THE CHALLENGE

Carlos applied to 12 programming internships without receiving a single interview call. His resume listed coursework and projects but used generic descriptions like "Worked on database project." After learning resume best practices, he transformed his bullet points to showcase specific achievements: "Developed a database application that reduced data retrieval time by 40%." Within three weeks of sending his revised resume, he received interview requests from 4 out of 7 companies—a dramatic improvement from his previous 0% response rate.

What makes the difference between a resume that gets passed over and one that gets you noticed by employers?

Learning Objectives

- Identify the essential components of an effective resume.
- Recognize the importance of personal branding in career development.
- Develop strategies for highlighting skills and experiences in a resume format.
- Understand how to tailor resumes for different career opportunities.
- Create a framework for a personal brand that aligns with career goals.

CORE CONCEPTS

Term	Definition
Resume	A document that summarizes your education, work experience, skills, and achievements for potential employers.
Personal Brand	The unique combination of skills, experiences, and personality that defines your professional reputation.
Action Verbs	Strong, descriptive verbs that demonstrate accomplishments and responsibilities (e.g., Led, Analyzed, Created).
Quantifiable Achievements	Accomplishments expressed with specific numbers or percentages to show measurable impact.
Tailoring	Customizing your resume for specific job opportunities by highlighting relevant experiences and using keywords from the job description.

Background: Your resume is often your first introduction to potential employers—it's your personal marketing document. An effective resume should be clear, concise, and tailored to the position you're seeking. Combined with a strong personal brand, your resume helps you stand out in competitive job markets by communicating your unique value proposition.

APPLY IT

PART A: WEAK VS. STRONG RESUME BULLET POINTS

Compare these resume bullet points and identify what makes the "After" versions more effective.

Before (Weak)	**After (Strong)**
"Responsible for customer service"	*"Resolved 50+ customer inquiries daily, achieving 95% satisfaction rating"*

1. What two improvements make the "After" bullet point stronger?

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Before (Weak)	**After (Strong)**
"Worked on social media for the club"	*"Managed Instagram account, growing followers from 200 to 800 in one semester"*

2. What specific elements make this bullet point demonstrate impact?

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PART B: ACTION VERB REFERENCE

Use these strong action verbs to begin your bullet points:

Leadership	**Achievement**	**Communication**	**Analysis**
• Led	• Achieved	• Presented	• Analyzed
• Managed	• Improved	• Authored	• Evaluated
• Coordinated	• Increased	• Negotiated	• Researched
• Supervised	• Reduced	• Persuaded	• Assessed

3. Rewrite this weak bullet point using an action verb and quantifiable achievement:

Weak: "Was in charge of organizing the fundraiser event"

Strong: _____

_____

PART C: PERSONAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT

Begin developing your personal brand by answering these questions:

Your Personal Brand Foundation

Top 3 Professional Strengths:

_____

_____

What makes you unique in your field of interest?

_____

_____

What problems are you passionate about solving?

_____

_____

4. Draft a brief personal brand statement (2-3 sentences) that captures who you are professionally:

_____

_____

_____

_____

> **Example:** *"I'm a data analytics student who combines technical expertise with creative problem-solving to help organizations make data-driven decisions. I bridge the gap between technical and non-technical stakeholders through clear, actionable visualizations."*

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Which of the following is the BEST example of a quantifiable achievement?

- ☐ A. Worked hard to improve sales
- ☐ B. Helped the team with various tasks
- ☐ C. Increased quarterly sales by 23% through targeted email campaigns
- ☐ D. Was responsible for sales growth

2. Why is it important to tailor your resume for each job application?

- ☐ A. Employers only read resumes that are exactly one page
- ☐ B. To highlight the skills and experiences most relevant to each specific position
- ☐ C. To use different fonts for different industries
- ☐ D. So that each resume has a unique design

3. Explain why "Managed a $5,000 budget" is a stronger resume statement than "Was in charge of money."

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4. What are two key elements of an effective personal brand?

_____

_____

5. Reflection: Think about a job, internship, or volunteer position you've held. Write one strong resume bullet point describing an achievement from that experience using an action verb and, if possible, a quantifiable result.

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