

Resumes: Writing Your Summary of Qualifications or Professional Highlights

The Summary of Qualifications section on your resume contains three to five brief statements that say why you're the best prospect for the job you want (your job objective).

What Goes in Your Summary of Qualifications?

When we say "Summary of Qualifications," we mean "Summary of Qualifications **for your job objective.**" Remember, your resume is a marketing piece for your next job, not the story of your whole life. So, rather than summing up your entire career in your Summary of Qualifications, you just need to write about how you qualify for the next step in your career: *your resume job objective.*

In your Summary section, you can write about your experience, credentials, expertise, personal values, work ethic, background, or anything that qualifies you for the job you're going for. You're free to make claims, drop names, and do your best to entice the reader to finish reading the resume. Remember, all claims must be substantiated later when you write the body of the resume, so be honest while giving yourself full credit.

- A good summary conveys your professional niche while highlighting your most important and relevant skills.
- Serves as a roadmap for the rest of your resume. Ensure the rest of your resume supports the summary.
- Begin with a personal positioning statement which defines who you are.
- Length should be no more than 1/5 of the page.
- If the reader read no further than your summary, he or she should have a good idea of what you can do.
- An objective statement can be incorporated into the summary as the last sentence, if desired.
- Beware of generic statements, such as "I am well organized and detail oriented." Employers want to hear your **unique** voice and get a sense of your communication skills while reading the summary portion of your resume.

Brainstorm for Good Summary Statements

Here are some questions and examples to help you come up with strong summary statements: **1. How much experience do you have in this profession, in this field, or using the required skills?**

Example: Someone staying in the field of financial management might answer, "I've worked as a financial manager for a mid-sized company for the last 14 years."

Summary Statement: 14 years as the financial manager of a company with current sales of \$75 million.

2. Imagine your best friend is talking to the hiring person for the job you want. What would your friend say about you that would make the employer want to call you for an interview?

Example: The best friend of a job hunter desiring an editorial position with a newspaper might answer, "She even won the Pulitzer Prize! No one from the *Examiner* had ever done that before."

Summary Statement: First syndicated journalist at the *Examiner* to receive the Pulitzer Prize.

3. How is success measured in the position mentioned in your objective statement? How do you measure up?

Example: A software developer wishing to make a move into technical writing might answer, "Many different users have told me that my explanations are easy to understand."

Summary Statement: Reputation for writing clear and concise explanations for technical and nontechnical users.

4. What is it about your personality that makes this job a good fit for you?

Example: A customer service representative staying in the same field might answer, "I am very diplomatic, so I get good results."

Summary Statement: Outstanding diplomacy that consistently produces win-win results for customers and company.

5. What personal commitments or passions do you have that would be valued by the employer?

Example: Someone wanting to lead an environmental organization might answer, "I am committed to educating people about industrial waste hazards that are endangering the environment."

Summary Statement: Strong commitment to preserving nature through education about environmental hazards.

6. Do you have any technical, linguistic, or artistic talents that would be useful on the job?

Example: Someone applying to be a teacher in a multilingual school might answer, "I can speak Spanish, Italian, and Russian."

Summary Statement: Multilingual: Spanish/English/Italian/Russian.

Examples:

Sample Summary Template

_____ (who you are, i.e. "Mechanical Engineer at the Master's (PhD) level") with thorough understanding of _____, _____, _____, and _____. Advanced training, education and research focused on the development (advancement) of _____ (technology) and its application to _____ (industry, population, product, result, etc.) Strong _____ and _____ skills (soft skills) honed through leadership roles involving _____ and _____.
(Objective Statement): Seeking a position as a _____ in the _____ industry.

Professional Highlights:

Extensive management experience including working closely with governance boards; hiring and managing staffs of various sizes; fundraising; strategic planning and budgeting; contracting and managing musicians and performers; and planning and supervising community educational programs

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Adept in data analysis, using both primary and secondary data, software applications including: *Microsoft Word ♦ Microsoft Excel ♦ Microsoft PowerPoint ♦ Microsoft Access ♦ Stata ♦ Python.*
- Effective communicator, skilled in presenting complex concepts in straightforward ways
- Bilingual, English and Spanish: speak fluently, as well as write and translate in both languages
- Proficient in Mandarin Chinese: four semesters of language study at Brandeis University
- Experienced in time management, establishing priorities, and complying with deadlines.
- Proven leadership and team-building abilities.
- Thorough understanding of government regulations through work with agencies such as BOEM, EPA, FDA, & OSHA.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience in research and history structures
- Experience and knowledge in preparing documentation
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills
- Proficient if using MS Office Applications and Windows Applications
- Ability to conduct research and investigation

Biomedical Research •Pharmaceutical Research

Recent **Biotechnology** graduate with emphasis on research and new product development seeks position in pharmaceutical testing and research laboratory. Technical skills include laboratory, field research, and data analysis. Strategic and logical thinker with outstanding cross-cultural skills developed through overseas study and travel. Fluent in German.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Staff Editor for The Archaeological Review
- Trained in expository, media and academic writing
- Developed archival system for museum film collection
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, SASS and Macintosh programs

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Five years teaching experience at the postsecondary and secondary levels with students diverse in age, ability and ethnicity.
- Areas of teaching competence include Biology, Advanced Placement Biology, Evolution, Human Physiology, Marine Biology, Family Life and Human Sexuality, among others.
- Experienced in developing course curricula as well as executing field trips, laboratory exercises, and other activities beyond traditional lectures.

From: <http://susanireland.com/resume/how-to-write/summary> and Lehigh Career Services