



Résumé Guide

Purpose

The purpose of a résumé is to market yourself to employers by succinctly summarizing your education, experience, and skills. When conceptualizing your résumé, think of it as a marketing tool, rather than a simple work history, as it is intended to promote you as a great candidate for the opportunity at hand. There is no one way to formulate a résumé, but there are some best practices and standards that the Career Services Office recommends. Stand out from the crowd with high-quality content and a clearly written, error-free document. Remember, your résumé is often the first impression you give employers. Make sure it is an example of your best writing—free of spelling, grammar, or formatting errors.

General Layout and Formatting

Content: Typical sections should include (but are not limited to): summary, education, skills, experience, and personal/volunteer/co-curricular involvement.

Length: Keep your résumé to one page. Typically a two-page résumé is only necessary when one has more than five years of full-time, relevant work experience.

Margins: Make your résumé visually attractive. Use some white space to allow the reader's eye to rest. Using .5-inch to 1-inch margins is recommended.

Font: Choose a font that looks professional and legible (e.g., Garamond, Cambria, Arial). Keep your font size between 10–12 points.

Consistency: Keep the formatting consistent throughout your résumé. For example, if you choose to bold a job title, make sure that you bold every job title. Also, make sure that all of your bullet points, section headers, dates, etc. line up neatly on the page.

Accuracy: Your résumé, and all other job search materials, must be 100 percent error free. Be sure to carefully proofread your résumé, checking grammar, spelling, and punctuation. It is a good idea to have at least two to three people proofread it as well. Some employers will not consider a job candidate if they see even one typo on the résumé.

Be Accomplishment-Oriented: Employers hire you for your skills and want to read about times when you have successfully utilized the skills they are seeking. Describe achievements rather than listing duties; quantify outcomes whenever possible; be sure to highlight your proficiency in technical skills (both industry or job function-specific) and be honest; do not exaggerate your experience.

Use Action Words: Strengthen your bullet points in the experience section by beginning each with an action verb that reviews the skill to be described in the accomplishment statement. Try to match work experience with the job requirements.

Make It Clear: Eliminate the pronouns "I, my, me" at the beginning of each bullet point as this is assumed. Avoid introductory and wind-up phrases such as "My duties included..." and "My responsibilities were..."

Overall Appearance: Ask yourself and others if your document is easy to read and professional looking. Also, consider that the average recruiter may scan your résumé for 10–20 seconds. Make sure that your most important information stands out. If a hard copy is required, use white bond paper.

Contact Information

Include your name, city/state, phone number, and email address at the top of your résumé. Additionally, include a hyperlink to your LinkedIn profile, and any other professional websites you have (GitHub, About.me).

Note: Avoid entering anything in the header of your document; it may not be read correctly by applicant tracking software.

Example:

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Chicago, IL 60616 · (312) 567-6800 · lrohe@hawk.iit.edu · linkedin.com/in/miesrohe

Summary Section

Rather than including a generic objective statement, consider writing a professional summary to outline your expertise and experiences. Depending on the outline you follow, the résumé summary statement may still include an objective, either specific or general, but the key difference is that you start off writing about yourself, which puts you on a stronger footing both as a writer and a job applicant. Your summary statement should include the following parts:

1. **Introduce yourself**, leading off with your main credential PLUS core competence AND/OR area of greatest experience. For example, a Master of Science in Chemical Engineering who has held multiple positions as a lab assistant and completed several successful group projects might write something like the following:

Master of Chemical Engineering with competence in recommended laboratory procedures and productive experience in collaborative projects.

2. **Add your specialty**, which can either be established from experience and formal training or speculatively aligned with your career development goals:

Specializes in petro-chemical process engineering.

Or perhaps:

Pursuing specialization in process efficiency and sustainability best practices.

3. **State the objective**. Now that you've pushed off from a strong footing by beginning the summary with your best-known subject—yourself—you can include your immediate career goals.

Seeking position as process engineer with Acme Products Ltd. *[specific position]*

OR:

Seeking opportunities to contribute to organization coincident with development of project management skills. *[general career development goal]*

Example:

SUMMARY

Master of Chemical Engineering with competence in recommended laboratory procedures and productive experience in collaborative projects. Specializing in petro-chemical process engineering. Seeking position as process engineer with Acme Products Ltd.

