

# RESUME WRITING GUIDE – Format & Content

A resume is a brief summary of your qualifications, education, and experiences relevant to your position search objective. Creating an impactful resume is the first step to getting an interview for the position or opportunity that you want! Recruiters look for three things on your resume,

## ◆ What did you do? ◆ Why did you do it? ◆ What was the result?

Employers will spend less than 30 seconds reviewing your resume – in a clear, well-organized style, convey how you are the candidate that matches what they need.

Follow the tips below to craft a basic resume that you can build on throughout your career path.

## 1: Create your header

Create a consistent header that you will use on all your job search documents (resume, cover letter, reference list). Put your name on the first line (capitalized, in a large font size). Below your name, list your current email address, cell number, City/State, LinkedIn address and/or web page (*if pertinent*). Listing a street address is optional. Choose a modern font that is easy to read and looks professional. Use this font consistently throughout all of your job search documents.

### EXAMPLE:

## SARAH E. JONES

859-999-1234 • sejones924@gmail.com • LinkedIn/sarahjones924

## 2: Your Education

This section should include:

- Degree and major; any minors, concentrations or focus areas
- Name of the institution(s); **List your current or most recent educational experience first.**
- Graduation date (past or future) **or** dates attended, if a degree was not completed
- Listing GPA is optional (recommended, if 3.5 or above)
- Relevant coursework – as it relates to the position you are applying to
- Other pertinent info may include: **Study Abroad, Honors, Senior Research/Honors Thesis**

### EXAMPLE:

## EDUCATION

### Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Graduation • May 20xx

Concentrations: *Finance and Marketing* | Minor: *Economics* | Overall GPA 3.65

**Berea College, Berea KY** | *Berea College Tuition Promise Scholarship Recipient*

### Relevant Coursework

Marketing, Marketing Research, Intermediate Corporate Finance, Business Management, Broadcast Journalism, Broadcast Practicum, Strategic Management

### Study Abroad Experience

KY Institute of International Studies (KIIS) – “*History, Religion and Health & Human Performance*”  
Israel and Egypt • June-July 20xx

# RESUME WRITING GUIDE – Format & Content

## 3: Your Experience

List most recent experience first. You should include:

- Title of your position, Name of the Organization and Location (City, State)
- Dates, including month and year (no specific days needed)
- Descriptions of responsibilities beginning with a variety of **action verbs** (see *list of action verbs*)  
*Do not write about your experience with “I” statements and avoid phrases such as “duties included” and “responsible for”.*
- Use believable, verifiable accomplishments – Action Verb & Skills = **Results**
- All positions and experiences should be included! internships, volunteer community service, undergraduate research, academic and extracurricular projects or honors projects
- You may choose to divide your experience into two or more sections – to feature unique or career related experiences, like: Research Experience, Teaching Experience, Leadership Experience or Volunteer Experience - **Refer to Resume/CV Headers list to consider what to feature.**

### EXAMPLE:

#### EXPERIENCE

**Resident Advisor**, Residence Life/Student Life  
Berea College, Berea, KY

August 20xx – Present

- Serve as a peer advisor and role model for students by following policies and procedures, establishing and maintaining credibility and positive relationships with floor/building residents and the college community
- Create open lines of communication to foster a positive living/learning environment
- Manage safety by regularly taking rounds of the building, confronting policy violations, and submitting work orders and incident reports when necessary, and serving on-duty, as assigned
- Assist with resolving student concerns and handle emergency situations, if necessary

## 4: Your Activities, Leadership, Service

Specific section headers to feature extracurricular or co-curricular experiences - Service, Leadership, Professional Skills (*general overview of your transferrable skills*), Activities, Organizations/Affiliations, and Honors & Awards.

### EXAMPLE:

#### LEADERSHIP INVOLVEMENT & EXPERTISE

- Student Government Organization (Senior Class Senator) Aug 2018-Present
- Member, Kentucky Society of Certified Public Accountant Aug 2016-Present
- Member, Berea College Entrepreneurship for the Public Good May 2016-Present
- Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2010 Certification Feb 2015
- Languages: Beginner Japanese, Beginner French
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook 365

## 5: Your Unique Skillset

Emphasize your unique combination of skills, interests and experiences by creating a category that highlights what you have to offer an employer! Other categories to consider: Technical/Computer Skills, Language Skills, Creative/Theatre/Music Skills, Sports Experience, and/or Personal Interests.

# RESUME WRITING GUIDE – The Best Advice

## TIMELESS TIPS –

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ No spelling errors</li><li>✦ Easy to follow format</li><li>✦ Omit personal information<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Age, health, race, marital status, religious preference should not be listed</li></ul></li><li>✦ Save your resume with a recognizable file name: “YourName_Resume”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ No exaggerations</li><li>✦ Easy to read</li><li>✦ Do not write in the first person</li><li>✦ Spell out all acronyms</li><li>✦ Add your LinkedIn profile and make all hyperlinks live</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Grammatically correct</li><li>✦ Remain focused on position description</li><li>✦ List content in reverse chronological resume, beginning with your most recent position and proceeding backwards</li><li>✦ Avoid listing high school education or experiences</li></ul>
--	--	---

## TOP TRENDS -

### Enhance your contact information

- List your phone number and your city, state, and zip code for your resume header
- Use active links to your email, LinkedIn profile and your online portfolio (if applicable)

### Modernize your resume format

- Keep your resume design professional – use of some color done tastefully is acceptable
- Replace **outdated fonts** (Times New Roman) with more modern fonts such as Cambria, Calibri, or Georgia. (As standard typefaces, they translate well between operating systems.)

### Guide the reader’s eye

- Use bold and italics to ensure your achievements stand out (but don’t overuse!)

### Use the keywords from the position description

- Use the same keywords listed on the position description to get through any online screening system. Be sure to mirror the language and pay attention to detail - changing something as simple as ‘customer service’ to ‘client relations’ can get your resume approved or rejected.

### Rethink how you highlight your skills

- Employers are looking for more than a list of skills - they want to know how you’ve applied them. Consider high impact outcomes – Money, Time, Productivity, Performance, Customer Service, Sustainability – think about ways that you’ve increased productivity, saved time or made an organization money. Highlighting those kinds of skills and accomplishments will definitely grab the recruiter’s attention!

### Maximize your resume content

- A resume is as long as it needs to be to convey value; 2-page resumes can be effective.
- To conserve space use bullet points, active verbs, and industry-specific acronyms, and don’t state the obvious (e.g., including “references available upon request”).