

## COMPLETE GUIDE TO RESUME WRITING

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### **RESUME WRITING: Best Practices**

Your resume is usually your first impression with a prospective employer. It showcases your skills, abilities, and experiences to a future employer. Resumes are often quickly reviewed, so it's important to be clear and succinct while emphasizing your skills and accomplishments. Below are some of the best practices to keep in mind when writing your resume.

#### **BE CONCISE**

- Present your most relevant experiences & accomplishments clearly in a one-page document.

#### **AVOID PERSONAL/OLD INFO**

- Typically, you can remove older information (high school activities/jobs), unless it is directly relevant. Focus on your professional experiences & leave off personal information.

#### **BE PROFESSIONAL**

- Create a clean and organized document. Avoid color, photos, or graphics. Present yourself truthfully, including experiences you can speak to well.

#### **AVOID TEMPLATES**

- Use the Career Services sample resumes or start with a blank Word document. Templates are difficult to edit and often have poor formatting. They may also not upload correctly to an online application tracking system (ATS).

#### **BE ORGANIZED**

- Organize each section and your information carefully & thoughtfully, so that the document is easy to read and makes sense. You want to demonstrate your strong points at a glance.

#### **AVOID PRONOUNS**

- Help declutter your resume by removing pronouns. Your resume is about you, so you don't need to use "I, me, my, we, us."

#### **ADD FOCUS & REVISE**

- Tailor your resume to your desired profession and career goals. This will help your resume stand out as a match to jobs & employers.

#### **PROOFREAD!**

- Make sure there are no spelling errors, grammar errors, & that the formatting is consistent. Have a Career Advisor, or someone you trust, look it over for you.

**RESUME WRITING: Format Guide**

**FORMATTING AND APPEARANCE**

**Margins:** 0.5" to 1" consistent on all four sides

**Font Type:** Times New Roman, Cambria, Garamond, Georgia, or other "serif" fonts

**Font Size:** *Name:* bolded and slightly larger (up to size 16 font); *Body & Headings:* 11 to 12-point font

**Length:** 1 page for most undergraduate students (475-600 words), 2 pages depending on experience

**Reverse Chronological Order:** Within each section, the most recent experience should come first

**COMMON CATEGORIES**

**IDENTIFICATION**

- Name, City/State (optional), phone number, professional email, LinkedIn URL

**OBJECTIVE** *Optional*

- Adds focus to your resume to a specific job or career field
- Name job title, skills used, setting, or combination of these three

**EDUCATION**

Include institutions you have received a degree from

- List Majors, Minors, and Concentrations
- Type of Degree (Bachelor of Art or Science), Month and Year of Graduation or Expected Graduation
- GPA: list if 3.0 or above, Dean's List (if applicable)

**RELATED EXPERIENCE**

*Include jobs, internships, volunteer and field experiences relevant to your field of interest*

- **Exercise Science and Physical Education:** experiences such as athletic training, coaching, health/fitness centers, clinical experiences
- **Family Science and Human Development:** experiences such as, assisted living communities, hospitals, nursing homes, senior citizen centers, and community recreation programs; *School Settings* also include experiences you have with children such as camp counselor, childcare provider, daycare & nursery
- **Nutrition and Food Studies:** experiences such as community/healthcare clinic, hospital, restaurants and catering, food research/science, food corporations/organizations, agricultural work, and lab work
- **Public Health:** experiences such as health system clinics, care facilities, nonprofit organizations, advocacy work, and health departments

**WORK EXPERIENCE or OTHER EXPERIENCE**

*Include part-time or full-time jobs*

- Incorporate specific accomplishments and skills *transferable* to your field of interest such as communication, time management, problem-solving, administrative, etc.

**SKILLS**

*This section can include technical/tangible skills that set you apart from other candidates*

- **Computer and/or Social Media skills:** Microsoft or Mac OS software, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
- **Languages:** Specify the language and your proficiency (don't need to include English)
- **Certifications:** CPR, AED, First Aid, ServSafe, etc., *(all certifications listed should be current)*

**OPTIONAL HEADINGS**

- **Volunteer:** campus clubs, walkathons, fundraisers, organized food or clothing drive, etc.
- **Professional Organizations:** include organizations you belong to
- **Activities:** campus clubs, community or campus sports and/or coaching
- **Honors and Awards:** academic, community or athletic awards or honors
- **Leadership:** leadership role in a club or organization; sports team captain or coach

**RESUME WRITING: Writing Successful Bullet Points**

Resumes are summaries of your experiences and skills. Strategically using bullet points allows you to showcase your skills and experiences. Below are recommendations and guidance for writing great bullet points.

