Resumé Writing Workshop

# What will you gain today:

1. A step by step **process** to help you create an effective and impactful resume.
2. The ability to articulate your **skills** and **knowledge** to match any job vacancy.
3. An understanding of how to maximize your **impact** as a candidate.

## 

# Workshop focus areas:

1. Difference between a Resume and a CV.
2. Purpose of a resume.
3. Writing for impact.
4. Resume Layout
5. Resume Do’s and Don’ts
6. Step by Step Resume Creation.

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#### Task

* In pairs discuss and brainstorm on the below concepts before diving deeply on the information outlined in the content on the same.
  + Differences between a CV and a Resume
  + What is a Resume?
  + Why do you need a Resume?
  + The DOs and DON’Ts when writing an effective resume
* Now go ahead and go through the below content and compare notes between the discussion you just had and information the content gives.

## 

## CV? Resume?

## What’s the difference?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Curriculum Vitae** | **Resume** |
| * Typically longer than 2 pages * A comprehensive overview of candidate's education, research and employment experiences * Typically used when applying for academic, scientific, and research positions; for entrance into post graduate programs; and for funding for research grants and proposals | * 1-2 pages in length; concise * Summary of relevant skills, experience and education * Designed to briefly show the employer your past work accomplishments when applying for employment. |

### 

## What is a Resume?

* A resume is a short summary of your skills, educational background, experience and work or in this case projects.
* It is the first step to job search and it is used as a marketing tool to obtain an interview.

### A resume is NOT

* An autobiography
* A comprehensive list of all your experiences and accomplishments
* Used to obtain a job (it is used to obtain an interview!)

## Why do you need a resume?

* To “win an interview” by convincing the employers that you have the relevant skills required for a particular position
* To describe your qualifications for that particular position in an easily readable format

## Writing for Impact

* 4 step process for a high impact resume focuses on:

1. Employer needs
2. Your message
3. Your evidence
4. Your presentation

### Employer Needs



* Read the job description carefully
* Research the organization and sector
* Call the employer or network to find out more (yes, really!)
* Have a chat with the contact you may know from the company
* Assume you *know* what the employer needs

### 

### Your Message

* Think, “how is this relevant to the employer’s needs?”
* Use keywords from the job description when highlighting your skills, knowledge and abilities

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### Your Evidence

* For maximum impact, **show**, don’t tell
* Use **examples** from your experiences and interest as **evidence**

#### How to create an evidence-based resume using the WHO method

1. Choose relevant experiences you would like to include on your resume
2. Choose tasks from each experience relevant to the job that can demonstrate skills and contributions
3. Use the **WHO method** to evaluate tasks and experiences to help you write evidence-based statements.

**W = Wha**t did you do (tasks/projects)

**H = How** did you do the work? (skills, strategies, methods, tools, techniques,

attitudes)

**O = Outcomes** associated with the work (results, impact, contribution, intention,

scope)

#### What is your story?

Think back over the years about your accomplishments and professional experiences (internships, jobs, or positions held in school, etc).

For each position, ask yourself: what problems did I solve and/or what improvements did I make? Your answers will form the basis of the stories you tell on your CV. The stories do not have to be earth-shattering (we’re not looking for a cure for cancer!) but they should centre on the impact you made in prior positions.

To create high-impact stories, think back over each position you have held and the things you did to help the organization you were working with. Describe the initial situation, what actions you took, and the results of your efforts. Then summarize your story into no more than two or three lines.

By filling your resume with stories of achievements, you will do more than attract the potential employer’s attention to your resume. You will also provide them with a source of interview questions. They can ask you about your stories, and you can use them as answers to soft-skills interview questions. In this way, the work you do to creating compelling stories for your resume is also preparation for acing your job interviews.

#### Useful phrases and “impactful” words to use in telling your story

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Phrases** | **Action verbs** |
| * In charge of implementing . . . * Provided technical assistance to . . . * Disseminated results of analysis . . . * Worked closely with . . . * Instrumental in . . . * Succeeded in . . . * Planned and managed . . . * Supported customers/colleagues with. * Researched, assessed and synthesised. * Worked largely unsupervised … * Built successful relationships with … * Entrusted with additional tasks … * Analyzed customer interactions and … * Consistently hit all monthly targets … | * Designed * Evaluated * Monitored * Conducted * Implemented * Co-ordinated * Assisted * Presented * Guided * Managed * Organized * Refined * Quantified * Led * Identified * Simplified |

So let’s start now - tell us a story!

