

WHAT IS A RESUME?

Your resume is often one of the first things a prospective employer sees; its purpose is to present your skills, achievements, and qualifications as effectively and briefly as possible. Writing a resume is like developing an advertisement to market an interesting and exciting “product”—YOU!

MAKING IT COUNT

Most employers look at a resume for no more than a minute so it's important that yours is extremely easy to read and highlights your best qualifications. It should be a targeted compilation of any relevant, recent experiences that support your candidacy for a given position and NOT a running list of everything you have accomplished. For résumé samples, visit the Loeb Center Handouts & Samples page.

Important Reminders!

- You must have your resume approved by a Peer Career Advisor or Career Advisor before you can apply for most positions posted on Handshake.
- Save your resume (and other application materials) as a PDF before submitting it for an application.
- Check for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.
- Always include accurate information – do not misrepresent yourself.
- Know what is on your resume. Anything is fair game for an interview!

FORMAT & LENGTH

The recommendations for format and length of a resume will vary depending on where you are at in your career and what types of experiences you've had. The following suggestions are for college students and recent graduates. For résumé samples, visit the Loeb Center Handouts & Samples page.

Format

The chronological format presents your experiences in reverse chronological order, highlighting your titles, employers, and dates of employment starting with the most recent at the top of each section and finishing with the least recent at the bottom. This is the preferred format for college student applicants.

Length

Keep your resume to ONE page. Exceptions can be made for students with extensive laboratory and research experience applying for positions that ask for such qualifications. Typically, they will request a C.V. (curriculum vitae), which is like a resume, but can be over a page, and should list all pertinent research and publications. Meet with one of the career advisors for more information about this kind of document.

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RESUME CONTENT

Resumes are generally arranged by topics, or headings. The following are examples of typical headings you might use on your resume. For examples of how these are laid out in a resume, visit the [Loeb Center Handouts & Samples](#) page.

Contact info The first thing on a resume should be your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Your name should be the boldest and largest part of this heading.

Education List your college education first. State the degree you are a candidate for (Bachelor of Arts), your major(s)(if declared), concentration(s), expected graduation month/year, and overall/major GPA. List any study abroad experience in this section, as well as any scholarships and academic honors you have received. If relevant, you can also include your thesis topic or relevant coursework.

For underclassmen, include high school information (school, location, awards). Juniors can include exceptional high school information. Seniors can do so as well, but are generally discouraged from including high school details unless you're applying for a job in your hometown.

Experience The section includes both paid and unpaid experiences – any activity that took considerable time and produced marketable skills is appropriate for this section. Summer internships and school year jobs are the most typical examples, but significant campus extracurricular or volunteer experiences can also be included.

In reverse chronological order, give your title, the name of the company/organization, the geographic location, the dates worked, and a brief description of your responsibilities. Use bulleted statements for maximum effectiveness and begin each statement with an action verb (see list of action verbs on next page). Avoid passive language and personal pronouns.

You may want to separate your experience into multiple sections; for example, “Relevant Experience” and “Additional Experience,” or “Work Experience” and “Extracurricular Experience.” Use the combination of headings that reflect your most important experiences and accomplishments.

Skills & Interests If you have significant language or technical skills, you may want to create a section to emphasize them. You can also include any certifications or licenses you have (CPR, life-guarding, etc.), if relevant. If you have space, mention your personal interests like travel, hiking or painting, though the more specific you can be, the better (e.g. ‘contemporary American short fiction’ is better than ‘reading’) This is not a necessary section but adds talking points to your resume.

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LIST OF ACTION VERBS

accomplished	decentralized	helped	performed	shaped
achieved	decreased	hired	pinpointed	showed
acquired	defined	identified	pioneered	simplified
activated	delegated	implemented	planned	sold
adapted	delivered	improved	prepared	solved
addressed	demonstrated	improvised	presented	sorted
administered	designated	increased	prevented	specified
advanced	designed	influenced	processed	sponsored
advised	determined	initiated	procured	staffed
allocated	developed	inspected	produced	standardized
analyzed	devised	inspired	programmed	started
anticipated	directed	installed	projected	stimulated
applied	discharged	instigated	promoted	streamlined
appointed	discovered	instituted	proposed	strengthened
appraised	distributed	instructed	proved	stretched
approved	documented	integrated	provided	structured
arranged	doubled	interpreted	published	studied
assessed	earned	interviewed	purchased	suggested
assigned	effected	introduced	realized	summarized
attained	eliminated	invented	recommended	supervised
audited	enforced	investigated	recruited	surveyed
centralized	engineered	lectured	reduced	sustained
clarified	established	led	re-established	tailored
collaborated	estimated	liquidated	renegotiated	taught
combined	evaluated	located	reorganized	tested
completed	exceeded	made	reported	tightened
composed	executed	maintained	represented	traded
conducted	exercised	managed	researched	trained
constructed	expanded	marketed	resolved	transacted
consulted	expedited	mediated	restored	transferred
contributed	extended	minimized	reviewed	uncovered
controlled	facilitated	modernized	revised	undertook
coordinated	formed	modified	scheduled	used
created	founded	monitored	selected	utilized

