Resume Writing

Career Center

An effective resume should do two things: 1. Describe where you've been and 2. Foretell where you're going.

Rather than an exhaustive list of every job you've ever held or award you've ever won, your resume should be a carefully crafted document that helps employers clearly see the value you will bring to their organization. This can general be done in a one page document that clearly illuminates the specific, tangible and transferable skills and attributes that you have to offer.

BUILD THE RESUME EMPLOYERS WANT
CONNECT WHAT YOU HAVE TO WHAT THE EMPLOYER NEEDS

It's critical to understand up front that, in your resume, interviews, and all interactions with employers, the responsibility rests with you to make the match between what you have to offer and what the employer needs.

With your resume, it's up to you to convince the employer that you are worth an interview. Through your resume, you want to demonstrate how your academic, extracurricular, and work experiences connect to the job and offer the employer some evidence that you have the potential to be a good fit for the job and organization.

WHAT MATTERS?
When examining resumes, employers say they look for evidence of:
- Ability to work in a team
- Leadership skills/experience
- Written communication skills
- Strong work ethic
- Analytical skills
- Verbal communication skills
- Initiative
- Technical skills
- Detail-Orientation
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Interpersonal skills
- Organizational abilities

To achieve this, you must research the organization and position so that you'll have a clear idea of what to showcase as you tailor your resume to the specific job. Find the similarities between the job and your experience and qualifications.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER
What does your resume say about you? Ideally, it says you warrant a closer look and an interview. But your resume can also say negative, unintended things about you that may lose you the interview.
- Your resume can say you don't pay attention, don't care about details, and/or aren't interested in the company or job.

Additional Tips:
- Use 10- to 12- point type font
- Focus on information that is relevant to the employer and job
- Keep your resume short
- Include key words taken directly from the job description
- Quantify your results, when possible

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

SUGGESTED RESUME FORM

SECTION	BASICS	SUGGESTIONS
CONTACT INFORMATION	• Name, address, phone number and email address should always be at the top of the page. • Always include area code/zip code • For current students, list both college and home address	• Be sure your voicemail and email address are business-appropriate! • Your name should always be at least a 16pt font.
OBJECTIVE *(OPTIONAL)*	• An objective is used to demonstrate you are directed in your internship/job search • If it is too general, it will not help you and could potentially work against you	• Do not use an objective at a career fair. • No objective is needed if you include a cover letter. *If possible, always provide a cover letter in your application!*
EDUCATION	• Begin with your most recent educational experience. Include the university, the degree you expect to earn or have earned (Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts), your major/minor, and GPA • List study abroad or other colleges attended for a significant amount of time.	• The emphasis on your GPA will vary by employer. If your GPA is a 3.0 or higher, we recommend that you include it on your resume. If lower than a 3.0, you may consider omitting it. • Some students may only list their major GPA if it is higher, rather than their overall GPA.
HONORS *(OPTIONAL)*	• Include academic honors such as Dean's List, scholarships, and honor societies.	• Honors may be listed under a separate heading or as a subsection under Education.
RELEVANT COURSEWORK *(OPTIONAL)*	• You may want to list courses you have taken that are relevant to the internship or job. • List the name of the course (Organizational Psychology)	• Relevant courses can be helpful if you do not necessarily have a lot of hands-on experiences. Talk with your Career Coach about which courses to highlight for each position.
EXPERIENCE	• Include any employment, internships, significant campus leadership roles, volunteer work, research, and relevant class projects. • Include your title, name of organization, location (city, state), and range of dates for each position (Aug 20xx-May 20xx) • Emphasize accomplishments, skills, abilities, duties, and responsibilities appropriate to the position for which you are applying.	• Refrain from using passive language when describing your accomplishments. Instead, use phrases beginning with action verbs. • Do not use pronouns in your bullet points • You do not need to restrict this category to paid experience. • You may wish to separate this section into "Related Experience" and "Additional Experience".
ACTIVITIES	• List college-related activities including student government, fraternities/sororities, student clubs, sports activities, etc. that are not mentioned elsewhere.	• Be sure to note offices held and committee involvement.
SKILLS	• Foreign languages, computer skills, and other relevant skills should be included.	• List level of fluency/proficiency with languages/computer skills (Do not overstate your competence).