Education

Your education section should include any degrees or certifications you have earned or are in the process of completing. List your degrees in reverse chronological order, with the most recent listed first.

Include the full name of the school you attend(ed) (e.g., Illinois Institute of Technology), city and state where the school is located, full name of the degree (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Applied Mathematics), and your expected graduation date (month/year).

Include your cumulative or major GPA if it is above 3.0/4.0. If your GPA from a past institution is not on a 4.0 scale, it is highly recommended that you convert it using the World Education Services conversion chart:

<https://www.wes.org/gradeconversionguide>.

Example:

EDUCATION	
ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Chicago, IL	May 2018
Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering	GPA: 3.6/4.0

Skills

Your skills section should be listed after your education. Include technical, computer, programming, and scientific skills, proficiencies, and certificates, as well as languages spoken.

Transferrable skills (organizational, time management, communication skills) and personal qualities (outgoing, team-player, detail-oriented) should not be listed in this section. Instead, these competencies should be demonstrated throughout your experience section.

Include only skills that you feel comfortable using upon starting a job. If you have basic knowledge of a certain skill, but do not feel confident using it upon beginning a job, do not include it on your résumé.

Example:

SKILLS
Programming Languages: Python, Java, Javascript, C++, C
Frameworks: Django, AngularJS
Technologies: HTML/CSS, jQuery, IndexedDB, Git, LaTeX

Experience

Your experience section can include any relevant work, volunteer, academic, project, or leadership experience. You can create multiple sections, each with different headers, to highlight various categories of your experiences. Each section should be listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent experience listed first.

- Include the name of the company or organization, location, your position title, and dates of involvement (month/year). See example below.
- Describe your role using bulleted phrases, in an active voice. Each bullet point should begin with an active verb that highlights the skill you are demonstrating (organized, programmed, led). Vary the list of verbs you use to show your range of skills. See the list on the next page.
- Focus on your accomplishments and outcomes, not only your job responsibilities. Consider why your role was important—what value did it have to the organization?

- Write between two and six bulleted descriptions of your roles for each experience.
- Frame your experiences around the accomplishments that future employers in your field will find beneficial. Order your bullet points with the most relevant accomplishments first.
- Review the PARS method of writing bullet point descriptions: What was the **problem** you addressed? What were the **actions** you took? What were the **results**? What **skills** did you use or develop?
- Demonstrate your transferrable skill set through part-time jobs, volunteer experiences, and co-curricular involvement. If the experience is not directly related to your career field, you can still include it to highlight your communication, leadership, or time-management skills.
- Format academic projects the same as you do your work experiences, with the name of the organization or school and dates included.
- Avoid using any personal pronouns.
- Include any self-directed or personal projects in your experience section, or in a section of its own. Employers like to see that you are interested and motivated enough to teach yourself a new skill.
- Consider a "relevant experience" section above your work experience if you have a wide range of experiences.

Example:

EXPERIENCE	
NAME OF COMPANY, City, State/Country	Month/Year–Month/Year
<i>Position, Department or Division</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe achievements in results-oriented style, impact on the organization • Developed... • Performed... 	

Personal/Co-Curricular/Volunteer Experience:

If you have room, include any volunteer work, service projects, or co-curricular involvement. Highlight your transferrable skills here, or simply list experiences to demonstrate your involvement beyond school and work.

Full Example:**Ludwig Mies van der Rohe**

Chicago, IL 60616 · (312) 567-6800 · lrohe@hawk.iit.edu · linkedin.com/in/miesrohe

SUMMARY

A specific outline of your core credentials, competencies, specialties, and objective in submitting this résumé. Should be no more than three lines long.

EDUCATION

ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Chicago, IL
XX Degree
Specialization/Minor

Expected May 20XX
GPA: xx/4.0

SKILLS

This would include technical, computer, programming, and scientific skills, proficiencies, and certificates

EXPERIENCE

NAME OF COMPANY, City, State/Country
Position, Department, or Division

Month/Year–Month/Year

- Describe achievements in results-oriented style, impact on the organization
 - Developed...
 - Performed...
-

PROJECTS (OR RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS) (OPTIONAL BASED ON EXPERIENCE)

TITLE OF PROJECT, City, State/Country
Position, Department or Division

Month/Year–Month/Year

- Description...
 - Skills applied...
 - Implemented...
-

PERSONAL

- Community service
- Professional memberships and/or designations
- Other activities, unique interests, etc.

