

Summary of Qualifications/Skills Summary for Your Resume

Many applicants choose to put a list of skills or qualifications at the top of their resume. The goal of this section is to make it easier for the employer to see a demonstration of the key things they are looking for in an applicant.

When to Use It

If you are in a situation where you are trying to communicate skills/abilities from a variety of experiences (e.g. University projects and a number of different jobs), it could take time for the employer to see your core competencies quickly. In these cases, a summary section speeds up their first read of the resume.

When Not to Use It

If the first 2-3 key things on your resume (e.g. the first half of the page) quickly demonstrate your qualifications for the specific role, you don't need to provide a summary. In this case, this could slow down the reader's ability to see your competencies.

What to Call the Section

There are many different titles that describe this section. These include:

- Qualifications Summary
- Highlight of Qualifications
- Skills Summary
- Skills Highlights

You can call the section anything you like as long as the title describes what the section is about.

Key Principles in Creating a Skills Summary

- The reader is not looking for a list of all of your skills. Think about your most relevant 3-5 skills or competencies.
- Consider skills where you can explain specifically how you've developed them

Step One: Determine Which Skills or Qualifications to Highlight

Go back to your notes from the Position Requirements Analysis Tool to see which are the most important skills/qualifications and put them in your summary section in order of importance.

Step Two: Finding Your Examples

Think about an example where you demonstrated or learned that skill. The more specific the example, the better the statement. For example, if you state you learned a skill as part of your academic program, it's important to think of one example (course or projects) where you used the skills. Ideally, the example will allow you to clearly elaborate on what you did, how you did it and quantify any accomplishments.

Step Three: Writing The Statements

As you write the statements, remember that the reader will look at your document from top to bottom and left to right. This means putting the most important skills at the top of your list and inserting the core skill as close to the beginning of the bullet point as possible.

Example One: Leadership Skills

In this case, the student was the chair of an events committee for a student group.

Skill: Leadership

Connector Word: Demonstrated

Where: Chair, Events Committee, DEM Society

How: Lead a committee of five students to organize, market and hold five events for students.

Accomplishment: Increased student participation by **10%**

Statement on resume: Demonstrated leadership skills as chair of the events committee where I led five students in the organization of five student events with an attendance increase of 25% over previous year.

Example Two: Data Management

In this case, the student volunteered in a medical clinic.

Skill: Data management

Connector Word: Developed

Where: Receptionist, Dr. Samir Khan's Medical Office

How: Effectively managed patient records and maintained a patient database in a busy medical clinic

Accomplishment: Managed records for over 200 patients

Statement on resume: Developed data management skills by maintaining the patient database in Dr. Khan's office for over 200 patients.

Example Three: Research

In this case, the student participated in the Research Opportunity Program with a professor.

Skill: Research

Connector Word: Developed

Where: Research Opportunity Program with Professor Tsang

How: Conducted literature searches using PubMed and MEDLINE for Professor Tsang's pharmaceutical research project

Accomplishment: Included in the contributor's list for the published article.

Statement on resume: Developed research skills by supporting Professor Tsang's pharmaceutical research project including conduction literature searches using PubMed and Medline and was included in contributor's list for the published article.

Skills Summary Worksheet

Skills Sought by Employer (remember to put these in order of importance for your reader)	Connector words: developed, demonstrated, gained, displayed etc.	Where and how (including accomplishment) i.e. job title, company, school

Resources

- Position Requirements Analysis
- Outcome-Based Statements Tools
- Sample Resumes on the Career Centre Website
- Resume Critiques