

The Basics of Resume Writing

Samford University Career Development Center

I. Purpose

The purpose of the resume is to convince employers of what you have to offer, and how your skills match the skills he/she is seeking for the opening. The goal of a resume is to lead to an interview invitation.

II. How to start

Brainstorm by making a list of all of the work and in-depth volunteer experience you have had, and under each of those write down all of the things you did for each experience. For upper-classmen this list will include college experiences only; for underclassmen, this could include some experiences from high school. Write down your education, special skills, and any other activities you've been involved in. At this point, don't worry about format--- just focus on putting the information down on paper.

III. Contents

Some of the components of a resume typically include:

- A. Identification:** Include your name, address (either your mailing address, or just your city, state, or zip), phone number, and e-mail. You may also include a link to a portfolio, website, or LinkedIn page *as appropriate* (and typically no more than one of them).
- B. Objective:** This is not a required section, but it can be helpful if you need help making your resume fill a page. IF you use an objective, make sure it is *targeted*. It should include the name of the company and position, if appropriate, and should focus on what you have to offer an employer; this motivates them to continue reading. When using the title, use "or related position" as well, to show that you are open to other positions for which you may be qualified.

Examples:

"A sales or related position at ____ (company name) which would allow me to use my communication skills and marketing experience gained through coursework and related internships."

- C. Education:** List your degree (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Business Administration, etc.), institution name, city, state; your major(s), and date of graduation. Include your GPA if it is a 3.0 or better, using the format of GPA: 3.2/4.0, or GPA 3.43/4.00. See resume samples for order of these items.

If you received another degree from a previous institution, skip a line and list the name of your other school(s), city and state, and dates you attended.

If you participated in a study abroad, skip a line after your university information and list it in the format of: **International Studies:** Name of University, city, country, dates.

- D. Experience:** Employers prefer the reverse chronological format. List the most recent job first, the next most recent and so on. It is easy to read and identifies your work experience clearly. Types of work experiences that may be included are summer, part-time, full-time, in-depth volunteer, and campus work as well as internships, and extensive externships. Depending on how much you have done, you may or may not include all of these. For upperclassmen, only use the jobs you had while you were in college unless they are particularly relevant to the job you are seeking. If you are a freshmen or sophomore, you may include some experiences from high school.

You need to include all the important information: Job title, name of employer, city, state, and dates of employment (see examples)

To create your descriptions, look at your brainstorming list and what you jotted down for your duties under each job. From that, craft your descriptions. A few points:

- Start each bullet with a verb or adverb, present tense if you are still doing it, past tense if you are not.
- Think “I” when starting each one, but don’t write it. Example: “(I) Assist customers...”
- Use transferable skills whenever possible; a transferable skill is one that can be used in multiple situations, even those which aren’t related. The ability to multi-task, work in a fast-paced environment, accurately process monetary transactions, and adapt communication skills based on customer needs are all examples of transferrable skills.
- Remember that your first resume is a draft; bring it in to the Career Development Center and we’ll be happy to give you feedback!

- E. References:** Always make a separate reference page. Three to five references are appropriate. Include names, titles, city/state, phone numbers, and e-mails. Make sure you put a “Mr.”, “Ms.”, or “Dr.” before each name. ASK PERMISSION BEFORE USING INDIVIDUALS AS REFERENCES, and also ask which phone number and email you should use (personal vs. work). See sample reference sheet for additional tips.

E. Additional Sections:

Each person’s resume is different. Based on your experiences and the purpose of your resume, you may have additional sections to include, but not limited to, some of the following:

1. *Activities:* List any campus or community activities you've been involved with while in college. List the name of the organization and positions held (if any).
2. *Special Skills:* List any relevant skills for the position to which you are applying, such as language skills, software/hardware knowledge, etc.
3. *Honors/Awards/Scholarships:* Focus on any special achievements or recognitions. If listing scholarships, describe their nature (i.e. academic, leadership based, etc.)
4. If you have a great deal of experience, you may find it helpful to divide it into several sections, such as “Work Experience” and “Volunteer Experience”, or “Related Experience” and “Other Experience”.

IV. Final Notes

Formatting

- Keep it to one page if at all possible; based on experience and major, it may be acceptable for it to be longer. CVs are typically greater in length (see example),
- Use the same style of font throughout your resume, references, and cover letter; use the same size font throughout as well, with the exception of your name, which should be larger.
- Use italics and bold to emphasize and highlight, but don't over do it.
- Use indented and "bulleted" statements.
- **As needed, you should customize your resume for each type of position you are seeking.**
- Use good quality resume paper if the employer requires a hard copy. White or ivory are the most acceptable colors. You can print on the resume paper or print on plain paper and have it copied (professionally) onto resume paper.