RONALD RESUME

Current Address: Rresume@email.sc.edu | (803) 555-5555   **Permanent Address:**
1111 Columbia Road   2222 Brown Road
Columbia, SC, 29208   Charlotte, NC 28226

EDUCATION
University of South Carolina; Columbia, SC
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Minor in Political Science; May 20xx
Overall GPA: 3.25, Dean's List: 2 Semesters

Study Abroad: Universidad Veritas; San Jose, Costa Rica; Spring 20xx

RELEVANT COURSEWORK
Juvenile Delinquency   Social Welfare Policy
Information Technology and the Human Services   Diversity in the Workplace
Legal Aspects of Social Welfare   State and Local Government
Children and Family Services

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands, Columbia, SC
Teen Counselor, May 20xx-Present
- Develop activity programming and supervise 20+ preteens
- Assist children with homework and provide tutoring to students in variety of subjects
- Organize educational programs such as "Passport to Manhood ™ " and "CareerLaunch™ "

Three Rivers Behavioral Health, Columbia, SC
Volunteer, May-August 20xx
- Shadowed KEYS (Knowledge and Excellence for Your Success) Counselor during outpatient sessions
- Gained a better understanding of working with troubled teens in a mental health facility

YMCA, Columbia, SC
Childcare Coordinator/ Volunteer Counselor, summers, 20xx, 20xx
- Facilitated bi-weekly meetings with four other counselors to plan weeklong summer camps for community children
- Provided educational activities for approximately sixty fifth-grade students to increase skills in reading and math
- Supported childcare function for families in need of daycare assistance
- Identified caretakers and matched them with families
- Successfully coordinated over 75 placements for the summer program

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Development Office, University of South Carolina-Columbia
Office Assistant, August 20xx-Present
- Demonstrated attention to detail while completing clerical tasks including filing, mass mailing, photocopying, faxing, and data entry

O' Charley's, Columbia, SC
Server, August 20xx-August 20xx
- Assisted with training of 10 new employees

ACTIVITIES
Active Minds, Member
- Destigmatize mental illness and promote mental health awareness through peer contact

SKILLS
Basic Spanish
Proficient in SPSS; Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook; Adobe Photoshop

ACTION VERBS

Utilize this list of action verbs when structuring your bullet points on your resume. These words are especially helpful when pointing out accomplishments on your resume. This list of transferable skills will also be helpful as you format your cover letters and in talking about your experiences during an interview.

ANALYTICAL
_____ analyzed
_____ assessed
_____ compared
_____ critiqued
_____ devised
_____ diagnosed
_____ estimated
_____ evaluated
_____ identified
_____ interpreted data
_____ investigated
_____ made decisions
_____ observed
_____ predicted
_____ projected
_____ proved
_____ researched
_____ reviewed
_____ screened
_____ solved problems
_____ studied
_____ surveyed
_____ tested
_____ thought critically
_____ validated

COMMUNICATION
_____ communicated
_____ conveyed
_____ debated
_____ defined
_____ described
_____ drafted
_____ edited
_____ explained
_____ influenced
_____ interacted
_____ interviewed
_____ listened
_____ persuaded
_____ presented
_____ promoted

_____ published
_____ read
_____ reflected
_____ reported
_____ responded
_____ spoke in public
_____ summarized
_____ translated
_____ wrote

CREATIVE
_____ acted
_____ advertised
_____ authored
_____ conceptualized
_____ created
_____ designed
_____ developed
_____ displayed
_____ entertained
_____ fashioned
_____ founded
_____ instituted
_____ illustrated
_____ improvised
_____ innovated
_____ performed
_____ produced
_____ promoted
_____ shaped

FINANCIAL
_____ allocated
_____ appraised
_____ audited
_____ balanced
_____ budgeted
_____ calculated
_____ earned
_____ forecasted
_____ invested
_____ merchandised
_____ raised funds
_____ projected
_____ purchased

HELPING
_____ adapted
_____ advised
_____ assisted
_____ coached
_____ collaborated
_____ counseled
_____ demonstrated
_____ educated
_____ enabled
_____ encouraged
_____ facilitated
_____ familiarized
_____ fostered

_____ guided
_____ informed
_____ mentored
_____ served
_____ supported
_____ taught
_____ tutored
_____ trained
_____ volunteered

LEADERSHIP
_____ assigned
_____ approved
_____ authorized
_____ chaired
_____ directed
_____ delegated
_____ enforced
_____ evaluated
_____ executed
_____ facilitated
_____ founded
_____ handled a crisis
_____ hired
_____ implemented
_____ initiated
_____ managed change
_____ presided
_____ recommended
_____ recruited
_____ strengthened
_____ supervised

