



RESUME AND COVER LETTER GUIDE

What Is a Resume--Marketing Your Experience

A resume is your first opportunity to promote or “sell” your skills and experience to a potential employer. Most internships and full-time jobs require you to submit a resume as your application. As you look for career- related internships and full-time jobs, it is important to tailor your resume to meet the needs of each employer, reflecting the education, experiences, and skills you will need for the desired position.

Preparation

Before writing your resume, review your educational and professional history. Make lists of all schools attended, jobs held (paid and volunteer), duties performed, extracurricular activities, honors received, skills acquired, and any appropriate additional information. These lists will form the basis of the content of your resume, and will help you identify which accomplishments are relevant and should be included. As you narrow your career options and identify skills in demand for your targeted industries, you will want to emphasize those on your resume.

Choosing a Resume Format

Many kinds of experiences may be listed on a resume, such as internships, volunteer work, part-time jobs, leadership positions, research, and on-campus or extracurricular activities. Depending on your background and the type of position for which you are applying, it is important to consider which experiences and style are most appropriate.

Getting Started

Margins: Use “normal” (i.e. one inch) margins on the top, bottom, left and right sides of the page. Margins may be decreased to ½ inch to fit all information on one page, but make sure the resume is easy to read and not too crowded. Keep a balance of white space and text.

Fonts: We recommend using 11 point font, and no smaller than 10 point font. Most resumes use either Calibri or Times New Roman for font type, but you may use any professional style font. Be consistent with font style throughout the resume.

Indentations, Italics, Underlining: Thoughtful use of indentations, italics, underlining and bold can make your resume more visually appealing and easier to read. However, overuse of those styles can be distracting.

Be Consistent: Be consistent throughout the resume regarding abbreviations, dates and how you present information. Make sure that each work, volunteer and internship experiences are in the same format. Always list the organization, job title, location, and dates of employment/experience in the same order, style and font. Being consistent gives the employer an indication of your attention to detail.

Resume Formats

Chronological: Used most frequently, this easy-to-read resume format focuses on your education, work, skill, or leadership background. It is written in reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent experience. Use action verbs to describe your accomplishments in each position.

Functional or Skills-Based: This approach is useful if transitioning to a new career field to highlight your experiences and transferable skills. Start each description of a job- related accomplishment with an active verb. Then list the employers, job title, and employment dates in a separate work history section.

Combination or Hybrid Technical: This resume format focuses on the individual’s experiences and transferable skills developed at particular work settings, volunteer experiences, or internships. A reverse chronological listing of work history is still used.

Resume Layout

Most resumes include several standard sections. You may decide to customize your section headings depending on your background and desired position.

Heading/Personal Contact Information: List your name, address, phone number, and e-mail. Your e-mail address should be professional and include your name. Your voice message should be appropriate for potential employers to hear.

John M. Smith
1234 Park Street, St. Louis, MO 63141
314-555-5555 (mobile)
jsmith@live.maryville.edu

Professional Summary/Career Objective (*optional*): This statement is optional and included only if you have made a career change and your past experience does not reflect your current interests. If included, this concise and specific statement serves as a thesis statement to communicate your interests and qualifications directly related to the position.

Education: Begin with the most recent degree you are pursuing or have earned. Include institution, city and state, degree you will earn, major(s) and minor(s), and month and year of completion. List any additional degrees in reverse chronological order. Study abroad and other summer or academic programs may also be listed in this section. Transfer students who attended another institution for more than one year may also list that institution on their resumes. Dual degree students should list both institutions. **High school details should be omitted after two years of college.**

Maryville University, St. Louis, MO
Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Science, May 2015
Relevant Coursework: Insurance and Risk; Risk Theory

Honors, Awards & Activities: List honors, awards and/or activities in a separate section or as a heading under the education section.

Experience: The experience category may be titled "Work Experience" or "Relevant Experience". This section includes work, internship, leadership, research, and volunteer experiences. Employers consider experience, paid or unpaid, an integral part of your resume. Highlight your accomplishments and skills related to each specific experience. As your resume expands, you may break your experience into different sections (e.g., teaching experience, clinical experience).

Computer/Technical/Language Skills: Indicate your knowledge of technical, international language, research, computer (software, hardware, platforms, programming languages, operating systems, applications), and other specialized skills. Be accurate and explain your knowledge or proficiency level by using appropriate wording to describe your ability (fluent, proficient, or basic knowledge).

