekers of all ages. Opinions on the issue are varied. Human resources professionals prefer applicants to include career objectives on résumés primarily because the objective assists the Human Resources Department to correctly route résumés to the proper departments. It also indicates where the résumé should be filed for future review if current positions are not available. Hiring managers, however, may be indifferent since they are able to assess your qualifications and how they would best benefit the organization.

The final decision on whether to include a career objective is yours. Before making that final judgment, however, develop a complete understanding of a career objective's function and of possible variations in writing it.

Three Purposes of a Career Objective:

1. It provides a reference point in constructing your résumé so that you select only the most important and relevant information about yourself to include in the résumé.
2. It can make a connection between the targeted position you seek and the type of position an employer is offering.
3. It can assure a prospective employer that you have career goals and direction.

Every résumé you submit to an employer should be targeted to a specific position and employer, starting with the career objective. Even if you have several different career options in mind for a given organization, remember that one general résumé will not be an effective self-marketing tool for every position.

Types of Objective Statements

Statement of Professional Position

This objective simply states a professional title.

Examples: Mechanical Engineer
Project Manager

Statement Reflecting Functional Area

This objective provides the area of interest, type of position, and skill level.

Examples:

- “An internship in electrical engineering.”

- “A co-op in industrial engineering and management.”
- “An entry-level position in chemical engineering.”
- “An entry-level environmental position.”
- “An entry-level position in pharmaceutical sales.”

Statement of Functional Skills and Preferences

This objective indicates your preferences in areas such as geographic location, employment sector, or organizational size. In addition, it identifies your practical skills.

Examples:

- “A position in a large, high-tech organization requiring network design skills.”
- “An entry-level 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 Formats

This objective specifies both your short-term goal and your long-term ambition.



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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

This objective serves the same purpose as the statement of functional skills and preferences, but is more direct.

Examples:

- “Seeking an industrial engineering position in manufacturing, offering outstanding technical and communication skills.”
- “Seeking a supervisory position in telecommunications, offering practical experience in communications management and proficiency in the analysis and resolution of network system problems.”
- “Seeking the position of store manager, offering a proven record of high performance and a passion for retail management.”

Tips for Writing Objective Statements

Be specific:

- Employers want to know what job fits you. They seek employees who have clear-cut career goals. Be sure to be direct and to the point in your objective.

State only one desired work type or position in a single objective:

- Stating multiple functional areas of work interest conveys indecisiveness, a lack of career direction, or that the résumé has not been tailored to a specific position.

Avoid using cliché phases:

- “a challenging and interesting position”
- “opportunity for advancement”
- “dealing with people”
- “a progressive organization”

Make your objective unique:

- Remember that your goal is to write a résumé that distinguishes you from other applicants. By writing a unique and powerful objective that is straight to the point, you will stand out to recruiters as they read numerous résumés with similar sounding, broad objectives.

Develop an objective and résumé which is employer-focused rather than self-focused:

- Use your objective to state the contributions you can make to the position, not what you expect from an employer. In other words, concentrate on what you bring to the employer rather than what you hope to gain from the experience.

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