



How to Write a Professional Resume

How to Write Effective Bullet Points

Step 1: Brainstorm

- What is your communication objective?
- Who is your audience?
- What are your best professional highlights?
 - Transferable Skills
 - Communication, research, leadership, problem-solving...
 - Qualities
 - Hard-working, quick-learner, team-player...

Step 2: Back it up

- Where did you demonstrate your skills?
- What are your best accomplishments?
 - Work
 - part-time jobs, work-study, summer jobs, internships
 - Clubs
 - leadership, committees, events
 - School
 - coursework, group projects

Step 3: Provide details about W-H-O you are

- W – **What** did you do?
- H – **How** did you do it? (Strategies, tools, attitudes)
- O – What **outcomes** can you point to that prove you added value? (Results, impact, scope)



Content Examples: Before and After of Using the WHO Method

Class Project:

Before:

- Participated in a course project for local business

This “Before” sentence only addresses the “What” part of the WHO

After:

- Collaborated with a team of 4, using Porter’s Five Forces and developed solutions for internal threats based on analysis
- or
- Developed solutions for internal threats based on analysis of Porter’s Five Forces in a team of 4 for a local business
- or
- Presented recommendations to mitigate internal threats developed collaboratively using Porter’s Five Forces

Customer Service

Before:

- Provided customer service in a high stress environment

After:

- Defused conflict using active listening and diplomacy to resolve customer concerns while adhering to store policies
- or
- Resolved customer concerns while adhering to store policies by using active listening and diplomacy

Club Involvement

Before:

- Responsible for new member orientation

After:

- Created dynamic new member orientation program using relationship and team-building strategies to build affiliation and club loyalty
- or
- Increased retention rate of members through a dynamic new member orientation program using relationship and team-building strategies to build affiliation and club loyalty



Exercise – Try it out!

Take a look at the following experience descriptions and see if you can determine the What, How, and Outcome pieces of each description sentence.

Experience Descriptions:

Sales Associate, Macy's Fine Jewelry

- Designed and created promotional displays for multiple products to build brand awareness with mall shoppers resulting in a 15% increase in foot traffic through the store
- Mastered training in 6 different watch brands to become more knowledgeable on products
- Provided quality customer service by thoroughly knowing inventory and matching customer desires to product lines
- Built client books and sent out regular individualized correspondence to create long lasting relationships with customers

Shift Manager, Pizza Palace

- Designed and implemented marketing tools such as direct mailing and direct customer contact resulting in the franchise reaching top five out of one hundred stores in sales
- Ensured accuracy in daily sales by reconciling transactions, resulting in a 20% decrease in errors
- Collaborated with the owner and two other managers to execute improvements in lower food costs, leaner labor, and to analyze the financial reports

Research Assistant, University of Oregon Department of Psychology

- Conducted research on gender differences in mathematic performance when stereotypes are present to further personal understanding of research methods
- Proctored 50+ subjects while they took part in a research survey; the results of this sample helped solidify the understanding of human performance in stress inducing situations
- Managed work schedules of 4 research assistants in order to provide consistent staffing and sufficient hours for scheduling subjects

Next Steps:

1. Write your resume. You have a powerful software tool available to help you do this. See Optimal Resume in the Handshake Resource Library.
2. Get feedback on your resume. You can do this in many ways:
 - Make an appointment with a Career Advisor (use the "Schedule an Appointment" function in Handshake)
 - Ask your friends, family, mentors for advice
3. Keep revising and tailoring your resume as your experience and target employers change.



Formatting Your Resume

Format Serves Function!

Step 1: Function of your resume

- What is your communication objective?

Step 2: Choose appropriate content

- Which sections make sense for your communication objective?

Required:

- Contact Information – your name is your brand
- Education – Bachelor of Science or Arts? High school?
- Experience – generic or specific?

Optional:

- Profile / Summary of Qualifications
- Coursework – beyond major requirements
- Academic Projects – lay out like Experience
- Activities – one line per activity
- Skills – measurable skills (e.g., computer and language skills)
- Interests – tailored for target
- Awards/ Honors

Step 3: Maximize the visual impact

- Make it easy to scan.
- Leave enough white space to avoid a crowded look.
- Fill one page (know the expectations of the employer).
- Use **bold**, *italics*, and CAPS sparingly to highlight key information.
- Order information in reverse-chronological order within each section.
- Accept no errors! Don't trust spell-check.
- See Optimal Resume for a resume builder that follows these suggestions.