#### Task

* On a piece of paper, write down all of the experiences that you have gone through either in school or in a job setting that has had an impact on your career, focusing on those that have contributed to your journey as a Software Engineer.
* Now that you have them all on paper, narrate this story to a peer partner. Are they awed and inspired? If yes, Good work! If no, ask for feedback and repeat the story until it is solid.
  + Remember to use the **WHO** method!
* Now that you have them all on paper, narrate this story to a peer partner. Are they awed and inspired? If yes, Good work! If no, ask for feedback and repeat the story until it is solid.

### Your Presentation

* There is no one-size-fits-all template when it comes to resumes, what you choose to highlight or leave out in your resume can be interchangeable depending on the job you're applying for
* Generally, the sections include:
  + Name and contact details
  + Personal statement /career objective\*
  + Education\*
  + Relevant work experience\*
  + Skills\*
  + Awards and Honours\*



* Highlight important information using bold, italic, underline but do

not overdo it!

* Follow a well-organized, logical and consistent format
* Ask someone to spell check before sending



* Include a photo
* State your marital status, religion, gender etc
* Include references (unless on request)

## The DOs and DON'Ts of a Resume

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DO** | **DON’T** |
| **✓ TAILOR** your resume to each job position  **✓ MATCH** the skills you have to the skills the employer is looking for.  **✓** Use **ACTION VERBS** & **SPECIFIC EXAMPLES** to illustrate your skills  **✓** Make it **EASY TO READ**: an attractive layout will grab an employer’s attention  **✓** Pay attention to **GRAMMAR** and **SPELLING**  **✓** Get someone to CHECK your resume before submitting it | ✘ Exaggerate or lie**✘** Use the same resume for all applications - personalize! **✘** Write long descriptive sentences; keep them short & to the point**✘** Use fancy/unusual fonts**✘** Use slang or abbreviations**✘** Include personal information i.e. marital status, gender etc |

## 

## Let’s get started on our own resumes!

Before we get started, here is an example of a Great [Resume](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_N4OFCLh-bW6t2poUBoDD939M6-l-9LVIDlAavbc7tU/edit). **Do not** copy this resume, but take a look at it to see the format and quality that you are looking to attain in this session.

### First Step

1. Find a resume template on google that you can use to write your resume in
2. **Do not forget** to share the document with your Technical Professional Development Instructor through their emails upon completion.

Now, let's start!

### Contact Information

At the top of your Google Doc, add your contact information in the following format.

Firstname Lastname

Address City, Country

Phone Number

Email address (should be [firstname.lastname@gmail.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@gmail.com))

LinkedIn URL

Portfolio URL

Example:

Joseph Muli

P.O. Box 00800-6578, Nairobi, Kenya

(+254) 703 887695

joseph.muli@gmail.com

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/joesphmuli](http://www.linkedin.com/joesphmuli)

Portfolio: [www.josephmuli.com](http://www.josephmuli.com)

#### Task

Create the contact information section for your CV, **just** like the example above.

### Personal Statement

A personal statement is an essential way to bullet point your achievements and sell yourself to a hiring manager. It should state:

* Who you are
* Your skills and what you can offer the organization
* Your career aim: tailor your answer to the job you are applying for, and make it seem as though you are passionate about pursuing a career in that area.

Key points on writing a dynamic and interesting personal statement:

* Get straight to the point: avoid lengthy descriptions, make your testimonies punchy and informative.
* Keep it between 50 to 150 words maximum**.**
* Match person and job specifications with a well-written copy.
* Read your personal statement out loud to ensure it reads naturally.
* Use first-person sentences.
* Don’t overuse the word “I” since it shows a lot of repetitiveness which makes the personal statement boring. A good rule of thumb is to try to limit your use of “I” to only once. Try to reword sentences in such a way that they will have the right impact without needing the word at all.

Example:

Good Personal Statement

A competent and committed Web Design and Development graduate looking for a rewarding career in the Information Technology sector. Exemplary track record of successfully developing projects from the concept design to testing and handover. Currently seeking a suitable graduate web developer position within a progressive environment where I can enhance and utilize design skills.

Good Personal Statement

A motivated, adaptable, and responsible Computing graduate with a strong systems mindset, seeking a position as a Frontend Engineer. I have a methodical, customer-focused approach to work and a strong drive to see projects through to completion.

Bad Personal Statement

I am a hard-working, innovative individual who enjoys working. I am excellent at meeting deadlines. I have two years of experience in business, and I would like to contribute to the business with my excellent skills and past work experience.