- Bullet points should be used when you want to add details about your experiences. They are primarily used when talking about your professional work experiences but may be used for other activities, like research or campus/community involvement.
- Start each bullet point with a strong and different action verb and describe the work you did or your accomplishments with meaningful detail.
- Keep verbs in the correct tense. Currently at job = simple present tense (Coordinate). Past job = past tense (Coordinated).
- Highlight your transferable skills (leadership, oral/written communication, critical thinking/problem-solving, etc.) and incorporate the experiences/skills requested in the job description.
- Incorporate numbers and results that showcase what you accomplished and your success!

Use the following questions to help you construct your bullet points and check out some examples below.

**WHAT:** What were your most significant responsibilities or accomplishments?

**HOW:** How did you do them?

**WHY:** Why was the task important?

**WHEN:** When or how frequently (quantify) did you do it?

**WHO:** Who did you interact with (types, ages, number of people)?

**IMPACT:** How did you impact the business/organization?

**BASIC:** Used strong communication skills.

**MAKE IT BETTER:** How and when did you use strong communication skills? For what purpose?

- Developed communication skills with students through more than 20 one-on-one meetings and by facilitating 7 interactive workshops each semester.

**BASIC:** Cleaned the restaurant and took orders.

**MAKE IT BETTER:** Why did you clean? How many orders did you take? For what purpose?

- Maintained a clean kitchen, dining room, and restrooms for customers' safety and employees to provide a positive dining experience.
- Displayed professional and friendly customer service by interacting with and gathering orders for over 50 guests per shift.

**BASIC:** Worked with customers.

**MAKE IT BETTER:** How did you work with them? How many?

- Provided excellent customer service to 100+ customers throughout the day by checking in about their shopping experience and if they needed assistance with finding merchandise.

**BASIC:** Rang people up on the cash register.

**MAKE IT BETTER:** How many people? Can you add a number to show how much money you managed?

- Managed over \$3,000 worth of daily sales and engaged with over 75 customers per day to help them complete their shopping experience and troubleshoot any issues.

**BASIC:** Planned golf outing.

**MAKE IT BETTER:** What was the impact of this? How did you do it? What was the result?

- Organized alumni golf outing to enhance positive relations and increase alumni donations, resulting in engagement of over 200 community partners and \$10,000 in day of donations.
- Planned and coordinated all logistics of golf event including securing golf course, catering, and sponsorships as well as invitation and RSVP list, prizes, and volunteers.

**RESUME WRITING: Career Readiness Action Verbs**

**CRITICAL THINKING**

*Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.*

- Analyzed, Developed, Diagnosed, Distinguished, Gathered, Inferred, Reasoned, Resolved, Solved, Synthesized

**COMMUNICATION**

*Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.*

- Advised, Authored, Collaborated, Communicated, Corresponded, Documented, Informed, Mediated, Negotiated, Presented, Published, Recruited

**TEAMWORK**

*Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.*

- Advised, Collaborated, Coordinated, Enhanced, Facilitated, Negotiated, Participated, Partnered, Recommended, Supported

**TECHNOLOGY**

*Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.*

- Adapted, Adjusted, Applied, Coded, Converted, Digitized, Installed, Manufactured, Mapped, Modified, Programmed, Processed, Simulated, Upgraded

**LEADERSHIP**

*Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.*

- Administered, Chaired, Coached, Created, Delegated, Facilitated, Implemented, Managed, Mentored, Mobilized, Negotiated, Planned, Recommended, Spearheaded, Supervised

**PROFESSIONALISM**

*Knowing work environments differ greatly, understanding and demonstrating effective work habits, and in the interest of the larger community and workplace.*

- Administered, Collaborated, Enlisted, Encouraged, Implemented, Initiated, Influenced, Launched, Led, Managed, Produced, Spearheaded, Supervised

**EQUITY & INCLUSION**

*Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.*

- Connected, Conversed, Diversified, Harmonized, Interpreted, Internationalized, Mentored, Revitalized, Traveled, Transformed, United

You Led A project	You Changed or Improved	You Managed A Team	You Supported Customers/Clients	You Researched	You Achieved	You Wrote or Communicated
Chaired	Customized	Directed	Advised	Analyzed	Attained	Authored
Coordinated	Modified	Facilitated	Advocated	Assessed	Completed	Composed
Operated	Refined	Guided	Coached	Calculated	Exceeded	Counseled
Organized	Restructured	Mentored	Educated	Discovered	Reached	Documented
Planned	Simplified	Supervised	Fielded	Evaluated	Succeeded	Promoted
Produced	Strengthened	Taught	Informed	Measured	Surpassed	Publicized

