RESUMES

Types of Resumes

Chronological

- This type of resume is preferred by recruiters. It also works best for students who are applying for internships and post-graduation employment as well as applicants who have experience closely related to their career goals.
- It should be easy to read and quickly allow the recruiter or reviewer to understand the candidate's goal and determine qualifications.
- This style focuses on work experience and skills developed through jobs, internships, and volunteer experience.
- Jobs are listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first.

Functional

- This resume format emphasizes transferable skills and related accomplishments while de-emphasizing certain positions that you held.
- This style is most useful for those with little work experience or who are making a dramatic career change.

Hybrid/Combination

- This format combines both chronological and functional formats.
- It creates a resume that highlights your most related experience while emphasizing your skills and abilities.
- This style allows the most flexibility and is a good option for students or graduates who may have a variety of experiences.

Overall Format

- A one-page resume is recommended for college students (those applying to entry- and mid-level positions) unless you have significant related experience.

- When writing a two-page version, the most relevant information should be on the first page, and there should be enough text to fill one half or more of the second page.
- Use 10-12-point font and an easy to read font such as Times New Roman or Georgia. Your name at the top can be larger.
- Bullet points are preferred for easy reading; do no use complete sentences.
- Margins should be ½" to 1" – left, right, top, and bottom.
- Each resume should be tailored to the position applied for.
- Resumes should drive the information shared in an interview. The resume is written to help get an interview – not to get the job.
- Present tense can be used to describe roles and experiences you are currently doing, but past tense should be used for all other experiences.
- "I" or "my" should not be used – it's best to avoid first person altogether.

The following categories are listed in the order we recommend they appear on your resume.

Heading

- Your name should be at the top of the page in a large, easy-to-read font.
- Follow your name with current contact information such as phone and email address. Some employers prefer that home address is no longer included since resumes are generally only sent digitally. Use your best judgement if you think including it is necessary or not.

Objective/Intro

This is an optional feature but one that can help your resume stand out and tie into your cover letter.

- This section highlights the focus of your search. It identifies what you want to do and what skills you have to offer.
- Be brief, clear, and concise.
- Keep your goals and objectives realistic and relevant to the job you are applying for and make sure it is supported by your resume.
- This section will change for each specific position you apply for.

Education

- List degree(s) – including in-progress ones – and majors to match your transcript and in reverse chronological order.

- Include the name of the school and location (city, state)
- Provide only the month and year of graduation (or anticipated graduation if you have not yet completed your degree).
- Only include GPA if it is 3.0 or higher.
- Use two to five relevant course titles, if appropriate, as they appear on your transcript. Do not include course number.
  - This is a good addition for those with less experience. When used, this section should only include courses specific to the position applied for. For example, if you are applying for a software design job, you could an include a course such as "Introduction to Computer Programming" to exhibit familiarity with specific coding languages.
- High school experience is not recommended to include after the sophomore year of college.
- Special honors, scholarships, special projects, and study abroad experiences can also be included in this section if they support your career goals.

Experience

- Separate into "Relevant" and "Additional Experience" sections if appropriate.
- Include roles such as internships (paid and unpaid), volunteer work, and projects.
- Provide complete information for each position: organization, location, start and end dates (month and year only) and position title
- Use action verbs to describe responsibilities and accomplishments (see Resume Power Verbs for suggestions).
- Provide quantitative information when relevant (ex: supervised 5 student workers)
- Focus on skills that are relevant to the job you're applying for and use buzzwords/keywords from the job description to connect your roles to the one you are applying for.
- Include multiple titles and responsibilities if you had more than one role at an organization.

Technical Skills or Additional Skills

- List computer software you are familiar with and any certifications that are obtained.
- Avoid listing transferable skills such as "great communication," 'team-oriented" or "leadership skills".
- Include languages you are proficient in and categorize them as fluent, conversational, or basic.
- Specific awards/honors not relevant to schoolwork or certifications can also appear in this section or an additional section labeled as "Certifications and Awards"

Appearance, formatting, proofreading, and other Dos & Don'ts

- Avoid templates if possible – recruiters are familiar with templates that are available and respond negatively to them. If you see a template you like online, create it manually in Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Correct any misspellings and grammar issues – your resume should be error-free. Ask a friend or family to look over it, or have it reviewed by the Strommen Center or the Writing Center.
- Keep in mind that many resumes are reviewed by AI or by people who (on average) spend 5-7 seconds looking at your resume. Keep it concise and easy to read, with the information that's most relevant and most important to you on the first third of the document, but tailor it to a human reader, not a robot.
- Make sure to save your resume under your name (ex: LastName_FirstName.doc) and when submitting, make sure to upload it in a PDF format so that your formatting will not be affected and the organization will have no issues opening it.
- A resume is a living document – it will change many, many times based on your experience and based on expectations for resumes. Setting it up in a format that is easy for you to edit is essential.
- At the end of the day, it's your resume and you chose how to format it. Our advice and guidelines are based on what feedback employers give and other higher ed institutions have insight into. Not all of it may be right for your or your career path. You choose how to tell your story and a resume is just one method for that.

Still have questions? Not sure if your formatting or descriptions are clear? Make an appointment with a Strommen Center Career Coach or Peer Advisor on Handshake!