List of Action Verbs for Résumés

Management/Leadership Skills

administered	delegated	incorporated	prioritized
analyzed	developed	increased	produced
appointed	directed	initiated	recommended
approved	eliminated	inspected	reorganized
assigned	emphasized	instituted	replaced
attained	enforced	led	restored
authorized	enhanced	managed	reviewed
chaired	established	merged	scheduled
considered	executed	motivated	streamlined
consolidated	generated	organized	strengthened
contracted	handled	originated	supervised
controlled	headed	overhauled	terminated
converted	hired	oversaw	
coordinated	hosted	planned	
decided	improved	presided	

Communication/Interpersonal Skills

addressed	debated	interpreted	proposed
advertised	defined	interviewed	publicized
arbitrated	described	involved	reconciled
arranged	developed	joined	recruited
articulated	directed	judged	referred
authored	discussed	lectured	reinforced
clarified	drafted	listened	reported
collaborated	edited	marketed	resolved
communicated	elicited	mediated	responded
composed	enlisted	moderated	solicited
condensed	explained	negotiated	specified
conferred	expressed	observed	spoke
consulted	formulated	outlined	suggested
contacted	furnished	participated	summarized
conveyed	incorporated	persuaded	synthesized
convinced	influenced	presented	translated
corresponded	interacted	promoted	wrote

Research Skills

analyzed	diagnosed	identified	organized
clarified	evaluated	inspected	researched
collected	examined	interpreted	searched
compared	experimented	interviewed	solved
conducted	explored	invented	summarized
critiqued	extracted	investigated	surveyed
detected	formulated	located	systematized
determined	gathered	measured	tested

Technical Skills

adapted	debugged	operated	replaced
assembled	designed	overhauled	restored
built	determined	printed	solved
calculated	developed	programmed	specialized
computed	engineered	rectified	standardized
conserved	fabricated	regulated	studied
constructed	installed	remodeled	upgraded
converted	maintained	repaired	utilized

Teaching Skills

adapted	developed	individualized	stimulated
advised	enabled	informed	taught
clarified	encouraged	instilled	tested
coached	evaluated	instructed	trained
communicated	explained	motivated	transmitted
conducted	facilitated	persuaded	tutored
coordinated	focused	set goals	
critiqued	guided	simulated	

Financial/Data Skills

administered	balanced	estimated	projected
adjusted	calculated	forecasted	reconciled
allocated	computed	managed	reduced
analyzed	conserved	marketed	researched
appraised	corrected	measured	retrieved
assessed	determined	planned	
audited	developed	programmed	

Creative Skills

acted	developed	illustrated	performed
adapted	directed	initiated	photographed
began	displayed	instituted	planned
combined	drew	integrated	revised
conceptualized	entertained	introduced	revitalized
condensed	established	invented	shaped
created	fashioned	modeled	solved
customized	formulated	modified	
designed	founded	originated	

Helping Skills

adapted	collaborated	facilitated	rehabilitated
advocated	contributed	familiarized	presented
aided	cooperated	furthered	resolved
answered	counseled	guided	simplified
arranged	demonstrated	helped	supplied
assessed	diagnosed	insured	supported
assisted	educated	intervened	volunteered
cared for	encouraged	motivated	
clarified	ensured	provided	
coached	expedited	referred	

Organization/Detail Skills approved

arranged	filed	organized	scheduled
cataloged	generated	prepared	screened
categorized	implemented	processed	set up
charted	incorporated	provided	submitted
classified	inspected	purchased	supplied
coded	logged	recorded	standardized
collected	maintained	registered	systematized
compiled	monitored	reserved	updated
corresponded	obtained	responded	validated
distributed	operated	reviewed	verified
executed	ordered	routed	

More Verbs for Accomplishments

achieved	improved	restored	transformed
completed	pioneered	spearheaded	won
expanded	reduced (losses)	succeeded	
exceeded	resolved (issues)	surpassed	