



Resume Writing Guide

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The primary purpose of a resume is to summarize your experiences, education, accomplishments, and skills in order to ultimately get an interview. There are many accepted “best practices” in writing resumes – things everyone should do – and yet you still have a lot of flexibility with formatting and style to make yourself stand apart from others. Use this guide to help you build an initial resume but also utilize the professionals in the career development center, your faculty and internship advisers, and others to get feedback on how to best present your strengths and experiences.

FORMATTING

An employer spends an average of 20 seconds looking at a resume – that’s it! Consequently, an easy-to-read, concise, consistent resume is critically important.

- The traditional college student should have a one-page resume. A two-page resume is acceptable in many fields if your experience is relevant to justify the length.
- Even spacing, alignment of text, margins, and consistent headings contribute to visual appeal.
- Font size should be no smaller than 10-point and no larger than 12-point. Your name at the top of the page can be slightly larger for emphasis, but not huge!
- Use common font styles such as Times New Roman, Garamond, Cambria, Arial. Avoid intricate fonts or those with narrow or wide spacing.
- Be consistent with your highlighting such as use of **bold**, ALL CAPS, underlining, and *italics*.
- Avoid templates, tables, text boxes, borders, columns, and unusual fonts; these elements can cause problems when uploading to a web site or if the recipient is using a different word processing program than you. Use Word or PDF documents for maximum flexibility (e.g., .doc, .docx, .pdf).

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS & ACTION WORDS

Transferable skills are an important component of your resume. Through different areas of involvement (academic projects, part-time jobs, internships, volunteering, campus activities, etc.), you develop many skills that can relate to any career field. As you describe these experiences, you want to make sure that you are accurately highlighting the skills that you can offer to an employer.

Each year, employers are asked which skills they are looking for from students and recent graduates. For ALL majors and industries, here are the attributes* employers seek on a candidate’s resume:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Leadership | • Analytical/quantitative skills |
| • Teamwork | • Flexibility/adaptability |
| • Communication skills (verbal & written) | • Technical skills |
| • Problem-Solving | • Interpersonal skills (relates well to others) |
| • Strong work ethic | • Detail-oriented |
| • Initiative | • Organizational ability |

*As noted in NACE’s Job Outlook 2017 (source: www.nacweb.org)

Try to identify which of these skills you have developed through your own experiences. As you describe your experiences throughout your resume, we encourage you to use strong action words to draw attention to the skills that you have. Below is a list of action verbs, separated by skill sets, to help get you started with the brainstorming process:

Leadership / Management

Administer	Enforce	Lead	Produce
Assign	Evaluate	Manage	Recruit
Coach	Implement	Mentor	Review
Coordinate	Improve	Motivate	Schedule
Decide	Increase	Order	Strengthen
Delegate	Influence	Organize	Supervise
Develop	Inform	Oversee	
Direct	Inspire	Persuade	
Empower	Integrate	Plan	
Encourage	Interview	Present	

Problem-solving / Decision-making

Adapt	Conclude	Expand	Plan
Adjust	Control	Improve	Receive
Anticipate	Deliver	Increase	Recommend
Attain	Distribute	Monitor	Reduce
Change	Eliminate	Obtain	Utilize
Complete	Establish	Perceive	Work

Communication (Verbal & Written)

Advertise	Draft	Present	Review
Arrange	Edit	Promote	Revise
Author	Facilitate	Proofread	Sell
Collaborate	Interpret	Provide	Summarize
Communicate	Introduce	Publicize	Translate
Compose	Market	Publish	Write
Correspond	Mentor	Recruit	
Describe	Moderate	Report	
Develop	Negotiate	Represent	
Direct	Persuade	Respond	

Teamwork / Helping / Interpersonal Skills

Advise	Encourage	Motivate	Relate
Aid	Ensure	Offer	Represent
Assist	Facilitate	Participate	Resolve
Coach	Guide	Promote	Serve
Collaborate	Help	Protect	Support
Contribute	Instruct	Provide	Teach
Coordinate	Interact	Recognize	Train
Counsel	Listen	Refer	Tutor
Educate	Mediate	Rehabilitate	Volunteer

Analytical / Quantitative / Research

Analyze	Examine	Learn	Solve
Assess	Experiment	Observe	Study
Clarify	Extract	Organize	Summarize
Collect	Formulate	Predict	Survey
Critique	Hypothesize	Process	Synergize
Determine	Identify	Prove	Synthesize
Diagnose	Inspect	Question	Systematize
Discover	Interpret	Reason	Test
Dissect	Interview	Research	Troubleshoot
Evaluate	Investigate	Review	Weigh

