

RESUME HEADERS

Headers are used to summarize the **key highlights** of your experiences, skills, and job history. Think of your header almost like an **elevator pitch** – you’re trying to convince the reviewer to keep reading your resume by showing them a preview of what you have to offer.

A header is not required. It’s up to you to decide whether you’d like to use a header, depending on how you would like to communicate your experience to employers.

Headers are usually put at the top of your resume, below your name. Make sure you name your header based on the type you chose, do not write “header” on your resume.

Some common types of headers include:

Capabilities

A bulleted list, with the most important or relevant items first. Bullet points can make this section easier and quicker to read.

Professional Summary

A short paragraph, typically 4-5 sentences long. Summaries allow you to tell a narrative, or a story, about who you are.

Core Competencies

A few keywords in a list. Core competencies are typically soft skills. Technical skills are included in the “skills” section.

No header

Some people choose not to include a header. It may be because they want to save space, or they feel that their other sections already contain the information that’s in the header.

Below, we’ll go into more detail about how to write each of these types of headers.

CAPABILITIES

Capabilities typically take the form of a **list** of your key experiences, skills, and knowledge areas. It's almost like a "table of contents" about you. What are the most important about you that you would want an employer to know?

There isn't a required number of bullet points to include, just be mindful of length. The advantage of the capabilities section is that it should be **quick and easy to read**.

Example

CAPABILITIES

- Proven ability to provide case management services and connect clients to community resources.
- Strong conflict mitigation and problem solving skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including conversational Spanish
- Experience with community outreach and client advocacy
- Knowledge of program evaluation techniques including data collection and report writing

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies are also a list, but it will feature keywords rather than phrases or sentences. Core competencies are a list of skills, however, they operate differently from your "Skills" section.

Your "Skills" section typically for listing more technical skills such as language, programs you may know how to use, or artistic skills. Core competencies will more likely house **transferable skills** such as communication, collaboration, or leadership.

Think of core competencies almost like **#hashtags** on a social media post. They're a quick and brief way of showcasing your top strengths.

Example

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Casework
- Research
- Organization

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A professional summary is a short paragraph (typically 4-5 sentences.) Professional summaries allow you to tell a **story** about how your previous experiences, your skills, your interests make you a great fit for the job. Always **tailor** your professional summary for each role you apply for.

A typical professional summary will include some, if not all, of the following:

- Your areas of interest
- Your specialty or area(s) of expertise
- Skills related to the role
- Noteworthy achievements or personal qualities
- Transferrable skills, especially those that may set you apart from other candidates

Examples

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Highly motivated BSW graduate with experience in social services, including direct practice and program administration. Trained in and committed to trauma-informed treatment modalities. Passionate about working with individuals and groups to promote optimum mental and emotional health. Experienced leader with the ability to engage, relate to, and manage individuals from varying backgrounds while promoting team values.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

LMSW passionate about working in the medical social work field, with 3+ experience working in community clinics. Practiced in patient advocacy, discharge planning, and connecting patients with culturally relevant resources. Strong interpersonal skills, with a compassionate approach to helping patients and their families navigate the healthcare system.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

LMSW with 4+ years of experience mentoring, counseling, and supporting young adults in their personal development. Skilled in individual and group counseling, fostering safe and inclusive spaces for clients to share experiences with courageous vulnerability. Successfully delivered and developed social-emotional learning programs for 50+ students at 3 community colleges.