* Why is this a bad personal statement?
  + The word “I” is used several times
  + It is not compelling - in comparison to the “good” statements above, we do not feel interested in learning more about the person
    - This is a personal sales pitch - we don’t feel like we want to buy what this person is selling!
  + “excellent skills and past work experience” is very vague - it alludes to something compelling, but doesn’t actually explain or grab our attention

#### Task

Write a killer Personal Statement by answering the following questions:

1. What makes you unique, or at least different from, any other applicant?
2. When did you initially become interested in being a developer? How has this interest developed? When did you become certain that this is what you wanted to do? What solidified your decision?
3. What do you expect to get out of this career?

Create your own Personal Statement. **Do not** copy the examples above. After you’ve written the first draft of your Personal Statement:

1. Read it out loud, ensure it reads naturally
2. Refactor until you feel convinced
3. In groups of 3 people, review your peer’s personal statements by having each person read her/his out loud, and then giving each other feedback
4. Personally review and refactor once more
5. Add it to your Resume!

### Highlighted Software Applications

This is where you list your best-completed software projects. They can be either a group or personal projects, but they should be your BEST projects that you are most proud of, and feel represent your skillset. Potential employers will review these projects and the code you wrote for them (must all be open source on Github) and will ask you to explain how you built the applications during your interview.

Example:

Bootstrap - Scrum Master, Full Stack Software Engineer 2013-2016

URL: <http://bookstrap.moringaschool.com/>

Cloud-based learning management system (LMS) application for a network of private coding schools

* Architected and implemented full-stack applications for user profiles, messaging, attendance, curriculum and video content delivery, student help system, administrative panel and authentication
* Implemented services with AWS deployment, RESTful APIs, SQL database models, and front-end widgets

#### Task

Use the below points to help you write down your top 3 Highlighted Software Projects. For each project, answer the following:

1. First-line
   1. What is the name of the project?
   2. What was your role on the team?
   3. When did you work on the project?
2. Second line
   1. URL to the deployed project and/or Github Repository
3. Third line
   1. A one-line, concise and punchy description of the project:
      1. What did you build? In one sentence, how would you describe your project?
4. Bullet points (maximum 3)
   1. What was the outcome of the project? What indicates that you built an awesome product?
   2. What key technologies did you directly work with?
   3. What did you do/solve with each technology?
   4. What was a notable technical achievement or challenge you had to overcome that you think an employer would appreciate?
   5. Examples:
      1. Deployed via X technology
      2. Peaked at X users/day
      3. The app was successfully able to do X
      4. Accepted and praised by the client
      5. Featured on X publication.

**Strictly** follow the format outlined in the above task when crafting the “Highlighted Software Applications” section of your Resume.

With your peer partners, review your “Highlighted Software Applications” and give each other feedback, and then add them to your Resume.

After completing the above exercise, add it to your Resume!

### Technical Skills

Statetechnical competencies based on your experience level with them. Avoid overstating your abilities or including too much information. Employers will use this section to see what technologies you are most familiar with and your experience level with each.

Split your technical competencies into two sections: Strong and Experienced.

* Strong should contain all of the languages and technologies that you are most familiar with and feel your abilities are the greatest.
* Experienced should contain all of the languages and technologies that you are comfortable with, but don’t feel that you have strong expertise.

The last section “Personal Skills” talk about your personal traits and soft-skills that will be beneficial to the employer.

Example:

Strong:

Javascript, Node.js/Express.js, APIs, Sails.js, Socket.Io, Promises, AngularJS, HTML5

Experienced:

Gulp/Grunt, SOA, AWS, CSS3, jQuery, Oauth, Deployment, BaaS, Three.js, Redis, Backbone

### Personal Skills

* Effective communicator and ability to work well within a multi-disciplined team
* A keen approach and strong ability to learn new skills
* Ability to work well under minimal supervision
* Systems-thinker that enjoys working in teams to solve challenging problems

#### Task

1. Think about your core technical competencies and list them in categories, just like in the example above.
2. **Strictly** follow the format outlined above when crafting the Technical and Personal Skills for your Resume.
3. With your peer partners, review your “Technical Skills” and give each other feedback, and then add them to your Resume.

### Employment History

Your employment history should be a list of accomplishments from past positions held, rather than a list of duties performed. In this section, make your experiences sound as technical as possible. Present your achievements from the angle of that you were architecting, building, and engineering systems in order to achieve organizational goals. If you have not held any professional positions, do not include this section.

Just like all other sections on your Resume that tell your story over time, this list should be in reverse-chronological order.

