

# CREATING YOUR RESUME

## Step 1: How Do You Get Started?

You should begin your resume with a heading that includes your name, address, phone number, and email address. You may also want to include your permanent address or alternate contact information. Be sure to include a zip code with your address, and telephone area codes.

## Step 2: Inventory Your Experience

### WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

The **Education** section highlights the knowledge you have acquired, and can include degrees, training, certifications, or licensure. List all degrees earned and the date they were earned (list expected date of graduation for in-progress degrees). List the degree title before the institution name. You may also want to include your GPA (especially if your cumulative or major GPA is 3.0 or higher), relevant coursework, academic honors, or study abroad experience. Dean's list, president's list, honor societies, and academic awards may also be listed, but if you have many activities and awards you may want to include them on their own honors/awards section of the resume.

### WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

The **Work Experience** section highlights your work-related experience (paid or unpaid.) Employers want to know what you have done and what experience you have that is worthy of consideration. Experience includes full-time jobs, part-time jobs, academic research projects, internships or co-op positions, or volunteer work. When describing each experience, list the position, title of organization, city, state, and dates employed. Use action verbs to begin each statement describing your accomplishments and job duties. Quantify people, products, and profits when possible.

## Step 3: Match Your Experience and Skills with the Employer's Needs

The content of your resume will change each time you complete a new job application. Take care to mention skills that you possess that are required or recommended for the particular job you are applying to. Additionally, change the wording of experiences and skills to match the type of position for which you are applying.

## Step 4: Organize Your Resume Effectively

Organize your resume in a way that reflects your best self. Name and contact information should always be first; however, you should organize the rest of the information based on what is the most important to you (and to your targeted employer) from the top of the page down. Keep in mind that additional categories can be created to represent your various strengths. Some additional sections can include: **Honors/Awards, Leadership Activities, Scholarships/Achievements, Relevant Skills and Experience, Special Interests, and Accomplishments**. If one area outweighs another as an asset, it should come before other sections.

References should always be presented on a separate page. Prepare the reference page with the name, title, and organization where the reference works, as well as address, telephone number, and email address for each reference. Make sure that your references are aware that you have included them on your list. On your resume, you can indicate "References Available Upon Request" at the bottom of the page.

# CREATING YOUR RESUME CONT.

## Step 5: Creating Your Draft

### *Length*

Your resume should be easy to read; if it is too lengthy or jumbled, your potential employer may disregard it. Most undergraduate students should keep their resume to one page, but a two page resume is an option for job seekers with more job experience. If you feel you are leaving out vital information to keep your resume at one page, add a second page.

### *Phrasing*

Use brief, yet descriptive phrases rather than sentences.

### *Formatting*

Balance the layout by making all four margins equal. Your resume should be visually pleasing at first glance. White space helps important information stand out to the reader. Utilize resume templates for ideas on how to create a visually appealing resume.

### *Production*

Use good quality, 100% bond paper in a conservative color, such as white, grey, or beige.

### *Action Verbs*

Describe your skills, abilities, and accomplishments using action verbs. Use present tense for current job duties and past tense for prior job duties. Do not include first person pronouns like "I" or "my."

## Step 6: Ask for Comments on Your Resume

Always get a second opinion on your resume. Ask a trusted family member, advisor, friend, mentor, professor, career development specialist, or colleague to look over your resume and make suggestions for improvements. A second opinion can help you correct mistakes before a potential employer does.

## Step 7: Evaluate Your Resume

### *Content*

- Name is at the top of the page and highlighted by large font.
- Descriptions utilize action verbs with a consistent verb tense; current job is in present tense, past jobs are in past tense.
- Repetition of words or phrases is kept to a minimum.
- Capitalization, punctuation, and date formats are consistent.
- There are no typos or grammar and spelling errors.
- There is a rationale for each piece of information included.

### *Organization*

- The best assets, whether education or experience, are listed first.
- The document is easily reviewed; categories are clear and text is indented when needed.
- Dates of employment are easy to find and are in a consistent format.
- Listings in each section run from most recent to least recent.

### *Format/Design*

- Bold text and capitalization are used minimally and consistently.
- Margins and line spacing keep the page from looking too jumbled or crowded.
- Spacing and font size are consistent.
- Font is easy to read and preferably no smaller than 11 pt.