**RESUME WRITING: More Action Verbs**

Abstract	Conceptualize	Entertain	Lecture	Report
Access	Conclude	Establish	Liaison	Represent
Acquire	Condense	Estimate	Link	Research
Activate	Consider	Evaluate	Listen	Restructure
Adapt	Construct	Examine	Locate	Review
Address	Consult	Expedite	Maintain	Revise
Administer	Contact	Explain	Manage	Revisit
Advertise	Contribute	Explore	Measure	Revisit
Advise	Converse	Express	Mediate	Revitalize
Advocate	Convince	Facilitate	Modify	Rework
Aid	Cooperate	Figure	Monitor	Rewrite
Align	Coordinate	Fluency	Motivate	Schedule
Amend	Correct	Follow	Negotiate	Screen
Analyze	Correspond	Forecast	Observe	Search
Announce	Counsel	Formulate	Operate	Seek
Answer	Craft	Furnish	Organize	Select
Anticipate	Create	Govern	Participate	Sell
Appraise	Critique	Guide	Pattern	Sense
Arbitrate	Debate	Handle	Perform	Serve
Arrange	Defend	Help	Persuade	Shape
Articulate	Define	Identify	Photograph	Share
Assess	Delegate	Illustrate	Plan	Simplify
Attain	Demonstrate	Implement	Prepare	Sketch
Audit	Design	Improve	Present	Stimulate
Authored	Determine	Incorporate	Prevent	Strategize
Awake	Develop	Infer	Probe	Strengthen
Boost	Diagnose	Influence	Problem-solve	Structure
Budget	Direct	Inform	Process	Style
Build	Discern	Initiate	Proficiency	Suggest
Calculate	Discover	Inquire	Program	Summarize
Capture	Discuss	Inspect	Project	Support
Categorize	Dispense	Inspire	Promote	Survey
Challenge	Dissect	Institute	Propose	Teach
Change	Document	Integrate	Publicize	Track
Check	Draft	Interpret	Pursue	Trade
Choreograph	Draw	Interrogate	Qualify	Train
Clarify	Edit	Interview	Quantify	Transform
Classify	Educate	Introduce	Question	Translate
Coach	Elicit	Intuit	Reason	Troubleshoot
Combine	Eliminate	Invent	Receive	Tutor
Comment	Emphasize	Inventory	Recommend	Understand
Communicate	Encourage	Invest	Reconcile	Upgrade
Compare	Enforce	Investigate	Record	Verify
Compose	Enhance	Invite	Refer	Volunteer
Comprehend	Enlist	Layout	Relate	Welcome
Conceive	Ensure	Lead	Render	Write

*This is a sample resume. Make a copy of this sample and use it to create your own resume. If a section doesn't apply to you, delete it. Add other sections if needed. Delete these instructions.*

**FIRSTNAME LASTNAME**

City, State | Email address | Phone number

**OBJECTIVE**

Use a statement if you are looking for a specific role, handing your resume to a hiring manager, or want to highlight more skills. *(Don't use a summary/objective if you're open to multiple roles or sending your resume to a recruiter)*

**EDUCATION**

**Montclair State University** – Montclair, NJ Expected Month Year  
*Bachelor of Science/Arts: Major; Concentration; Minor* GPA: 4.0  
Dean's List Recipient: Fall 2024 - Spring 2025

**RELEVANT COURSEWORK**

**Course full name** - If you have minimal experience; identify 2-3 300 or 400-level courses that are unique to your college experience, provided you a practical experience, or allowed you to focus on a specialized area or topic.  
**Course full name** - You should list out the full name of the course and write a *brief* description that focuses on a specific project or presentation that you completed for the class. Highlight any unique skills or experiences you gained in the course.

**RELATED EXPERIENCE**

**Community Health Center** – Clifton, NJ Month Year – Present  
*Administrator*

- Start with strong verbs to describe what you did and accomplished.
- Try to format in terms of “Performed X to do Y resulting in Z.”
- Add numbers whenever you can to help quantify your performance.
- Under each position, you should have bullets that encompass your role.
- You want the bullets to showcase your skills and accomplishments. Do not simply state what you did.

**Healthcare Center** – Bloomfield, NJ Month Year – Month Year  
*Healthcare Intern*

- Be sure to vary your starting verbs here

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Daycare Facility** – Montclair, NJ Month Year – Month Year  
*Child Caretaker*

- Tended to 3 children between ages 7-11 for several hours.
- Managed children's activities, meals, and routines.
- Updated parent's accordingly in any urgent matters.

**EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE**

*You can put any clubs or organizations you are a part of here. You can also include professional development or professional memberships. For example:*  
**APHA** (American Public Health Association) – Member Month Year – Month Year

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

*You can put any volunteer experience in this section or it can be part of your extracurricular activities section*

**SKILLS**

**Languages:** *add any languages that you know (besides English); Ex: Fluent in X (speaking, reading, writing)*  
**Computer skills:** *Microsoft Office; Video & Photo editing (add any other programs or software you might know)*  
**Certifications:** *add any certifications that are relevant and currently active*