Additional Possible Headings for Resume Sections

Academic Honors	Endorsements	Professional Affiliations
Achievements	Extracurricular Activities	Professional Seminars
Areas of Expertise	Field Experience	Publications
Awards	Global Experience	Related Coursework
Campus Involvement	Honorary Societies	Scholarships
Certifications (or Licenses)	Honors and Awards	Seminar Presentations
Civic Engagement	Internship Experience	Skills and Competencies
Committee Assignments	Language Competencies	Student Teaching
Community Service	Military Service	Study Abroad
Computer Literacy	Papers Presented	Technical Skills
Conferences (Workshops) Attended	Practicum Experience	Volunteer Activities

Resume Writing Tips

The best resumes are focused, concise, visually appealing, and speak to the employer's needs. Keep in mind the following guidelines.

- Focus on the employers' needs, not yours. Highlight the qualifications that best match the "ideal" candidate.
- Think about how your skills are transferable to a new environment and keep this in mind as you write descriptions of your past experiences. For example, customer service skills that you gained in retail could be transferable to other client-based work.
- List your GPA if it is over 3.0 and important in the field to which you are applying.
- Limit your resume to one page, make the format clear and easy to read, and ensure no spelling or typing errors.
- Begin your bullet points with action verbs, and describe **HOW** you did it, **WHY** your task/project/accomplishment was important, and **WHO** was impacted.

References

DON'T: Write "References available upon request" at the bottom of your resume.

DO:

- Prepare a list of references on a separate page so you are ready if an employer asks for them.
- Copy and paste your heading (name and contact information on your resume) onto a second page and list the name, title, address, phone and e-mail of three to four people (professors, student group advisors, internship supervisors).
- Contact all references BEFORE you list them to ensure they will provide a positive reference.
- Contact all references AGAIN after you have provided the reference list to your potential employer and provide them with the job title, description, company name, and the name of the person who will be in contact.

Cover Letter Writing

A cover letter is your formal introduction to a prospective employer. Your letter should demonstrate your ability to think clearly, write persuasively, and describe HOW your skills and past experience will benefit the employer. Reflect your motivation, creativity and knowledge of the organization. Do not simply restate your resume information.

- Write a custom cover letter for each position and use the same heading and font that you used on your resume.
- Address your letter to a specific person. If you do not have a name, call the organization and ask for the name and title of the person who should receive your letter. As a last resort, you may use "Dear Hiring Manager."
- In general, cover letters state the specific position you are seeking in the first sentence, tell the reader why you think you should be considered and suggest the next course of action (e.g., you will follow up with a phone call).
- Make the most of referrals and connections, and name the person who referred you in the opening sentence. The familiar name will grab the reader's attention.
- Research the organization, study the position description, and tailor your letter accordingly. Your initiative and knowledge will make your letter stand out from others, if you do more than only change the company name.
- Focus on the reader's needs, not yours. Make it clear what you specifically can do for the organization.
- Limit the letter to one page or less. Business writing is simple, straight-forward, and to the point.
- Cover letters serve as a method to help employers evaluate your writing ability. Ask friends, mentors and advisors to review your letter and provide feedback. Read your cover letter out loud to pinpoint grammatical mistakes.

Submitting Your Application Materials

The position description will indicate if the employer prefers or requires a particular method of sending your cover letter and resume to apply for a position. If sending a **hard copy** of your cover letter and resume, print them on quality paper and send them through the postal service. If using **e-mail**, be sure to use a concise, business-like style and check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar in the brief, 3-4 sentence note in the body of the email. Send your resume as a PDF attachment so it will print in the intended format. Be sure to include your contact information. When asked to apply through an **online application database**, complete all questions thoroughly and upload any requested materials in pdf format to retain format.