ORGANIZATIONAL
_____ administered
_____ categorized
_____ collected
_____ compiled
_____ consolidated
_____ coordinated
_____ entered data
_____ generated
_____ implemented
_____ increased
_____ maintained
_____ managed time
_____ monitored
_____ organized
_____ planned
_____ prioritized
_____ processed
_____ recorded
_____ retrieved
_____ scheduled
_____ validated

PERSUASION
_____ encouraged
_____ influenced
_____ mediated
_____ motivated

_____ persuaded
_____ negotiated
_____ recruited
_____ sold

TECHNICAL
_____ assembled
_____ calculated
_____ computed
_____ constructed
_____ compiled
_____ devised
_____ engineered
_____ installed
_____ inspected
_____ integrated
_____ operated
_____ overhauled
_____ measured
_____ programmed
_____ remodeled
_____ repaired
_____ retrieved
_____ screened
_____ upgraded

ADDED VALUE
_____ adapted
_____ enhanced
_____ improved
_____ maximized
_____ minimized
_____ shaped
_____ streamlined
_____ strengthened
_____ supplemented
_____ updated

RESEARCH
_____ clarified
_____ collected
_____ critiqued
_____ diagnosed
_____ evaluated
_____ examined
_____ extracted
_____ identified
_____ inspected
_____ interpreted
_____ interviewed
_____ investigated
_____ organized
_____ reviewed
_____ submitted
_____ summarized
_____ surveyed
_____ systematized

CREATING A SEPARATE REFERENCE PAGE

Choosing your references:
- You should be able to provide a minimum of 3 professional references, but no more than 5.
- A professional reference might be a former supervisor, team leader, manager, or even co-worker.
- Brainstorm a list of people who can speak highly of your past work performance (job, class-work, or research related).

Ask your references:
- Contact those designated and ask if they will give you a positive reference.
- *Never provide anyone's name to a potential employer as a reference without first asking if you may list them.*

Gather Contact Information:
- Make sure you have the proper spelling of:
  - Your reference's name
  - Company name
  - Official job title
  - Address and phone number
- For your own use, you may also get an email address.

Prepare references:
- To help your references speak intelligently about your background and strengths, you should provide them with a copy of your resume.
- They should also know what your goals are and the types of positions you are seeking.
- Notify your references of each position you apply for, and if possible include a copy of the job description.
- Some positions you are applying to may require a written reference in addition to a verbal reference. Make sure you let your references know if this is the case.

Keep references informed:
- Notify your references about *each* position for which you are applying so they might anticipate a call and prepare to "sell" you based on the specifics of each position.
- You pay provide them a copy of the job description.

Thank your references:
- Notify references when you accept a position and send a thank-you letter.

Susie Student
SS1111@email.sc.edu

Current Address:
USC P.O. Box 0000
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-0000

Permanent Address:
9274 Whisper Ln
Charlotte, NC 28226
(704) 777-7777

References

Mr. Thomas (Tom) Smith
Director
Citizens Against Sexual Assault (C.A.S.A.)
8981 Harden Street
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 555-5555

Mrs. Susan Brown
Director of Residence Life
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-7777
sbrown@csd.scarolina.edu

Dr. Phillip A. Jones
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-0000
pajnes@sc.edu

Ms. Francis Patterson
Summer Staff Coordinator
Camp Wildwood
P.O. Box 590
Kings Mountain, NC 28746
(803) 333-3333

ADDITIONAL RESUME STYLES

You may be considering an internship or employment setting where a traditional resume (like the example in this packet) is not the only appropriate type of resume. *Talk to a Career Development Coach to determine if one of these additional resume styles is appropriate for your career goals.*

FEDERAL RESUME
- A Federal resume provides your qualifications for a position in great detail.
- Federal resumes are generally 2-5 pages in length and include similar language as the vacancy announcement.
- A Federal resume includes additional information not typically requested in the private sector, including:
    - Job Information (announcement number, title, series, and grade of the job you're applying for)
    - Personal Information (including SSN, country of citizenship, and reinstatement eligibility)

See our tip sheet at www.sc.edu/career/Pdf/federalresume.pdf for more information.

CURRICULM VITAE (CV)
- A CV or Curriculum Vitae (meaning one's life in Latin) is generally preferred in these specific industries:
    - Academic, Scientific, Research, Teaching, Medical, Graduate program application, Grant & Fellowship application and International applications.
- It is generally 2 or more pages in length and emphasizes an individual's qualifications and activities.
- There is no standard formatting for a CV.

