**Resume Preparation Guidelines**

A well-prepared resume is your personal marketing document. It highlights your skills, experience, and accomplishments in a way that appeals to potential employers. Use these guidelines to create a clear, effective, and professional resume.

**1. Contact Information**

* **Full Name:** Clearly state your full name at the top.
* **Phone Number & Email:** Use professional contact details.
  + **Additional Tip:** Verify that your name, email address, and phone number are current. Use a professional email address (e.g., outlook.com) consistently.
* **Location:** Include your city and state (full address is optional).
* **Online Presence:** Add links to professional social media accounts (e.g., LinkedIn, GitHub) and ensure URLs are hyperlinked for easy access.

**2. Professional Summary or Objective**

* **Summary:** Write approximately three sentences describing who you are, your career direction, and why you'll bring value to the company.
* **Top Third Focus:** The top third of your resume is critical—ensure it showcases your best skills, experience, and achievements.
* **Tailor for the Role:** Customize your summary to align with the role you’re applying for.

**3. Work Experience**

* **Job Titles & Companies:** List your positions with company names and locations.
* **Dates of Employment:** Use month and year for start and end dates.
* **Reverse–Chronological Order:** Start with your most recent role and work backward.
  + Use the present tense for your current role and past tense for previous roles.
  + Include only roles from the previous 10–15 years.
* **Achievements & Responsibilities:**
  + Use bullet points with action-packed verbs to describe your tasks.
  + **Additional Tip:** Cut the fluff—focus on the most relevant accomplishments. Add details and numbers to quantify your success (e.g., “Increased sales by 20%”).
* **Promotions & Military Experience:**
  + Draw attention to promotions by describing the skills and responsibilities that came with each advancement.
  + Remove military jargon; use plain language so civilian hiring managers understand your experience.

**4. Education**

* **Degrees & Certifications:** List your highest degree first.
* **Institutions & Graduation Dates:** Include the institution’s name and your graduation year.
* **Coursework Descriptions:**
  + **Additional Tip:** If you’re new to a field (for example, IT), add a brief description of relevant coursework to showcase technical skills. This can be included under education or experience if it highlights key skills.

**5. Skills**

* **Hard Skills:** Include technical abilities such as software, tools, and programming languages.
* **Soft Skills:** List interpersonal skills like teamwork, leadership, and communication.
* **Action Verbs:** Use specific action verbs to describe your experiences—avoid generic words like “managed” or “communicated.”
* **Certifications:** Mention any relevant certifications that add value to your profile.

**6. Special Sections (As Needed)**

* **Military Experience:**
  + Highlight military promotions and responsibilities.
  + Use language that translates military achievements into civilian terms.
* **Volunteer Work, Awards & Accomplishments:** Include these if they strengthen your application.

**7. Formatting and Design Tips**

* **File Naming:**
  + Name your resume file properly to simplify tracking for both you and the hiring manager.
  + *Example Format:* Fname\_Lname\_Resume\_Company\_Role (e.g., Mo.Radke\_resume\_GDIT\_Analyst).
* **Font and Size:**
  + Set your font size between 10–12 points.
  + Choose a readable and attractive font such as Segoe UI, Verdana, Arial, or Helvetica.
* **Consistency:**
  + Apply design and formatting choices consistently.
  + Use uniform subheadings (if one is bold, ensure all are bold).
* **Margins & White Space:**
  + Use default margin sizes to frame your resume properly.
  + Balance text and white space to make the document easy to skim.

**8. Final Checklist**

* **Tailor Your Resume:**
  + Adjust your resume to fit the specific role’s description, integrating key skills throughout.
* **Relevance:**
  + Include only roles and education from the previous 10–15 years.
  + Avoid listing every job you’ve ever had; focus on what’s relevant.
* **Brevity:**
  + Keep your resume to one or two pages by removing irrelevant or redundant details.
* **Quantify Achievements:**
  + Add context and numbers to your accomplishments for clarity.
* **Omit Unnecessary Phrases:**
  + Skip “References Available Upon Request” since hiring managers know they can ask for references if needed.
* **Proofread:**
  + Check for typos and grammatical errors.
  + Use tools like Microsoft Word’s spell checker and have a friend or mentor review your resume for feedback.