Structuring an effective resume

Your resume is the first impression that an interviewer has of you, and should be short (no more than 2 pages) and easy to read. It cannot and should not tell everything about you - it should be direct, effective and professional.

Your resume is a selling tool. Why have others been glad they hired you? It should stress both your areas of expertise and what you have accomplished. It should paint a clear picture of you and differentiate you from others.

Your resume should fit you and speak to your values.

All resumes should contain the following information:

- Heading - name, address, phone, e-mail address
- Objective - (optional) a concise statement of what you want to do.
- Summary of Qualifications - a summary of experience, areas of expertise, technical or professional skills and any distinctions. This should include the strongest arguments for hiring you for the work defined in your objective.
- Employment History - company names, dates employed and job titles.
- Responsibilities Statement - under each job title, a summary of general duties and special assignments. Could include departments supervised, number of direct reports, size of business and/or budget managed. One paragraph is appropriate for recent jobs; one sentence for older jobs is adequate.
- Accomplishment Statement - under each job title, three to four (one to two for older jobs) key achievements and contributions. Quantification is important, so use numbers and percentages wherever possible.
- Education - a summary of your educational background, including degree, university and date.
- Professional Development and Training - listing of additional training that is relevant to your job objective.
- Memberships - include memberships and offices held in professional associations, boards and community activities.
- Publications - list the titles of publications that you authored that are relevant to your objective.

In this digital age it is IMPERATIVE that your resume be keyword-rich, i.e. that it contains the specific language associated with your area of functional expertise.