RESUMES

<u>SOME RULES OF THUMB</u>

- Resumes are completely subjective: each resume should be tailored to a specific job or situation. Think snowflakes.
- Employers are only interested in relevant information
- Resumes are you on paper. Make your document reflect that.
- Use a positive tone and attitude: pretend you are the bee's knees; pretend that without you, all former employers would tanked. Your employer already wants you, they just don't know it yet. Show them.
- Omit negative connotation. Take creative liberty in what you include, but remember to be honest.

<u>WHERE DO I START?</u>

1. **Write *everything* down:** It's a good idea to have a master list of all your work, volunteer, and leadership experience, including names and numbers of previous employers in case you need to provide references. This does not have to be pretty, nor will all this information fit on your official resume, but it allows you to keep track of what you may want to share with employers

2. **Identify what you want:** Because resumes are always subjective (they differ for every situation) situational differences are going to influence how you build your resume. So take the time to decide: is this for an internship? A part-time job? A long-term position?

3. **Research:** Once you've decided what you want, becoming informed about the employer and position is absolutely necessary. If the employer has a job posting, and there are specific job requirements and/or specific phrasing being used, it's in your best interest to incorporate them into your own descriptions wherever they apply. Copy the leopard's spots: camouflage your resume in their essence.

4. **Content:** Now it's time to decide what experiences to include in your resume. Go back to that master list and put yourself in the employer's shoes: what would they want out of an employee? Lean on your research for this, but if you find yourself lacking relevant experiences, be creative. Look at your previous experiences from new angles. For example, if you're applying to a retail position, but only have experience in childcare, you might talk about your ability to function efficiently in a high-stress, customer service-driven environment. Similarly, if you're applying for a finance internship and your only experience is as a cashier, you might discuss your ability to mentally evaluate numbers and sums.

5. **Pick a layout:** Now's the time to format all the information you painstakingly gathered and typed up. Find a template online (or in this packet) that you like. Depending on

your field, you may need to keep it fairly traditional (e.g., accounting, hospitality/business management) or you may have some room to get a little more creative (e.g., publishing, arts). Briefly, the important thing is to be consistent and neat.

6. **Revise, revise, revise!** One typo can completely change an employer's opinion of you. Make sure you have a second pair of eyes look it over.

<u>WHAT SHOULD MY RESUME INCLUDE?</u>

The Basics:

- Name and contact information, including a professional email
- Education - this is where you list what degrees you're working toward and what institutions you've attended

Relevant Information: This is where you decide which of your previous jobs, classes, and experiences will showcase your skills the best for this particular application.

- Relevant Experience - job title, company name, dates you worked there, and 2-3 bullet points describing your responsibilities at that job (use strong verbs - look at the list in this packet for ideas!)
- Relevant Coursework - if you're still in school and don't have much experience in the field you're applying to, this is a great way to showcase skills you might have gained in class. Choose one or two classes and describe the projects completed or skills learned in those classes.
- Expiration: It is important to note that sometimes information will no longer become relevant or important, so you can then eliminate it from your resume. For example, that time you worked at Jack In the Box in High School is great experience to mention when applying to work at the Dining Halls in College, but it is no longer relevant when you have your Bachelor Degree and you are trying to work for a Hilton. Information only stays so long as it demonstrates your qualifications for the job you are applying to.

Showcase Sections: Not always as detailed as your relevant work experience, these optional sections allow you to build a broader picture of yourself for your potential employer.

- Volunteer Experience - this can be similar to Relevant Work Experience if you've done a lot of community service or held long-term volunteer positions that relate to the job you're applying for
- Leadership Positions - show that you're a well-rounded person
- Skills - list relevant, significant skills you possess, such as speaking another language (or two!) or proficiency in a coding program. Do not include things like Microsoft Office that are pretty standard by now, or vague statements like "Good with people"

- Accomplishments & Awards - this can include academic honors, sports achievements, recognition from previous jobs, etc.

What Not to Include:

You may have learned to include an **objective** or **references**, or you may see space for these sections on some templates. Usually, neither is necessary. An objective only tells employers what they already know: you want to work for them. The only time this is helpful is if you are applying to a large company and want to make sure that your resume is considered for the correct position. It's usually assumed that you will provide references if the employer asks, so there's no need to include that statement on your resume. You only have so much space - use it wisely!

FORMATTING

- Different information is formatted differently! Think of formatting as a tool to emphasize certain things. You can use spacing, indentation, bold/italics, etc. as long as it looks coherent.
  - For instance, headers like "Education" and "Relevant Experience" might be bold or all-caps to make them easy to find, while the descriptions of your job responsibilities might be in bulleted lists to organize them.
- Use the whole page. Many people fill up the vertical space very quickly but have a lot of white paper left on the right side of the page. Try to organize your information horizontally as well as vertically.
- Dates of jobs/positions held are usually aligned along the right margin.