Initiative / Flexibility / Adaptability / Creativity

Act	Display	Institute	Photograph
Adapt	Draw	Integrate	Plan
Compose	Establish	Interpret	Play
Conduct	Express	Introduce	Print
Create	Fashion	Invent	Publicize
Customize	Illustrate	Model	Revitalize
Design	Imagine	Originate	Show
Develop	Initiate	Paint	Sketch
Direct	Innovate	Perform	Write

Computer / Technical

Assemble	Design	Lift	Program
Build	Drive	Maintain	Remodel
Calculate	Engineer	Make	Repair
Compute	Fix	Operate	Solve
Conserve	Handle	Overhaul	Treat
Construct	Install	Produce	Upgrade

Detail-oriented / Organizational Ability

Administer	Define	Monitor	Select
Approve	Dispense	Operate	Sort
Arrange	Distribute	Organize	Specify
Audit	Estimate	Prepare	Summarize
Budget	Execute	Process	Supply
Calculate	File	Purchase	Systematize
Catalog	Gather	Raise	Transcribe
Check	Generate	Reconcile	Validate
Classify	Implement	Record	
Collect	Inspect	Retrieve	
Compile	Log	Review	
Compute	Manipulate	Schedule	

SECTIONS OF A RESUME

Contact Information

- Include your name, address, telephone number, and a professional email address.
- Use a telephone number and email address at which you will reliably receive messages.
- If the school year is coming to an end and you are still applying for jobs or internships, you can list a school and a home address.

Robert J. Smith

8091 Market Avenue, #4B
Drexel Hill, PA 19026
484-111-2222
rjsmith@gmail.com

Samantha A. Martin

School:
987 E. Nields St
West Chester, PA 19380
610-999-0000 (cell)

Home:
444 Westin Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-321-9876

sm987654@wcupa.edu

Objective (OPTIONAL – most employers do not value these on the resume)

- An objective describes your specific job goal, typically combined with your highlighted strengths.
- Objectives are optional and in general most employers would rather you focus on presenting skills and accomplishments in your experience and activities descriptions.
- In the absence of a cover letter or email that explains your objective, to make your resume “stand alone” you could use one. The best objectives are specific and tailored.

Objective: Seeking a marketing internship in a consumer products company that will utilize my analytical, teamwork, and research skills.

OBJECTIVE

- To obtain a public relations assistant position in the Communications Department.

Summary of Qualifications / Profile (OPTIONAL; typically for alumni & experienced professionals only)

- As an alternative to an objective, a profile or summary allows you to summarize skill sets and strengths that have been developed throughout all of your collective experiences.
- Can be useful for a professional with significant work experience or for a career-changer who wants to emphasize skill sets first regardless of where those skills were acquired.
- Considered optional because many employers still prefer to see your specific accomplishments in relation to the job in which you achieved them.

PROFILE

- Maintain critical thinking skills essential to providing competent and dignified patient care.
- Advocate for patients' rights; strive to understand a patient's needs and concerns.
- Hardworking and energetic; flexible; adapt easily to change of environment and work schedule.
- Personable with a positive attitude; interface well with patients, families, and nursing staff.
- Team leader with able to create a positive working environment.

Education

- List the name and location of each institution attended, the complete correct degree program and major, and the month and year of graduation.
 - [WCU Programs of Study](#) (can be sorted by Undergraduate or Graduate)
 - Bachelor of Science (not Bachelors); Master of Arts (not Masters)
- Start with the most recent and highest degree first and work backwards. If you transferred or studied abroad, list these below your current program at West Chester University. If you only took a few classes elsewhere, you don't necessarily need to list that institution.
- You may choose to highlight 4 to 8 relevant courses (optional; many employers do not find course lists useful). Courses should showcase subject knowledge or professional skills. List course names, not course numbers.
- Unless you are still a first- or second-year student and/or have significant leadership or other involvements, high school does not need to be included.
- You may include your minor(s), GPA, and program accreditation (if relevant to your major).
- Alumni - A year or two after graduation, GPA becomes irrelevant to most employers so only include it when requested.

