

Resume Writing



What is A Resume?

A resume is a marketing tool designed to get you an interview. Your resume will summarize your education, experience and accomplishments to present the skills which are relevant to your career objectives. Review all your experiences, not just work related ones. If you've done research in your classes, volunteered for a community organization, organized a social event at school, or raised children — these are all examples of experiences that required you to use skills. Everyone has valuable experiences to put on a resume. Remember that the immediate purpose of your resume is to get you an interview — once you get your foot in the door, you can convince them to hire you.

Resumes are:

- Sent with a cover letter in reply to a job advertisement
- Shared with networking contacts
- Used by recruiters and hiring managers to initially evaluate your qualifications for a particular position

Employers scan a resume quickly — in less than 25 seconds — so make every word count!

Use the Chronological Format

List your employment in reverse chronological order. State the position held, employer, location, and dates of employment.

Describe each position according to job duties: list tasks performed, outcomes, and achievements, emphasizing those requiring the highest level of skill, responsibility, and judgment. Begin each phrase with an **action verb**. Quantify your accomplishments when possible, e.g., “surpassed sales quota by 15%,” “trained and supervised 5 employees”, “maintained average caseload of 85”.

Target Your Resume

Target your resume to a specific job type. Research similar jobs and analyze the criteria listed in postings, then reflect on your resume exactly how you meet those criteria. Show how your skills and experiences are just what the employers' need. Expect to have multiple versions of your resume if you are applying to many types of jobs.

Bullet vs. Narrative Formats

Bullet formats are easier to read than narrative formats that are wordier and often less concise. Try the narrative format to show off your writing skills only if you are an excellent writer.

Examples of bulleted verb phrases:

- Recruit and screen students and coordinate ongoing evaluation of participants' progress
- Hire and train highly qualified, passionate people
- Provide guidance, support, and leadership to program staff
- Communicate program developments to Board of Director

Basic Elements of a Resume

Although resumes may have standard elements, there are many effective formats. Leave out sections that do not relate to the kind of job you are applying for. You can modify these section titles to more accurately describe your experiences.

Heading

Include name, local address, e-mail address, and phone number.

Objective or Skills Summary – optional

Objectives are only useful if they allow you to convey a critical message about you that distinguishes you from other candidates. Almost everyone wants a challenging position with opportunities for advancement. A good objective must be specific. But, a highly specific objective creates the risk that you would not be considered for any opportunity that did not exactly meet your stated criteria. Example of a strong objective:

“To obtain an entry-level financial analyst position at Wall Street Investment Bank to successfully apply my knowledge of economic theory and practical bank experience.”

Use a “Profile” or “Skills Summary” section at the top of your resume to position yourself when you are want to do something different from what you have done before. Research job descriptions in your target market to find out what employers want, and make summary statements about what you have to offer.

Education

List institution, degree, major and year of graduation. Institutions should be listed in reverse chronological order, most recent school first. Include a GPA of 3.0 and above. List your GPA in your major if it is better than your overall GPA. Five years after graduation, you will usually want to move education close to the end of your resume and begin with your experience.

Honors, Awards or Accomplishments

Dean’s list, honor societies, and academic awards can be listed separately in the education section. Explain your awards to indicate the degree of achievement, for example: selected among 600 applicants to receive a full scholarship based on academic merit. Do the same for leadership awards and other recognitions.

Relevant Courses and Special Projects for Current Undergraduate and Recently Graduated Students

List courses that are specifically relevant to your target job. For example, if you are an engineer looking for a job in business, relevant courses and projects will be business-related. List relevant thesis, capstone or research project, using action verbs to describe them.

Experience or Professional Experience

Include any experiences, paid or unpaid such as: part-time work, full-time work, summer jobs, Co-op, internships, volunteer experience. List the name of the organization, city and state of its location, your job title and the month and years that you were there. Summarize what you did in each experience and be sure to make each bullet point results-oriented. Using action verbs helps people see you using your skills. (see Action Verb list) and showing quantity (numbers, statistics, and percentages) can demonstrate the scope of your contributions.

