



Resumes: *The Basics*

What is a Resume?

A resume is a marketing tool and its purpose is to help you get an interview by showing an employer your qualifications, skills, and experiences. It is normally a 1-2 page document that outlines your experiences related to a specific position that you are applying for with an organization.

Resume Guidelines:

- Target your resume to the specific job you are applying for (headings, descriptions, etc. may change depending on the position)
- Be consistent with format (font, headings, bullets, etc.)
- Use a professional looking font and 11-12 point font so that employers can easily read it
- Have at least two other people proofread your resume before sending it to anyone
- Lead with action verbs and write in phrases
- Use dates in your employment/experience sections
- Use resume paper (a light color) if you are mailing your resume to a prospective employer
- Be sure to always include a cover letter with your resume
- Make your resume unique—it is your document and marketing tool (there is not one “right” resume format)
- When possible, list accomplishments, not tasks

Different types of resumes:

- **Chronological** - A chronological resume lists experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent experience first)—this is the most common type of resume.
- **Functional** - A functional resume is organized by specific skills, experiences, and accomplishments—this format is often used by people who have “gaps” of time between experiences.
- **Scannable** - A scannable resume is used so that employers can scan your resume into a database and search for key words. It is best to use a really simple format for this type of resume so that it can be easily scanned. Don’t bold, underline, or put words in ALL CAPS, and don’t staple your resume if it is more than one page.
- **Electronic** - If an employer requests an electronic resume, you may want to check with the employer whether or not they would like your resume as an attachment in the email (with the cover letter as the message) or whether they want you to email your resume with your cover letter and resume being in the body of the message. If you are sending your resume as an attachment, send a PDF if possible.

Content Suggestions:

These are suggestions of different headings you may use in your resume. Be creative and remember that your headings may change depending on the position you are applying for.

- **Objective** - An objective is a short statement that explains what experience you are seeking and it provides focus for your resume.
- **Education** - List your degree, month and year of graduation first, followed by the name of your institution as well as the city and state of where the institution is located. You may want to also include any information about your focus of study.
- **Related Coursework** - In this section you can list the course titles (not course numbers) of classes that relate to the position you are applying for.
- **Skills Summary** - A great way to highlight skills that you have related to a position you are applying for is to outline them in your resume. You may want to include computer skills, language skills, laboratory skills, etc. Be sure to indicate your skill level, such as “fluent in Spanish” or “proficient in Microsoft Office.”
- **Experience** - If you have a great deal of experience in an area related to the position you are applying for, you may want to have a heading such as “Customer Service Experience” or use the simple heading of “Experience” to outline your work history.
 - In this section you should list your related experience with your most recent experience first (be sure to include your position, the organization’s name, city, state, and dates of employment)
 - Outline in 2 or more bullet points what you did in the position, achievements, and skills gained (remember to use action verbs to describe your experience)
 - Quantify what you did whenever possible (such as, “Supervised a staff of three”)
- **Activities and/or involvement** - Use this section to list any involvement you may have on campus and/or in the community. For example, if you have been involved in athletics, student government, a student organization, volunteered in the community, etc. Be sure to indicate if you have held a leadership position in an organization, such as Captain, Treasurer, or President.
- **References** - You can either say at the bottom of your resume, “References available upon request,” or have a reference page as part of your resume document.
 - List at least three references and no more than five
 - Provide their name, title, place of employment, telephone number, address, and email
 - Professors, internship supervisors, and past employers are all great people to list as your references
 - Be sure to ask your references before you list them
 - Give your references a copy of your resume and discuss the type of positions you are applying for so that they are prepared if a potential employer calls

Action Verbs:

Use this list of great action verbs to help describe your experiences on your resume:

- acquired
- adapted
- administer
- analyze
- approve
- audited
- coordinate
- conceived
- conduct
- completed
- control
- created
- delegate
- develop
- direct
- eliminated
- established
- evaluate
- expand
- expedite
- facilitated
- founded
- generate
- identified
- increased
- influence
- implemented
- interpret
- improve
- launched
- lead
- maintain
- motivated
- organize
- originate
- participated in
- perform
- plan
- pinpointed
- program
- proposed
- proved
- provide
- proficient
- recommend
- recruited
- reduced
- remodeled
- reorganized
- responsible
- revise
- review
- schedule
- simplify
- set up
- solve
- strategy
- structure
- streamline
- supervise
- support
- teach
- translated
- traveled