For each position held, include:

1. First-line
   1. Position title
   2. Company/organization name
   3. Location
2. Second Line
   1. The date range that position was held
3. Third line
   1. Achievements and Responsibilities, each achievement listed should consist of three components:
      1. Using a particular skill
         1. Example: Built user interface using AngularJS and conducted user testing to ensure the quality of user experience
      2. Carrying out a particular activity
         1. Example: Lead a team of 5 developers to build a full-stack Javascript application
      3. Getting a measurable, quantifiable result or benefit
         1. Example: Designed and implemented efficiency programs aimed at streamlining direct office services, saving $150,000 per year in labour costs

Example:

Sales Team Leader, United Nations, Kenya

May 2008 – December 2011

Achievements and responsibilities:

* Managed day to day team activities of ten Sales Executives within the department.
* Consistently achieved team targets, reaching 150% revenue against the plan during the whole period of employment.
* Brought in 55 major new clients, including companies Google, Facebook and Twitter.
* Facilitated client meetings to ensure excellent account management was maintained.
* Managed 4 employees in an executive office, maintaining an atmosphere of exactness, efficiency, and attention to detail.
* Designed and implemented efficiency programs aimed at streamlining direct office services, saving $150,000 per year in labour costs.
* Earned the 2013 “Outstanding Achievement Award” in a company of 200+ people

Example:

Sales Executive, PwC, London

July 2006 – May 2008

Responsibilities:

* Determined customer’s needs obtained from interviewing them.
* Oversaw media adverts.
* Ensured records are up to date and well maintained.

Selected Accomplishments:

* Analysed and condensed incoming data from various clients and customers, writing 1,500-word reports twice a week for our CEO
* Brought in £100,000 worth of new business during my time of employment.
* Provided excellent account management to all clients, resulting in numerous testimonials

#### Task

Those with work experience, jog your memory by thinking about places that you have worked in the past, and the achievements and responsibilities from those experiences. You will include volunteer leadership positions below, so only include jobs in this section.

For those who lack work experience, think about the skills that you possess, school clubs positions held, and volunteer activities that you have engaged in. This section will be much shorter for you than for others but do include two or three of your strongest working experiences.

Jogged your memory already? Now clearly outline a good employment history citing your achievements and responsibilities. **Remember** to follow the above format used when crafting the “Employment History” section of your Resume. When you are done, review and refactor with your peer group.

### Professional Qualifications

This is different from your educational background. Professional qualifications are vocational qualifications, often involving an element of practical training. Usually, they are linked with a specific industry and are designed to help you improve and develop relevant skills for a particular career path.

List special types of training you have received that demonstrates your commitment to learning a skill that is important to the job description. For each entry, include the name of the training, the name of the organization that conducted the training, location, and date. Attendance at general conferences should not be included.

For each Professional Qualification, include:

1. First-line
   1. Name of organization
      1. Example: Techno Brain Ltd, Kenya
2. Second line
   1. Course training dates
      1. Example: May 2016-Present
3. Third line
   1. Award(s)
      1. Example: Microsoft Dynamics CRM (Customer Relations Management)

Example:

Techno Brain Ltd, Kenya

May 2016-Present

Award: Microsoft Certificate Associate (MCSA)

Amani Institute, Kenya

March-May 2016

Award: Microsoft Dynamics CRM (Customer Relations Management)

#### Task

Remember your professional qualifications? List them down **strictly** following the style above, and then review with your peer group.

### Academic Qualification

List your schooling and degrees in reverse chronological order. For each entry, include the years attended, degree type/certification eg (BSc/ MA), the field of study, and school name.

Include Moringa School here since you are receiving certification at the end of the program!

For each entry, include the name of the certification and the granting institution/organization (if it is not the same institute).

For each Academic Qualification, include:

1. First-line
   1. Name of school
2. Second line
   1. Dates attended
3. Third
   1. Degree or certification received, certificate-granting institution
   2. (optional) honours or awards in bullet point format
4. Fourth
   1. Relevant courses taken - list all high-level technical or professional courses

Example:

Aston University

September 2004 – June 2006

BSc Computer Science (Hons)

* 1st Class Degree with Professional Placement

Relevant Courses

* Professional and Social Aspects of Computing
* Understanding Information Systems
* Information Security
* Human-Computer Interaction

Marmanet Secondary School

September 1999 – June 2004

Certification: Kenya NationalExamination (KCSE)

Relevant Courses

* IB Computer Science
* IB Physics
* IB Calculus

#### Task

Remember your academic qualifications? Add them, and **strictly** following the style above. Then, review with your peer group.

### Affiliations and Leadership

This section includes extracurricular ventures or activities in which you held a leadership position. If you lack work experience and included these qualifications in another section above, do not include them again here.