Actions Words for Resume Writing

Achieved	Communication	Detail Oriented	Research	Managed/Led	Service/Support	Manual Skills
Attained	Aided	Analyzed	Analyzed	Achieved	Advised	Arranged
Awarded	Arbitrated	Approved	Assessed	Assigned	Advocated	Assembled
Completed	Advised	Arranged	Calculated	Administered	Attended	Bound
Demonstrated	Apprised	Classified	Cataloged	Consulted	Cared	Built
Earned	Arranged	Collated	Collected	Contracted	Carried Out	Checked
Outperformed	Authored	Compared	Computed	Controlled	Coached	Classified
Reached	Briefed	Complied	Correlated	Coordinated	Coordinated	Constructed
Succeeded	Campaigned	Documented	Critiqued	Decided	Counseled	Controlled
Targeted	Clarified	Enforced	Diagnosed	Delegated	Delivered	Cut
	Collaborated	Followed Through	Discovered	Developed	Demonstrated	Drove
Creativity	Composed	Met Deadlines	Evaluated	Directed	Educated	Drilled
Acted	Conferred	Prepared	Examined	Established	Earned	Handled
Abstracted	Consulted	Processed	Experimented	Evaluated	Empathized	Lifted
Adapted	Contributed	Recorded	Extrapolated	Executed	Expanded	Maintained
Composed	Coordinated	Retrieved	Gathered	Facilitated	Explained	Prepared
Conceptualized	Counseled	Set Priorities	Identified	Fired	Facilitated	Pulled
Created	Debated	Systemized	Inspected	Guided	Furnished	Operated
Designed	Defined	Tabulated	Interpreted	Hired	Generated	Tested
Developed	Directed		Investigated	Implanted	Informed	
Directed	Drafted	Financial	Measured	Initiated	Inspected	Technical
Drew	Enlisted	Administered	Monitored	Led	Installed	Authored
Generated	Explained	Allocated	Observed	Motivated	Issued	Charted
Illustrated	Expressed	Analyzed	Organized	Negotiated	Mentored	Compiled
Imagined	Helped	Appraised	Proved	Operated	Referred	Condensed
Improvised	Influenced	Audited	Qualified	Orchestrated	Related	Developed
Integrated	Informed	Budgeted	Quantified	Organized	Repaired	Eliminated
Innovated	Inspired	Calculated	Reviewed	Oversaw	Resolved	Estimated
Painted	Interpreted	Computed	Surveyed	Planned	Provided	Formulated
Performed	Interviewed	Developed	Tested	Prioritized	Purchased	Generated
Planned	Manipulated	Figured	Tracked	Produced	Sent	Graphed
Problem Solved	Mediated	Managed		Recommended	Served	Installed
Shaped	Merged	Performed		Reported	Serviced	Instructed
Synthesized	Negotiated	Prepared		Supervised	Submitted	Invented
	Participated	Projected		Trained	Transmitted	Logged
	Promoted	Tracked Records		Unified		Minimized
	Recommended					Routed
	Repressed					Solved
	Spoke					Surveyed
	Suggested					Translated
	Summarized					Upgraded
	Supported					
	Verbalized					
	Wrote					

Sally M. Smith

1234 Maryville Dr., St. Louis, MO 63141
314-821-7062, ssmith2015@live.maryville.edu
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/>

EDUCATION

Maryville University, St. Louis, Missouri

Bachelor of Science, Financial Services, GPA: 3.69

Expected May 2018

Relevant Coursework: Financial Institutions; Securities Analysis and Investments Techniques;
Money and Banking; Portfolio Management; Personal Finance

PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

North Star Resource Group, Clayton, Missouri

Client Relationship Coordinator

January 2017 – Present

- Conduct market research and contact potential clients
- Draft daily research, marketing, and sales reports for the lead financial advisor
- Update client database systems
- Arrange marketing seminars and presentations
- Participate in early financial advisor training and development programs

WORK EXPERIENCE

Firehouse Subs, Oakville, Missouri

Sandwich Artist

January – December 2016

- Prepared portion sizes and sandwich ingredients fresh daily
- Listened to customers' orders and accurately communicate them to fellow Sandwich Artists
- Created delicious custom ordered sandwiches

Texas Roadhouse, Arnold, Missouri

Assistant Local Store Marketer/Server

August 2014 - November 2016

- Prepared materials needed to set up a welcoming environment
- Marketed Texas Roadhouse's great food and atmosphere and increased sales by 10%
- Provided guests with friendly, professional, and fast service and suggested upselling items when appropriate
- Communicated guests' orders to the kitchen team to ensure accuracy
- Awarded "Employee of the Month", October 2014
- Achieved "100% Customer Service Evaluation", May 2016

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

- Maryville University Financial Management Association
- Green Maryville Student Association
- Partners for Animal Welfare

SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Office Proficient (Word, Excel, Access, Powerpoint); Prezi; Piktochart

Language: Fluent in Spanish

Certification: CPR, First-Aid