Content

- **PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD!** Have it reviewed by the CDC as well.
- Use quantities, amounts, and dollar values where they enhance your job description; this also applies to use of software.
- Don't list gender, marital status, health, religion, political affiliation, or other personal irrelevancies; do not include pictures.
- Don't include information from high school, except in the rare occasion where it clearly demonstrates you've been interested in and involved in the field you are pursuing since that time.
- Don't explain unrelated information in detail. No one is hired from a resume or application, so save your explanations for the interview.
- Don't use words such as "I," "me," or "my" in your resume, except in the objective.

Make an appointment with the Career Development Center so a counselor can assist you with this important process!

***For more information, stop by or call the Career Development Center
217 Dwight Beeson Hall • 205-726-2980***

Strong Action Verbs

Accounting

Record
Assess
Audit
Prepare
Maintain
Forecast
Calculate
Estimate
Figure
Appraise
Examine
Measure
Verify
Transfer

Administration

Ensure
Monitor
Track
Assess
Coordinate
Organize
Requisition
Access
Receive
Process
Serve
Hire
Furnish

Analysis

Qualify
Clarify
Quantify
Infer
Discover
Conceptualize
Discern
Interpret
Dissect
Review
Observe
Assess
Emphasize

Arts

Choreograph
Design
Create
Build
Entertain
Perform
Draw
Draft
Render
Illustrate
Compose
Conceive
Photograph
Develop

Communication

Address
Answer
Clarify
Correspond
Define
Discuss
Edit
Explain
Interview
Listen
Present
Report
Summarize

CustomerService

Advise
Advocate
Arbitrate
Coach
Consult
Educate
Support
Inform
Resolve
Manage
Mediate
Train
Serve

Childcare

Supervise
Engage
Facilitate
Implement
Plan
Organize
Support
Encourage
Communicate
Adapt
Guide
Collaborate
Evaluate
Resolve

Design

Organize
Explore
Formulate
Sketch
Illustrate
Draw
Draft
Layout
Create
Incorporate
Plan
Style
Customize

Editing

Review
Analyze
Compare
Comment
Correct
Condense
Rewrite
Revise
Rework
Amend
Improve
Initiate
Adapt

Finance

Analyze
Invest
Budget
Inventory
Evaluate
Eliminate
Appraise
Construct
Develop
Acquire
Manage
Project
Reconcile
Balance

Fundraising

Research
Analyze
Strategize
Program
Develop
Contact
Inquire
Inform
Motivate
Persuade
Monitor
Coordinate
Generate

Healthcare

Diagnose
Evaluate
Administer
Monitor
Dispense
Track
Operate
Perform
Record
Coordinate
Develop
Conduct
Examine

Strong Action Verbs

Information

Appraise
Program
Link
Coordinate
Manage
Process
Document
Categorize
Design
Structure
Inventory
Critique
Appraise

Investigate

Assess
Survey
Pursue
Interrogate
Question
Analyze
Intuit
Seek
Search
Probe
Coordinate
Explore

Public Relations

Prepare
Assess
Coordinate
Present
Negotiate
Publicize
Prepare
Strategize
Coordinate
Formulate
Persuade
Implement
Investigate
Institute
Suggest

Management

Coordinate
Combine
Expedite
Facilitate
Plan
Shape
Schedule
Delegate
Mediate
Evaluate
Strategize
Develop
Supervise

Marketing

Review
Survey
Advertise
Promote
Identify
Announce
Publicize
Advertise
Advance
Boost
Improve
Generate

Mechanical

Analyze
Construct
Craft
Troubleshoot
Create
Design
Engineer
Repair
Align
Coordinate
Manipulate
Examine
Customize
Produce
Develop

Organizing

Simplify
Classify
Organize
Prioritize
Maintain
Liaison
Assist
Manage
Arrange
Systematize
Schedule
Coordinate
Plan

Teaching

Educate
Tutor
Demonstrate
Stimulate
Inform
Instruct
Facilitate
Awaken
Explore
Advise
Counsel
Entertain

Technology

Assemble
Built
Calculate
Compute
Design
Devise
Engineer
Operate
Pinpoint
Program
Remodel
Repair
Solved
Troubleshoot
Operate

Research

Identify
Evaluate
Review
Calculate
Conduct
Test
Compare
Analyze
Survey
Quantify
Collect
Inspect
Formulate

Service

Advocate
Anticipate
Defend
Discuss
Enhance
Follow
Initiate
Invite
Perform
Relate
Share
Welcome

Writing

Author
Conceive
Craft
Compose
Integrate
Capture
Abstract
Express
Inform
Summarize
Publish
Edit
Conclude
Review