**WINNING RESUME GUIDELINES**

***What is a resume?***

A resume is a basic tool in the job search process and should be carefully crafted to highlight your knowledge, experience, and abilities.

In addition to the resume, there is the cover letter, networking with relevant professionals, and, when you land an interview, excelling during that conversation. Consider the resume your first step into these later stages.

While there are tips and tricks that can help your resume shine in any setting, keep in mind that each opportunity requires unique strategies. Use a boiler-plate resume to tailor a “new” resume for each position that receives your application, focusing on the key qualities, demands, and values of that job. This can mean that you reorder the resume to list more relevant experiences first; that you place your education higher or lower on the resume; that you include certain experiences or skills you would not include on a resume for another job; and more. Read on for general guidelines in order to get started.

**General Resume Guidelines**

* ***Avoid templates***: An HR manger will recognize a popular template, and there will be other resumes that look identical. If you like a style from Word, Publisher, or another writing software, give it your own flare.
* ***Use third person***: Do not use personal pronouns such as “me” or “I.”
* ***Use past and present tense****:* Use past tense for previous positions and present tense for ongoing positions (even if you are on your way out!)
* ***Use one page***: Your resume should be one to two full pages in length. One page is better.
* ***Limit information***: A resume is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Include only the items that will help you get the job or into the industry you want.
* ***Create readability***: Your document should present information in a clear, accessible way. In particular, avoid cramped spacing, bright colors, and unusual fonts.
* ***Practice consistency***: Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) must be consistent throughout the document.
* ***Omit References***: Do not include a list of professional references on your resume unless specifically requested by the application or listing.

**Contact Information**

* ***Name***: Use a font size larger than the largest font in the rest of the resume so that your name stands out. (The rest of your contact information can be in the smaller font size.) Most people center their name at the top of the resume.
* ***Address(es)***: Include a current email address *and* mailing address. You may also include a permanent mailing address (versus a student housing address, etc.) if necessary. Make sure that your email address is professional; including your name is best.
* ***Phone number***: Be sure to include your phone number! (tip: preparing a resume is a great time to refresh your cell phone voicemail message.)

**Education**

* List degrees in ***reverse chronological order*** (most recent listed first.)
* ***High school information should be removed*** from the resume as you near graduation.
* ***Spell out degrees*** (for example, “Bachelor of Science in [major],” not “BS.”)
* Specify the difference between ***majors, minors, and concentrations***.
* Include the ***city and state*** after the name of the institution or university
* List the ***month and year*** of your graduation rather than a date range, even if it is in the future. You may use “expected” or anticipated” before this date, but you do not have to.
* Include a ***GPA if it is above 3.0***. Round the second number after the decimal point (for example, 3.25, not 3.249.) Include grading scale (for example, 3.1/4.0.)
* Consider adding ***relevant coursework***, listing courses that are most impressive to the employer (this is particularly useful when you are applying for internships or co-ops.)
* If you have attended ***institutions from which you did not receive a degree***, you may exclude them from the resume.

**Experience**

* List your relevant job experiences in ***reverse chronological order***, starting with your most recent position.
* List your ***job title*** and ***company/organization name*** in bold
* Include ***only the city and state***, rather than the full address, for each past employer
* When listing dates, ***include the month and year, or the semester and year*** (for example, “April 2021” or “Spring 2021.”) You do not need to include exact dates.
* ***Do not include your supervisor’s name*** unless you are listing a research position.
* ***Do not include your salary*** for any previous or ongoing position.
* Use ***bullet points*** to list job descriptions and duties instead of complete sentences.
* Use affirmative ***action and skill statements*** to describe what you did in your past job (for example, “Managed,” “Produced” “Facilitated;” avoid passive phrases such as “responsible for” and “duties included.”)
* Include ***numbers*** to quantify experience where possible. For example, # of employees supervised, $ amount budget you managed, # of workshops taught or projects coordinated, $ amount saved by your ingenuity.
* Focus on ***accomplishments and results***. Your resume should highlight how you were valuable to past employers, rather than list your responsibilities. For example, instead of “responsibilities included excellent customer service and communication with coworkers,” say “Consistently met sales goals and provided training in open/closing procedures to new employees.”
* Consider splitting an “Experience” section into ***two sections*** to highlight subsets of jobs. For example, a “Relevant Experience” section with jobs and duties most impressive to the employer, and then “Additional Experience” lower on the page with less detail.

**Skills**

* Include ***computer skills*** and name the software programs in which you are proficient. Rather than including Microsoft Office, list specific programs (Word, Excel, etc.)
* Include ***transferable skills*** (skills that would be valuable in many work environments) such as communication skills, problem-solving skills, analytical skills, etc.
* Include ***language skills*** if applicable (use “bilingual in,” “fluent in,” “proficient in,” or “reading”/ “speaking” fluency depending on your skills.)
* ***Quantify skills*** in other categories similarly, by including how well you know each. For example, “Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint”; “Familiar with Microsoft Access and FrontPage.”

**Honors, Awards, and Affiliations**

* If you only have one entry in a section, ***combine sections***, for example “Honors & Affiliations.”
* Include any ***professional or student organizations*** to which you have belonged, ***volunteer work***, or impressive ***extracurricular activities***. Include dates of membership, and avoid saying, “Member of…”
* Highlight ***unpaid leadership positions*** within societies, organizations, and/or clubs
* For honors, include any ***scholarships or awards*** you have received. Give dates and any distinguishing details, for example “Chosen as recipient from over 130 applicants.”

**Additional categories**

You can include some of the following categories as applicable experience in their own category: certifications or licenses, course projects, research, publications, presentations, and media appearances. Don’t be afraid to get creative! If it’s relevant, find a way to include it.