A Checklist for Resumes

❏ Is the resume pleasing to the eye? It should be balanced, not crowded at the top or off to one side.

❏ Is all necessary information included? (Check for the student's name, address, telephone number, and email address. Review and ask questions about education, professional or related experience, and other experience.) References are not usually unless requested. Sometimes, resumes include a line indicating that references will be furnished upon request.

❏ Is the email address appropriate for a prospective employer? It should contain the applicant's name and not be cavalier or suggestive.

❏ Has the writer eliminated all unnecessary information (such as gender, marital status, number of children, political or religious affiliation)?

❏ Are the parts logically and effectively arranged?

❏ Is the length appropriate? Unless there is a good reason, a resume should generally be no longer than one page and certainly no longer than two pages.

❏ If an objective is included, is it accurate? (As a professional or career objective, students sometimes write that they seek "an entry-level position as a…," but an entry-level position is an immediate objective, not a long-term goal. Applicants should focus on how the job fits into their career goals, not just their short-term job goals.)

❏ If a summary statement is included, would it catch the prospective employer's eye and begin to answer the question, "What can this person do for me/my company?" Does it succinctly showcase qualifications, strengths, and accomplishments, highlighting specific areas of expertise and the applicant's commitment to them?

❏ Are education and work history (and other such information) in reverse chronological order, with most recent activities listed first?

❏ Has the writer considered all relevant experience, such as volunteer work, internships, course

work, and school projects?

❏ Are job descriptions unnecessarily wordy? (For example, phrases like "responsible for" can often be omitted or tightened.) Furthermore, has the writer emphasized his or her strengths without exaggerating or misleading the reader?

❏ In lists, are all the items in parallel grammatical form? (For example, the list "writing proposals, trained new employees, planned staff meetings, Employee of the Year" is not parallel A parallel version is "wrote proposals, trained new employees, planned staff meetings, earned Employee of the Year award.")

❏ Is the resume error free? Misspellings, grammatical mistakes, and other errors may cause employers to ask, "If this person is careless in writing a resume, what kind of work can I expect from him or her?"

source: *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors* by Leigh Ryan and Lisa Zimmerelli, fifth edition.