Skills

The skills section may include multiple categories such as software, language, laboratory or computer skills.

Activities and Interests

Include your current participation in clubs, other extracurricular activities or volunteer work. List student organizations, professional associations, and community groups, and indicate any offices you’ve held. If these are school related, you may put them in the Education section. An Interests section at end of your resume, if you use one, lists interests like music, sports, and the arts. Listing religious or political activities may create the risk of alienating some readers.

Resume Writing

References Available Upon Request

This statement is expected on co-op resumes, but otherwise is unnecessary.

How to Maximize Your Resume's Effectiveness

Here are a few steps to prepare for writing a targeted resume.

First, inventory your:

- Experiences – including paid work, unpaid internships, volunteer work, and class projects
- Skills, transferable and knowledge-based, and key attributes; interests
- Education, academic achievements and extracurricular activities
- Awards and outstanding accomplishments

Second, research the job market:

- What kind of job are you looking for, including job type and industry?
- What are the relevant skills and qualifications needed to effectively do the job for which you are applying?
Read job descriptions to find out

Third, write a first draft:

- Look at samples in Career Services and online at www.quintcareers.com
- Have your resume critiqued

If you have difficulty identifying your skills and interests or if you don't know what kind of job you want, an appointment with a Career Services counselor can help you.

Keep in Mind as You Write Your Resume:

Create a Professional Image

The appearance of your resume matters. The layout and style should be consistent. For example, if you bold one heading, bold them all. Balance white space and text. Use a standard font like Times New Roman (no smaller than 11 pt) or Arial (no smaller than 10 pt). The recruiter wants to read your resume as quickly as possible with minimal delay, so keep your layout neat and user-friendly.

Use Keywords Appropriate to Your Industry

Increasingly, resumes are “read” first by a resume screening system which searches for keywords including the specific criteria listed in the job posting. When listing your skills and abilities use keywords and industry-appropriate terms. Highlight them in your summary if you use one, and embed them in your bullets. Where you can appropriately use the language of the job posting to describe your skills, do. For more information on using keywords go to http://www.quintcareers.com/resume_keywords.html.

Edit Your Resume

Do not use the pronoun “I” and minimize the use of articles when preparing your resume. Review your resume for unnecessary phrases such as “responsible for” or “duties include.” Spelling errors, typos and poor grammar damage your credibility. Use spell check, but remember that won't catch every mistake. “Manger” is correctly spelled, but it means something very different from “Manager.”

Proofread, Proofread, and Proofread again

Make sure to have a friend, family member or a Career Services staff member read through your resume to catch errors you may have missed.

Sample Resume Graduating Senior

PAT DENARO

100 Huntington Avenue #101, Boston, MA 02115
(617) 334-4433
professional@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Concentration: Finance, 5/08

GPA: 3.5; Dean's List

Activities: President, Alpha Epsilon Phi Sorority; Treasurer, NU Finance and Investment Club; Intramural Sports

Honors: Golden Key National Honor Society

EXPERIENCE

The Gillette Company, Boston, MA

- Corporate Financial Planning Assistant, 1/07-7/07; 1/08-present (part-time)
- Compiled information from global markets for weekly sales reports distributed to 40 senior managers
- Supported company-wide database and authorized user rights to the internal product cost website
- Contributed to company wide project that reduced overhead growth by 18% by collecting headcount numbers in collaboration with the controller
- Managed corporate financial department's monthly headcount reporting and processed more than 200 changes weekly
- Created Excel worksheets for cost center restructuring project
- Edited numerous PowerPoint presentations to be used by the Chief Financial Officer

