

Writing Resumes:

A Guide for Undergraduate Students

What is a Resume?

A resume is a snapshot of the education, experience, and skills you have that are valuable to an employer. Its main purpose is to convince a potential employer to invite you for an interview – to make them want to learn more about you. Resumes are used to screen applicants and determine which candidates have the background most closely matching the employers' needs. It answers the questions: "have you," "can you" and "will you do the job."

Before writing a resume, you should

- Do your research on the industry, field, company/ organization, and the job itself so you fully understand what the employer is seeking.
- Learn to speak the employer's language. While doing your research, pay attention to the vocabulary that is particular to the industry.
- Learn about trends that are developing within the industry.
- Identify the core skills required in the job, so as to best highlight and emphasize your relevant prior experiences and skills.

To Craft a Successful Resume, You Should

- Quickly and succinctly capture an employer's attention and interest. Most employers spend only 30 seconds reviewing a resume.
- Emphasize and quantify accomplishments rather than just listing responsibilities. Be specific whenever possible. For example: "Designed and delivered 20 math tutoring lessons to a group of seven fifth and sixth graders."

- Incorporate transferable skills, i.e. skills you acquired in one context or situation that are valuable in another. Examples of transferrable skills include: communication, teamwork, organizational, etc.

Resume Dos

- Be specific and quantify whenever possible
- Proofread multiple times for proper grammar, spelling, etc. (and don't rely just on Spell Check)
- Be consistent with formatting
- Organize the information in your resume in reverse chronological order
- Pay close attention to verb tenses in your bullets
- Keep your resume to one or two pages
- Be truthful about your accomplishments without undervaluing your experiences

Resume Don'ts

- Use resume templates from word processing programs, such as MSWord
- Use phrases like "Responsible for" and "Was in charge of"
- Say what you were supposed to do; say what you did
- Begin bullets with "I" or use complete sentences
- Include personal information such as your social security number, age, or nation of origin
- List unrelated, minor duties such as "opened mail" or "filed documents"
- Limit yourself by including only paid experiences
- Lie or exaggerate on your resume

Exceptions to the rules?

- Academic, research, and government positions may require longer and more detailed resumes or CVs, while creative, technical, and business roles may favor shorter and more concise resumes.
- In all circumstances, read the job listing thoroughly!

Resume Headings

Students can use a variety of headings to summarize and chronicle information for an employer.

Sample headings include:

Education	Leadership Experience
Skills	Relevant Experience or Experience
Related Projects	Activities
Interests	Relevant Coursework
Honors/Awards	Community Service/Volunteer Experience

Resume Sections

CONTACT INFORMATION

Basics

- Name, location, phone number, and email address should always be at the top of the page
- Using a professional-sounding email that is not your sou.edu address is recommended, as you lose this after graduation
- Make sure the address and phone number is somewhere you will readily be able to receive notification or calls from a potential employer.

Suggestions

- Be sure your answering machine message and email address are business-appropriate.
- If you have roommates or if someone else could be answering your calls, make sure they use proper etiquette and relay the message to you.

EDUCATION

Basics

- Begin with your most recent educational experience. Include the degree you expect to earn/have earned, your major/minor, university, expected date of graduation, and GPA.
- Add course highlights as an option (titled "Relevant Coursework").

Suggestions

- Generally list GPA if it is a 3.00 or above, and carry out to 2 decimal places. You may want to list your GPA in your major as well, provided you have had more than 1-2 courses in your major completed.
- List any study abroad experiences or other colleges you have attended for a significant period of time.

HONORS

Basics

- Include academic honors such as the Dean's List, scholarships, or honors societies.

Suggestions

- Honors may be listed under a separate heading or as a subsection under "Education."

SKILLS

Basics

- Foreign languages, computer skills, and other relevant skills should be included

Suggestions

- List level of fluency/proficiency with languages and computer skills (Don't overstate your competence).
- Be prepared to fully communicate in any language to declare to have fluency. Anything on your resume is fair game!

EXPERIENCE

Basics

- Include any employment, internships, significant campus leadership offices, volunteer work, and relevant class/research projects.
- Include title (including multiple titles at one organization if applicable), name of organization, location, and dates for each position.
- Emphasize duties, responsibilities, skills, abilities, and accomplishments appropriate to the position for which you are applying.

Suggestions

- Use phrases beginning with action verbs rather than sentences.
- Do not use pronouns in your job descriptions.
- You do not need to restrict your resume to paid experience.
- You may wish to separate this section into multiple sections such as "Customer Service Experience", "Leadership Experience", "Work Experience", "Related Experience", and "Other Experience."

MANAGEMENT

Administered	Analyzed	Assigned	Attained	Chaired	Consolidated	Contracted
Coordinated	Delegated	Developed	Directed	Evaluated	Executed	Improved
Increased	Organized	Oversaw	Planned	Prioritized	Produced	Recommended
Reviewed	Scheduled	Strengthened	Supervised			

COMMUNICATION

Addressed	Arbitrated	Arranged	Authored	Collaborated	Convinced	Corresponded
Developed	Directed	Drafted	Edited	Enlisted	Formulated	Influenced
Interpreted	Lectured	Mediated	Moderated	Negotiated	Persuaded	Promoted
Publicized	Reconciled	Recruited	Spoke	Translated	Wrote	

RESEARCH

Clarified	Collected	Critiqued	Diagnosed	Evaluated	Examined	Extracted
Identified	Inspected	Interpreted	Interviewed	Investigated	Organized	Reviewed
Summarized	Surveyed	Systematized				

TECHNICAL

Assembled	Built	Calculated	Computed	Designed	Devised	Engineered
Fabricated	Maintained	Operated	Overhauled	Programmed	Remodeled	Repaired
Solved	Upgraded					

TEACHING

Adapted	Advised	Clarified	Coached	Communicated	Coordinated	Demystified
Developed	Enabled	Encouraged	Evaluated	Explained	Facilitated	Guided
Informed	Instructed	Persuaded	Set Goals	Stimulated	Trained	

FINANCIAL

Administered	Allocated	Analyzed	Appraised	Audited	Balanced	Budgeted
Calculated	Computed	Developed	Forecasted	Managed	Marketed	Planned
Projected	Researched					

CREATIVE

Acted	Conceptualized	Created	Customized	Designed	Developed	Directed
Established	Fashioned	Founded	Illustrated	Initiated	Instituted	Integrated
Introduced	Invented	Originated	Performed	Planned	Revitalized	Shaped

HELPING

Assessed	Assisted	Clarified	Coached	Counseled	Demonstrated	Diagnosed
Educated	Expedited	Facilitated	Familiarized	Guided	Motivated	Referred
Rehabilitated	Represented					

CLERICAL OR DETAIL ORIENTED

Approved	Arranged	Cataloged	Classified	Collected	Compiled	Dispatched
Executed	Generated	Implemented	Inspected	Monitored	Operated	Organized
Prepared	Processed	Purchased	Recorded	Retrieved	Screened	Specified
Systematized	Tabulated	Validated				