

Pro-Tips Resume

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) or Applicant Scanning Software (ASS) are used by employers to weed out candidates. They program the software to scan resumes for specific key words from their job description. Some ATS will not be able to differentiate titles such as Clinical Nurse II and Registered Nurse. Other systems may not be able to distinguish between the terms BLS and Basic Life Support. Use the verbiage on the job description.

Reverse Chronological format is recommended for new nursing graduates.

- Showcase your work experience in reverse chronological order. Most recent to least recent.
- Have work experience to showcase. Ex: CNA jobs, Patient Advocate, Nursing Assistant positions.
- Clinical experience is a requirement of your program. Every BSN student will graduate with a similar experience so this does not need to be elaborated on as work experience.

Contact Header:

Name

Nursing Credentials in appropriate order, see below

City/State

Phone number

Appropriate Email address

LinkedIn profile

Professional Summary is encouraged.

Ex: 4+ years nursing experience with strong clinical background in critical care (CCU) and intermediate care nursing (IMCU). Proactively streamlines operations, initiating tasks and supporting healthcare team, while prioritizing excellent patient care. Champions patient and family education by providing compassionate, inclusive care that encourages self-sufficiency.

Education Section Suggested Format:

Bachelor Degree in Nursing (BSN)

University of Rhode Island-Kingston, RI

Skills & Certifications Section should be next. This is particularly important for nursing because of the specific requirements

- List EMR that you are experience with.
- List Certifications like this: *Basic Life Support (BLS), American Heart Association, expires: 12/1/2017*

Licensure should be listed like this:

- *Registered Nurse - California, #RN00101, expires: 4/17/2018.*
- *Always include your license number and expiration date because this shows employers that you are ready to start work ASAP and don't have to wait for a licensing process.*

According to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (AACN) the preferred order is:

- Highest degree earned- EX: BS, BSN, BA, AD, ADN
- Licensure credentials- EX: RN, LPN, CNA
- State Designations-EX: APRN (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse), CNS (Clinical Nurse Specialist)
- National Certifications- EX: RNBC (Registered Nurse-Board Certified) and FNP-BC (Family Nurse Practitioner-Board Certified)

Work Experience Section:

- They want to see that you have worked and have experience in the field. They want to see customer service skills and side jobs that you have had.
- List job title first. Use either the title of the job description or an industry-wide job title. Ex: Registered Nurse instead of Clinical Nurse II.
- Example of an appropriate bullet point: *Cared for up to 4 patients per shift with acute neurological disorders including: strokes, spinal cord injuries and head trauma.*

Pro Tips- Interviewing

The in person interview is a chance for the hiring manager to determine how they feel about you, how you will fit within their unit, your level of enthusiasm, your strengths.

- They want to know that you are committed and passionate about the job.
- They want to know that you will show up for shift on time.
- They want to know that you have the work ethic for someone in healthcare. This won't be a 9-5 job unless you work at a doctor's office that opens at 9 and closes at 5.

Do your research:

- Review the company or facility mission and purpose.
- Dress professionally for the interview.
- Practice, practice, practice. Do a mock interview.

Clean up your social media!!

- Have appropriate profile photos on all accounts. Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram.
- Never post anything on social media about your work environment, colleagues, patients, or supervisors that is negative!
- Change your privacy settings.
- Do not immediately 'friend' your boss on Facebook. Rather, connect with them on LinkedIn.

Employers will use behavioral interview questions because they want to see how you think, how you react, how you solve problems, how you show initiative, and what you value.

- You are never too good or over qualified for a position after exiting college! Ex. Just because you changed a bed pan as a CNA does not mean you will not have to as an RN and BSN. It also doesn't mean that you won't have to do that with a PhD, NP, MD, or PA.
- Employers will not appreciate arrogance or entitlement.
- When answering behavioral questions:
 - Story telling is the most memorable. Tell real life stories and examples about your unique experiences as a nurse or in other positions. Use the STAR Method for answers- Situation, Task, Action, Results.

Example:

Situation: "I love to get to know my patients. It was my first day of my second travel nursing assignment. I met my first patient, Elizabeth, and she was doing well managing her labor and was in good spirits awaiting the birth of her son, Cedric. Her husband laughed at the way I pronounced the name of their hometown, Puyallup."

Task: "After about 20 minutes of tracking the baby's heartbeat, I noticed that it was dropping."

Action:

"I explained to Elizabeth that her baby may not like her laying on the right side so I helped her onto her left side and asked her to take slow, deep breaths. I observed for a few minutes without increase and then turned Elizabeth back to her right side. Her baby's heartbeat did not increase. I told Elizabeth that she would be just fine and asked her husband to coach her breathing. I called the Midwife and continued to coach Elizabeth through her breathing. Her Midwife, Audrey, decreased the Pitocin and explained to Elizabeth that if the baby's heart rate did not increase, she would be sent for an emergency cesarean section."

Result: "Happily, my close observation and care resulted in the vaginal birth of a beautiful baby boy named, Cedric. I remain in contact with Elizabeth and her family on Facebook. She often sends me photos of Cedric, even now, 2 years later. I ended up extending my contract at that facility and was offered a Charge Nurse position. I learned that building a strong connection with my patient from the start can have positive lasting results. And, it's just who I am."

Follow up with a thank you card! -Never underestimate the power of this. Many candidates will not follow up at all so this is a huge plus for you. You can also send an email. Just know that a physical card is often times the winner.

Example follow up:

Carrie,

I enjoyed our conversation and look forward to meeting with your team on June 30th. It sounds like my three years' experience in a level 1 trauma center will benefit your unit and I'm excited to learn from you as well! Thank you for your time.

With thanks,

Your name

Potential Nursing Interview Questions:

1. Describe a situation when you had to work closely with a difficult coworker. How did you handle the situation? Were able to build a relationship with this person?
2. Talk about a conflict within your healthcare team. What was the conflict and how did you handle it?
3. Tell me about a time when a patient's family was dissatisfied with your care. How did you handle that situation?
4. What approach did you take in communicating with people who do not know medical jargon? Give an example of a time you explained medical terminology to someone who is not medically trained.
5. Talk about a time you worked in a fast-paced setting. How do you prioritize tasks while maintaining excellent patient care?
6. Describe your experience with a very ill patient who required a lot of your time. How did you manage this patient's care while ensuring your other patients were adequately cared for?
7. Give an example of a time when you were able to successfully persuade a patient to agree to something. How did you persuade this person?
8. Describe a time when you were the resident medical expert. What did you do to make sure everyone was able to understand you?
9. What is one professional accomplishment that you are most proud of and why?
10. Talk about a challenging situation or problem where you took the lead to correct it instead of waiting for someone else to do it.

Questions for you to ask:

- What would a successful first year in this position look like to you?
- How will a new person in this role be trained?
- Could you tell me about a nurse who really excels at their job, what makes their performance so outstanding?
- How will my performance be evaluated?
- What is your timeline for getting back to candidates about next steps?