



SIBURT INSTITUTE

for Church Ministry

Preparing a Resume

A written introduction of yourself regarding your experience and qualifications, your resume may go through many channels and pass through many hands. Those reading your resume, often a stranger, will decide whether or not to contact you. Therefore, a resume should be prepared in order to make a good first impression. Below are guidelines intended to assist you in preparing a resume that will introduce yourself in the best manner possible. Please keep in mind that a resume does not get you a job, rather it is intended to get you an interview for a job.

General Guidelines

1. **Limit the length to one-two pages.** Save details for the interview.
2. **Consider having a photo included with the resume.** Resumes with photos tend to get more attention, but only use a photo if you believe it contributes positively to your resume.
3. **Be Personable.** Search committees want to know who you are and how you relate to others. Much of ministry has to do with who you are as a person, your character, and your interpersonal skills.
4. **Consider the quality and appearance as you choose the general layout, fonts, printer paper, and copies.** Remember your resume will likely serve as a first impression to the search committee.
5. **Proofread the resume.** Check it carefully. Then ask someone who pays attention to details to proofread.
6. **Store the resume in multiple electronic formats.** It is best to have back-up copies, and since your resume is never a finished product. You will make periodic revisions throughout your ministry.

Essential Information

- **Complete Name**
- **Contact Information:** List your local and permanent address with phone numbers and e-mail address so you may be easily reached at all times. If you have a personal or ministry-related website, include the URL if the site reflects your skills and/or relates to your ministry goals.
- **Personal Information:** This may include a brief statement of your faith journey and other pertinent information.

- **Education:** high school and college graduation dates and if necessary, expected graduation dates. Include your college major(s) and minor(s). Instead of noting your GPA, include your academic abilities by listing awards, honors, and memberships in school organizations. Churches will want to know how well you relate to others, not only your abilities as a student.
- **Ministry-Related Experience:** List your experience chronologically, with the most recent job first. Include both paid and unpaid positions with a brief description of responsibilities and accomplishments in each position.
- **Other Work Experience:** Be sure to highlight skills, responsibilities, and accomplishments applicable to ministerial work.
- **Hobbies, Interests, Extracurricular Activities:** These give additional insights to who you are and may spotlight other skills which could be useful in ministry.
- **Endorsements for Ministry (if any):** These would include licensing and ordination by a church. If applicable, list the church, city, state, and date.
- **Personal Statement:** Write a paragraph explaining your particular approach to ministry. Do you focus on programs, parents, Bible studies, relationships, etc? Do you have a general plan or strategy for doing ministry?
- **References:** List about four people who know you and your abilities well. Always ask their permission first. Do not list relatives. Find references with different roles. List their name, how they know you, their address, phone number, and e-mail. (This can also be done as a separate document. If you are working with Siburt Institute in a job search process, we recommend that you not place references on your resume. You can supply them at a later point with a prospective congregation—when asked. This recommendation rests on the fact that your resume may be seen by various people. You may not wish people contacting your references without your knowledge.)

Resume Formats: Chronological, Functional, and Hybrid

The most common type of resume is a Chronological Resume which lists your education and experience in reverse chronological order. This is most commonly preferred among employers. Seminary students may have limited ministry experience, and might consider preparing a Functional Resume. The format is designed to emphasize qualifications and have less emphasis on employers and dates. The function format is helpful when:

- Your objective is very different from your experience.
- You desire to emphasize skills/abilities not used in recent work experience.
- Your most predominant or relevant experience has been unpaid, either through volunteer work, college or seminary education.
- Your experience has been gained in different, relatively unconnected jobs.
- You are an older worker seeking to emphasize a lengthy job history.
- You are entering the job market after an absence. ¹

¹ Material adapted from Baylor University Department of Religion, Ministry Placement Guidance.

Resume Template Guides

[ACU Career Center](#)

[Job Hero](#)

[University of Northwestern St. Paul](#)

[Westminster Theological Seminary](#)

[Columbia International University](#)