View our tip sheet at www.sc.edu/career/Pdf/Vita.pdf. Set up an appointment with your Career Development Coach to structure your CV.

CREATIVE RESUMES / ONLINE PORTFOLIOS
- You may be considering an industry where creativity is encouraged. A creative resume is one way to showcase your creativity and experience to a potential employer.
- Consider your audience when creating a resume that is not designed in the traditional format.
- Include the same information you would on a traditional resume, just in a different format.
    - Name and Contact information
    - Education
    - Experience
    - Activities/ Interests
    - Skills/Programs/Software

FUNCTIONAL / COMBINATION RESUME
- A functional resume allows you to group your work history by skills rather than in chronological order, for example:
    - Sales and New Account Development
    - Customer Relations
- A functional resume may be helpful for those who are in career transition, have employment gaps, or have too little experience when applying for jobs.
- A combination resume lists your skills and experience at the top of your resume, followed by your employment history.
    - This can be used to highlight skills you have that are relevant for the job you are applying too, while also providing a chronological work history.

Cover Letters

A **cover letter** is an opportunity to demonstrate to an employer that you have researched their company and have relevant experiences that would benefit their company mission and the position they are hiring for. The purpose of the cover letter is to arouse the employer's interest and gain his/her attention to your application for employment.

When possible, a cover letter should always accompany your resume when applying for a position.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

- Research the company and related positions to find the important skills needed for their industry.
  a. Your goal is to match your skills, knowledge and traits with the position, company, and industry in your cover letter. To do this, you must have a strong understanding of what the company is looking for in an ideal candidate.
  b. **Research facts about the company, their mission, vision, values, and current news and trends in their industry.**

- Always address the letter to the appropriate individual by name and professional title. This may involve calling HR to obtain a specific name.
  a. If you are not able to obtain a name, address it to the apparent job title of the individual receiving your application, "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Human Resources Director".

- Attract the employer's attention by beginning your cover letter with a strong statement.
  a. Many employers receive hundreds of applications and you want yours to be the one that is remembered.
  b. Develop a bridge or common bond between you and the employer. Tell how you learned of the organization and/or vacancy.

- Tell why you're interested in the employer. Indicate what you can do for the employer rather than what the employer can do for you.
  a. You can combine this with your first paragraph when you are gaining their attention, or this can be a separate paragraph all on its own.

- Always thank the employer for their time and consideration.
  a. If sending electronically, make sure you type "Sincerely" and print your name. An electronic signature is not expected.

CONNECT COMPANY RESEARCH WITH YOUR EXPERIENCES

	Keywords from My Research	**My Life Experience**
SKILLS		
KNOWLEDGE		
TRAITS		

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date of Letter

Individual's Name
Title
Employer
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Dr./Ms./Mr. _____: or:
Dear Recruiting Manager:

First Paragraph: **ATTENTION:** In your Initial paragraph, indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening. (Include prior contact with an employer or employees of the organization you are applying to, newspaper advertisements, Handshake, a job fair, etc.). **Remember: This is the paragraph where you initially hook them, so make it exciting!**

Second Paragraph: **INTEREST:** Mention why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services. This is the number one item that most students leave out of the cover letter. Show the reader that you have done your research and know what makes them unique and/or stand out from their competitors. Make it clear that you are interested in the position for more than just a J-O-B. You can combine this paragraph with the first paragraph if you prefer.

Third Paragraph: **FIT:** If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background and experiences make you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have related work or internship experience, point this out by mentioning specific achievements or unique qualifications gained through this experience. It can be helpful to choose 2-3 specific experiences from your resume that demonstrate your fit with the company. *Do not repeat information word for word as it appears on your resume.* **Make sure that you are not beginning each sentence with the word "I".** Above all, indicate the skills that you have gained and what you can do for the employer.

Fourth Paragraph: **FOLLOW-UP:** In the closing paragraph, indicate that you are very interested in an interview. You may suggest a time frame for when you will be available or will follow-up. Make some final connection between the available position and your qualifications. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Handwritten Signature)- if sending a paper copy

(Your Typed Name)

Enclosures (denotes resume, applications, other media, etc. that are enclosed)

USC CAREER CENTER ▪ THOMAS COOPER LIBRARY, LEVEL 5 ▪ (P) 803.777.7280 ▪ (F) 803.777.7556
CEC SATELLITE ▪ 1A01 SWEARINGEN BLDG. ▪ (P) 803.777.1949 ▪ (F) 803.777.1946
CAREER@SC.EDU ▪ WWW.SC.EDU/CAREER
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