A Note About GPA

- The general rule is to list your GPA if you have a cumulative 3.00 or better.
- Some employers advertise GPA preferences in their employment opportunities. In this case you should always list your GPA; many employers will consider students who fall below the minimum if they have other experience, leadership, or skills.
- WCU transcripts report GPA to three decimal places (e.g., 2.778). Based on a survey of employers in March 2013, most find it acceptable to round to the hundredths (e.g., 2.78) or tenths place (e.g., 2.8); **however**, 11% do not think you should round up at all.
- It is never acceptable to round up the whole number (e.g., 2.999 cannot be rounded to 3.0). **We recommend you report your GPA to two decimal places.**

EDUCATION

West Chester University of Pennsylvania, West Chester, PA
Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, May 2018

Delaware County Community College, Media, PA
Completed general education courses, 2015-2016

Education

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

- AACSB Accredited School of Business
- Major GPA: 3.67; Cumulative GPA: 3.54
- Will have 150 credit hours completed upon graduation

West Chester, PA

December 2017

Experience

- This section may include paid or unpaid full-time and part-time jobs, internships, student teaching, volunteer positions, and other activities in which you developed relevant skills.
- Include the name of the organization, location, your title or role, dates of employment or involvement, and descriptive information about your responsibilities and accomplishments.
- Avoid listing just duties (e.g., "Answered telephone. Raised funds."). Describe the quality and scope of your work, accomplishments. Quantify achievements where possible.
- Use present tense if experience is current and past tense if completed or in the past.
- If you have had a range of experiences, you can group them under more descriptive section headings such as *Writing Experience*, *Teaching Experience*, *Leadership*, and so forth.
- Alumni - A year or two after graduation, you will begin to emphasize professional experience more than less relevant part-time jobs or internships from college.

EXPERIENCE

KPMG, Philadelphia, PA

June – August 2017

Accounting Intern

- Utilized Excel and QuickBooks to track financial and tax record information for clients.
- Worked with a team of five auditors and received daily mentoring on client relations.
- Published online article on international convergence of accounting standards:
<http://ezinearticles.com/?id=1138407>

Wegman's Food Market, Exton, PA

July 2013 – June 2016

Cashier

- Provided efficient and friendly customer service while processing sales.
- Trained an average of three new cashiers monthly as well as all seasonal employees.

WRITING & EDITING EXPERIENCE:

Freelance Writer, January 2016 - present

Daily Local News, West Chester, PA

- Contribute articles on demand in a timely manner on topics such as politics, current technology trends, and entertainment

Wire Editor, January 2015 – May 2016

The Quad, WCU Campus Newspaper

- Selected, edited and compiled news stories for four pages of campus-wide circulation to over 13,000 students

Activities and Involvement

- Involvement in student groups, athletics, community service and engagement helps you develop communication, leadership, teamwork, and other transferrable skills highly valued by employers.
- You may present your activities in one section, such as *Activities*, or you might have several sections that group different types of involvement, such as *Leadership* and *Volunteer Service*.

ACTIVITIES

- Black Student Union, Sep 2016 - present
- Peer Mentor, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Aug 2015 – May 2016
- Career Fair Volunteer, Mar & Oct 2015

LEADERSHIP

Leadership Consultant, Office of Student Leadership and Involvement (Fall 2016 – current)

Organize and facilitate leadership development programs on campus. Work with an executive committee to plan the annual Leadership Conference in February.

Treasurer, Finance and Economics Society (Fall 2016 – Spring 2017)

Managed and allocated organization budget, submitted funding requests to SGA, and reviewed financial status monthly with faculty advisor.

Additional Sections

- Other common sections of a resume include *Publications*, *Presentations*, *Honors and Awards*, *Research*, *Professional Associations*, and *Interests*.
- Publications and presentations provide an opportunity to showcase your communication skills and/or content expertise. Provide complete and accurate details of where a potential employer can access your publication.
- Interests can provide insight into your personality and topics for small talk during interviews. Avoid casual interests like "hanging out with friends"; instead, focus on hobbies or activities that showcase professional attributes or qualities. If you are short on space this is a less critical section to include than others that showcase your skills.
- If you only have one award and it was academic in nature, you can list it under *Education* instead; if it was in relation to a job you held, you could list it under that job description.

PUBLICATION

- Co-authored and published journal article with professor: Samuel Harrington and David Cooper. Tax Season Annual Provisions. *Journal of Accountancy*, 4(1) 12-16 (2015).

PRESENTATIONS

- **Recruiting Organization Members through Social Media.** Presented to over 75 student leaders at WCU Leadership Conference, March 2017.
- **Human Behavior in the Social Environment.** Collaborated with five students to present topic in class and write research paper for seminar course.

INTERESTS: Off-road biking, intramural soccer, and hiking the Appalachian trail.

Skills

- Usually a brief list of computer software applications you use, languages you speak/write as well as your level of proficiency, or areas of certification relevant to your field (e.g., C.P.R.).