For each Professional Qualification, include:

1. First-line
   1. Title held
   2. Organization name
2. Second line
   1. Dates of the position held

Example:

Vice President, Graduate & Professional Student Senate at the University of Washington

September 2004 - Present

Example:

Mechanical Engineering Student Representative to Faculty Meetings, University of Washington

September 2001 – June 2003

#### Task

Have you been a member of any extracurricularclubs or activities, and/or held leadership positions? List them down following the above style then review them with your peer group. After, add them to your CV.

### Volunteer Activities

This section demonstrates your leadership, project management, adaptability, and responsibility through causes that you are passionate about. This can include long-term volunteer work, if you held an official position, or lead a project from beginning to end.

For each Volunteer Activity, include:

1. First-line
   1. Position held
   2. Organization name
   3. Location
2. Second line
   1. Dates of the position held
3. Third
   1. Responsibilities
      1. A bullet point list of 2-4 accomplishments and responsibilities

Example:

Volunteer Fundraiser, The United Way, Montclair, NJ,

July 2012 to Present

Responsibilities**:**

* Recruited and trained 14 volunteer fundraisers.
* Planned and promoted 3 successful fundraising events including an auction, dinner, and concert which generated over $80,000 in pledges.
* Increased contributions by 25% over the previous campaign

(OR)

Program Coordinator, Save Our Strays, Montreal, Canada

June 2004 to present

Responsibilities**:**

* Website management and content creation
* Weekly newsletter content and creation
* Coordination of staff, volunteers, and applicants on internal projects

#### Task

Create a list of all volunteer activities you have been involved in and where you volunteered, formatted just as those above.

Review the list with your peer partners following the format given in the [Volunteer Activities](#_qnuwkewfqbbo) section. Give each other feedback on the format used to create the list of volunteer activities. If there are corrections to be made, work on them. Refactor until the section is polished.

### Interests

This section demonstrates your capabilities through things you are passionate about. Don’t give a long list, concentrate on two or three interests, and write about what you learnt from each of them. Choose interests that are technical, and demonstrate your intellectual side, and engineering and professional mindset.

The format is a bulleted list of 2-3 interests, such as in the examples below. Make sure to also include your language proficiencies here as well.

Example:

* Travelling: planned and organised a four-week trip to go volunteer in Cambodia including sourcing the best value flights and accommodation. (demonstrates adaptability and independence)
* Music:Took part in concert participation with Wynton House of Music, Nairobi to help raise money for children’s home
* Languages: fluent in English (expert), Spanish (elementary proficiency), and Icelandic (expert)

#### Task

You are almost done! Think of things that you find fun or interesting and write them down. Make sure to include languages that you speak fluently.

Review the write up with your peer partners following the format and instructions given in the [Interests](#_gk0dbg9gp28l) section above. Give each other feedback on the format, grammar and sentence structure. If corrections are suggested, work on them. Refactor until the section is polished then go ahead to the next section.

### References

You can choose to put your references or state that they will be provided upon request. The choice is yours!

BUT for the purpose of this resume workshop let's create a reference section that you can either display or provide upon request.

On your CV, for each referee include their:

* Full name
* Position in their company
* Company name
* Phone number and/or email address

**Do not** disclose anyone’s private contact details on your CV without their permission!

Example:

Mrs. Saima Khan

Sales Manager

Flash Electronics Ltd.

Tel: 0109 228 2091

Email: [khan.s@flashelectronics.co.uk](mailto:khan.s@flashelectronics.co.uk)

#### Task

**Strictly** follow the format given above to create the “Reference” section for your Resume.

Review the section with your peer partners following the format outlined in the [Reference](#_6p09ufxxjj90) section and give each other feedback. If corrections are suggested work on them. Refactor until the section is polished.

Congratulations, you are now done creating the first draft of your CV!

Now, read through your CV and refactor until everything seems and sounds perfect. Use the following checklist to help you know whether your CV is ready or not.

1. Ensure that the below sections of the CV strictly adhere to the instructions given in each section.
   1. Contact Information
   2. Personal Statement
   3. Highlighted Software Applications
   4. Technical Skills
   5. Employment History
   6. Academic Qualification
   7. Professional Qualifications
   8. Affiliations and Leadership
   9. Volunteer Activities
   10. Interests
   11. References
2. Lastly, check out your formatting and ensure that you have used:
   1. A professional font either Times New Roman or Arial.
   2. Consistent spacing.
   3. 11 or 12pt font.

Review your Resume with your peer partners and give each other lots and lots of feedback using the above checklist as a guide.

1. Make the corrections suggested by your peers.
2. Let your peer partners review your Resume after implementing their suggested suggestions.
3. When you and your peer partners are completely satisfied with all your Resume’s, notify the Professional Development Instructor who will read through all your group's final