

Resume Tips

What is a Resume?

A resume is Your Advertisement! It summarizes your **education, accomplishments** and **experiences** to present the skills that are relevant to your career objectives.

A resume is a marketing tool designed to get you an interview. Your goal is to communicate your value and provide evidence of your capabilities **at a glance**.

Resumes are:

- Focused on **achievements** and **accomplishments** rather than job responsibilities
- Tailored towards **job target**
- Shared with **networking contacts**
- Used by recruiters and hiring managers to initially **evaluate your qualifications for a particular position**

TIP: Your resume is **not** a chronology of everything you have done. It highlights your skills and abilities to do a particular job. **Make a decision to edit down or eliminate altogether anything that does not match your target.**

How do I get started?

BRAINSTORM

Think about your experiences and accomplishments, both past and present. These may include: work experience, internships, summer jobs, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, student group leadership, research experience, academic and independent projects, publications.

Take an Inventory of your Skills:

Training/Education/Experience/ How you gained the skills

How you applied the skills

Benefits of results/usage of the skills - Is there a story?

When assessing skills consider what you did that....

- Solved a problem
- Increased something...media exposure, membership or participation
- Accomplished something that others thought could not be done
- Created a new and efficient way of completing a task
- Demonstrated leadership skills or team player skills
- Save an organization time and money

Crafting a Resume

The MASTER Resume

You will want to have on file a comprehensive document of all of your experience. This includes all paid work, volunteer, academic projects as well as all the skills you have developed and all the knowledge you have acquired through any experience. **Refer to this document whenever you will need to tailor a resume towards a particular role.**

The TAILORED Resume

Remember.....The most successful resumes are tailored for specific jobs.

Before you start writing your resume, think about how you can relate your previous experience to the responsibilities outlined in the job description.

Research the business or organization, review job descriptions – this will help you learn how to show how your skills can be valuable to an employer:

- ❖ **Read** job descriptions to identify skills and qualifications essential to the position
- ❖ **Review** employer websites to learn about the company mission, workplace culture, and values, key skills, industry-specific language
- ❖ **Conduct** informational interviews in the industry to learn about desired skills and experience

Show how your skills and experience are just what the employer needs. Expect to have multiple versions of your resume if you are applying to very different types of jobs. **A generic resume that is too broad will not be as effective in selling you to potential employers.**

What should my resume look like?

Format – Appearance matters

- Consistent, bold headings, font easy to read (no more than 11 pt.)
- Balance white space with text
- Keep it user friendly, and neat, avoid clutter

Branding Logo

- You may choose to use color, a logo or unique fonts related to your personal brand especially if you are in a creative field. Color and shading can be used to highlight sections of your resume, your name, borders to make them stand out.
- Match your colors for consistency on not only your resume but cover letter, business cards.

Did you know? According to the latest trends, a recruiter will scan your resume in **6 to 7 seconds** to determine if it will go into the “YES” pile for further review or the “NO” pile.

Headings

Include your name, e-mail address, phone number and LinkedIn URL. Your address is no longer necessary.

Be sure your email address is professional. Make sure that you customize your LinkedIn URL. If you have a website, you would like the employer to see, include it here.

Resume Profile (Branding Statement) or Summary - Optional

A summary is a quick snapshot (three unique phrases) of yourself that connects to the role you are pursuing. The summary should highlight your most significant capabilities, achievements and personality traits. *To do this effectively, research job descriptions in your target market to find out what employers want, and make summary statements about what you have to offer that best fit the position description.*

Branding Statements can be expanded into a *longer resume profile*, which is similar to a summary and is *a trend to include on the resume*. It clarifies and communicates what makes you special. Include: who you are, who you want to serve (target audience), how you differ from the competition (your unique niche). I have attached another document on creating a branding statement.

Skills – there is a trend to have a detailed Skills Section toward the top of the resume to showcase specific skills an employer may be looking for in an ideal candidate. At the recent Murrow Symposium in April, professionals in strategic communication suggested placing the Skill Section above the Education Section.

- List specific technology skills, soft skills, other skills related to the job description – take some time to assess and think about all your skills!

Core Skills: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Prezi, WordPress, Various Social Media Platforms, AP Style, Editing, Storyteller, Web design (HTML), Camera operation/DSLR, Cannon XA10, maybe include a couple of “soft skills” - customer service, problem solving.

Experience, Work History, Relevant Experience

- Bulleted format is easy to read and concise
- Include any experiences, paid or unpaid, summer jobs, internships, volunteer experience.
- Don't forget related skills you learned in class and projects! You can list experience you gained through your course work under *Relevant Experience*: (e.g. - creating, designing, working on a team to develop a PR campaign in your PR Management and Campaign course).
- Use Reverse chronological format
- State the position held, employer, location and dates of employment
- **Begin each phrase with an action verb** – avoid phrases like “responsibilities included.”
- Summarizes what you did in each bullet and make it **results oriented**. Quantify your accomplishments - “surpassed sales quota by 15%,” “trained and supervised 5 employees”, “increased donor contacts by 85%.”

Example of bulleted job accomplishments:

Experience

Public Relations Intern

Alumni Office, Washington State University – August 2017-August 2019

- *NOT: Jane is an excellent use of social media (not specific, need to start with action verb, needs to elaborate and quantify accomplishment)*
- *NOT: Worked on projects with others (not specific, quantify)*
- **Better:** Managed social media and marketing schedule for weekly alumni events
- **Better:** Created promotional content for social media platforms with a combined audience of over 6,000 followers (quantified)
- **Better:** Collaborated with university marketing staff to create seven long-term alumni outreach campaigns

Education – Trend for Education Section to be listed below Skill and Experience sections

- List institute, degree, major, year of graduation or expected graduation. Institution should be listed in reverse chronological order, most recent school first.
- Optional – You can include GPA usually if it is 3.5 or above.

Activities and Interests -

Include your current participation in clubs, other extracurricular activities or volunteer work.

List student organizations, professional associations, and community groups, and indicate any offices you've held. *If these are school related, you may choose to put them in the Education section.*

An Interests section at the end of your resume is optional. If you use one, list interests that demonstrate your uniqueness such as music, sports and the arts, or ones that relate to the job.

Final Tips

- Look at your resume as if you were the ***person doing the hiring***. Does your resume reflect the job description for which you are applying?
- Use online links or tools (LinkedIn). The viewer can see more about you and what you have accomplished. Incorporate your work in an online portfolio.
- Keep your resume, online tools, social media presence consistent with your personal brand.

(Resources: NACE, Northwestern University, College Resume Guide, CareerLadder, Murrow Professional Coaches, Public Relations Society of America)