SKILLS

- Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook
- Conversational Spanish

TRAINING & SKILLS

- Green Dot Bystander Training (February 2017)
- LGBTQA ALLY (October 2016)
- Social Media: Twitter, Instagram, WordPress, Tumblr
- Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook

References – NOT NEEDED on the resume

- There is no need to put “References Available Upon Request” on your resume; while it can be a simple way to conclude the document, it often just wastes a line of space.
- Create a separate page for listing your professional references, typically listing 3-5 individuals including: name, title, organization, address, phone and email. If their relationship to you is not clear by the title, indicate their professional relation to you.
- The reference page should have your name and contact information at the top (you can use the same heading as you do on your resume for a professional, consistent look).
- Before listing someone as a reference be sure to check with the person; in addition, be sure to provide a copy of your resume.
- If you have other information to point out, such as an e-portfolio or a website, you can including the following at the bottom of your resume:

Professional Profile & Recommendations: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/fullname>

Professional Portfolio available at www.sampleportfolio.com/jsmith

RESUME versus CV (CURRICULUM VITAE) – WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

A resume summarizes your educational background, work experiences, skills, extracurricular involvements, and sometimes your interests – to highlight your qualifications in relation to a specific goal. Usually the primary use of a resume is to apply for jobs and internships. A resume may be requested with applications to graduate and professional school, scholarships, and other related pursuits. A resume is typically 1-2 pages and is specifically tailored and targeted for your current goal; as such, it need not include every experience or activity you have been involved in.

A curriculum vitae (CV) is similar to a resume, although it is longer and more comprehensive. Most commonly used in academia, research, education, and fine arts settings, a CV provides greater detail of ALL of an individual's experiences, including emphasis on publications, presentations, courses taught, research interests, professional development, committee participation, and so forth.

Because CVs can vary in length from 5 to 30 or more pages, rather than develop samples of our own we suggest you look at the following comprehensive, expert resources on CV development. WCU CDC professionals can assist you during appointments with CV development and feedback.

CV RESOURCES:

University of Pennsylvania Career Services - CV Guide
<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/writtenmaterials/cv.php>

Purdue Online Writing Lab - Writing the Curriculum Vitae
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/01/>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) - Curricula Vitae (CVs) versus Resumes
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/curricula-vitae-cvs-versus-resumes/>

Duke University Career Center - Curriculum Vitae
<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/online-tools-resources/career-center-skills-guides/curriculum-vitae>

Princeton University Career Services - CV: The Curriculum Vitae
<http://careerservices.princeton.edu/graduate-students/exploring-options-inside-academy/academic-job-search-toolkit/cv>

HOW TO GET HELP WITH YOUR RESUME

Here are the ways you can get feedback on your resume (reviewed within two business days) in order to strengthen the presentation of your skills and accomplishments:

1. Upload your resume to [Ram Career Network](#)

Ram Career Network is the official career management system for jobs and internships.

- Students: log in to your account using your WCU Network ID (e.g., AB654321@wcupa.edu) and password. Complete your Profile the first time you log in.
- From the main menu, click on **My Documents**.
- Click the **Add New** button and you will be prompted with the document upload screen.
- When you upload your first resume, it will be placed in "Pending Documents" and a staff member will review the resume within two (2) business days.
- You will receive feedback via email, with suggestions for improvement; your resume will also be "Approved" for immediate use. This is a change from past practice (prior to July 2015); we now approve ALL resumes even if we also provide corrective feedback.
- We strongly urge you to make changes if you receive corrective feedback. Our goal is to help you present yourself in the best possible way, but due to the volume of resume submissions we have decided to streamline the review and approval process.

Note: Because the career center only reviews and approves the FIRST resume you upload, cover letters or other job search correspondence must be reviewed using our other services (see below).

2. One-on-One Appointments and Drop-in Hours

For in-person assistance, you may utilize drop-in hours (Monday through Friday, 1:00 to 3:00 pm) or call the office at 610-436-2501 to schedule a 30-minute appointment during regular office hours.

We strongly prefer that you bring a draft of a resume with you to in-person meetings so we can provide you with the most useful feedback. It doesn't have to be good – that is why we are here to help you – but you will benefit more from the appointment if you have a rough draft.

3. E-mail Service

You may choose to email your resume, cover letter, or other job search correspondence to cdc@wcupa.edu for feedback (again, you will receive an e-mail within two business days).

4. Drop-Off Service

You may bring a printed copy of your resume, cover letter, or thank-you note to the career center in 225 Lawrence and leave it with a staff member at the main welcome desk. You may pick up your documents with written feedback after two business days.

For sample resumes visit the Career Development Center's website and look at the Resume Samples in the Resumes & Cover Letters section

http://www.wcupa.edu/_services/stu.car/resumeCoverLetter.aspx