Liberty Financial Companies, Boston, MA

Internal Auditor, 1/06-6/06

- Audited internal subsidiaries of Liberty Financial Companies, Inc.
- Assisted in the development of audit programs and designed test work to evaluate potential risk exposure identified in the preliminary survey
- Prepared findings and recommendations for review by management of the department being audited
- Selected as a team member to travel to San Francisco to conduct an audit
- Provided assistance to all individuals on the audit team to ensure audit completion was timely

Gannet Welsh and Kotler, Inc., Boston, MA

Operations and Reconciliation / Municipal Bond Intern, 1/05-6/05

- Coordinated and gathered information to confirm compliance of 80 municipalities
- Sent letters and made follow-up phone calls to obtain data from municipal issuers
- Maintained a 5700-record database of municipal bond issuer contacts
- Prepared monthly reconciliation, cash ledgers, and asset checks
- Wrote queries and applied them to daily tasks
- Independently researched and secured this internship, creating opportunities for future students

COMPUTER SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Windows NT, Windows XP, Lotus Notes, Hyperion, and SAP

INTERESTS

Trekking, parasailing, saxophone, travel (Asia, Africa and Australia)

Sample First College Resume

Libby Arts

75 Park Avenue, #21 Boston, MA 02215 • arts.l@neu.edu • 617-123-4567

Education

Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Candidate for Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies, May 2012

GPA 3.0

Relevant Courses: Principles of Organizational Behavior, Media Culture and Society

Honors/Awards: Dean's List

Activities: Communication Studies Club, Intramural basketball

Skills

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access

Language: Completed Intermediate-level Spanish

Experience

Really Trendy Clothes, Boston, MA

Sales Associate

September 2006-August 2007

- Promoted sales and assisted customers in selection of clothing
- Coordinated and marketed store specials and floor displays
- Inventoried and replenished stock
- Trained new employees on store policy and sales techniques

The Green Family, Boston, MA

Babysitter

August 2004-September 2006

- Supervised two elementary school aged children in after school activities three times a week
- Planned entertaining and educational activities for the children
- Assisted children with homework

Volunteer Experience

Books On Tape, Boston, MA

Reader

January 2005-January 2006

- Read text books, instruction manuals and fiction

Interests

Diving, snow boarding, traveling, reading

Resume Writing

Action Verbs

COMMUNICATIONS

acted as liaison	corresponded	instructed	negotiated	referred
advised	counseled	interpreted	notified	sold
advocated	demonstrated	interviewed	presented	trained
arbitrated	displayed	lectured	promoted	translated
authored	edited	marketed	publicized	wrote
commented	guided	mediated	published	recommended
consulted	informed	moderated		

ADMINISTRATION

administered	determined	implemented	ordered	regulated
appointed	directed	initiated	organized	represented
arranged	dispatched	instituted	overhauled	revamped
completed	dispensed	issued	oversaw	reviewed
conducted	distributed	launched	prescribed	routed
consolidated	eliminated	led	presided	supervised
contracted	executed	managed	provided	supplied
controlled	founded	motivated	recruited	terminated
contributed	governed	obtained	rectified	
delegated	headed	offered	referred	

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

broadened	developed	drafted	initiated	planned
created	devised	estimated	invented	prepared
designed	discovered	improved	modified	produced
				proposed

ANALYSIS

amplified	computed	evaluated	identified	solved
analyzed	detected	examined	investigated	studied
calculated	diagnosed	forecasted	programmed	systemized
compiled	differentiated	formulated	researched	tested

FINANCIAL/RECORDS MANAGEMENT

audited	collected	invested	minimized	recorded
allocated	condensed	inventoried	monitored	scheduled
balanced	documented	listed	processed	tallied
catalogued	expedited	logged	procured	traced
charted	guaranteed	maximized	purchased	updated
classified				

MANUAL

assembled	delivered	modernized	repaired	rewired
built	installed	navigated	replaced	trimmed
constructed	maintained	operated	restored	

GENERAL

accomplished	contributed	increased	provided	strengthened
achieved	delivered	initiated	served	transformed
expanded	originated	serviced	performed	completed