SAMPLE RESUME

Your Name Here

0000 Keefe Campus Center • Amherst College • Amherst, MA 01002
srandoc@amherst.edu • (617) xxx-xxxx

Education

Amherst College, Amherst, MA	Class of 2016
Bachelor of Arts	
Relevant Course: Molecular Gastronomy	
GPA: 3.99/4.00	
Brooklyn Technical High School, Brooklyn, NY	Class of 2012
Major: Law and Society	

Relevant Experience

Her Campus Amherst, Amherst, MA	September 2012- present
<i>Writer and Photographer</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrote a weekly column about my substance-free Fridays• Contribute pictures of campus life to the Campus Style Blog	
Vivian Macaron, New York, NY	April 2011- present
<i>Food Blogger</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write NYC food reviews and develop dessert recipes• Edit web layout and food photography	
De Bon Caesar Food Club, Brooklyn, NY	September 2011- June 2012
<i>Co-founder</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established a food community and led dining excursions in NYC• Created a website to publicize club news and share photos of food events	

Work Experience

Business Integrity Commission, Manhattan, NY	July 2011- August 2011
<i>Facilities Assistant</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced financial loss by ensuring that all bills were paid before closing the fiscal year• Improved the supply room by devising an inventory and ordering needed supplies	
New York Downtown Hospital, Manhattan, NY	July 2010- August 2010
<i>Nurse Consultant Assistant</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepared Patients' Implant and Appeal Logs for the Billing Department• Organized Patient Information paperwork in the archives	

Volunteer Experience

Chinese-American Planning Council Service Learning, Brooklyn, NY	October 2009- June 2012
<i>Volunteer Intern</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed "Chew Smartly," a project that teaches kids about healthy eating• Customized holiday cards for veterans at the VA Hospital	

Skills and Interests

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- Fluent in Chinese (Cantonese)
 - Basic knowledge of HTML/CSS
 - Photography
 - Music: Piano, Violin, Guitar, Women's Chorus

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TARGETING YOUR RESUME

Different employers seek distinct qualities and experiences from their candidates. To be a strong candidate, you must target your resume to the relevant industry, organization, and position.

General Targeting Tips

- Include your relevant coursework. If you have completed courses that are relevant to your opportunity, include the names of classes in your education section.
- Create a Relevant Experience section. This section should fall right under your Education section and contain any experience (paid, unpaid, extracurricular, volunteer, etc...) that is relevant to the position. You can also create sections that reflect relevant competencies (e.g. Communications Experience, Teaching Experience, Research Experience, etc.).
- Focus on relevant experiences. An experience is “relevant” if: (in order of importance)
 - It was in the industry of the position you’re applying for
 - You learned content/knowledge that relates to the work you would be doing
 - You developed skills in another industry that are “transferrable,” in other words, you could apply those skills in the position you’re applying for
 - It demonstrates hard work and dedication
- Prioritize your bullets. To capture the employer’s attention, your most important and relevant contributions and responsibilities should be listed first under each experience.
- Use language that your target employers recognize. Integrate the key words of a job description or industry to show your understanding of the job/industry/employer.

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Industry Specific Targeting Tips

Most industries have their own preferences for types of information and formatting in a resume. After your resume is approved, we recommend you meet with a Careers In advisor to have them review your resume and give you industry specific feedback. Below are a few examples of industry-specific tips...

Arts & Communication

- Whether you're interested in journalism, film, writing, performance, or marketing, linking to a digital portfolio can offer employers the opportunity to see your skills in action and context.

Business & Finance

- Business and finance companies value academic achievements. Highlight your academics (GPA, study abroad, extra courses taken, awards, etc.) Include SAT/ACT or equivalent.

Education

- Use terminology important to educators in the organizations where you're applying. For example, if you hope to work in a STEM field, familiarize yourself with the relevant pedagogies and key words of the Next Generation Science Standards.

Government & Nonprofit

- For federal government jobs through USAJobs.com, use the resume builder to ensure you include all of the specialized information required. Use key words from the job description to describe your skills in order to be selected as a qualified applicant by the computer program doing the initial application review.

Health Professions

- If you plan to apply to medical school, highlight experiences that demonstrate the core competencies for medical students by the American Medical Association, such as service orientation and cultural competence.

Law

- Emphasize experiences that demonstrate research skills, written and verbal communication skills, and problem solving ability. For law school applications, your resume can be longer than a page, but only include experiences that are substantive.

Science & Technology

- For tech, include side personal projects such as websites, apps, or other tools that you built outside of class to demonstrate your other technical skills. Include a link to your Github profile.