



Resume Overview

- A resume is a one-page summary of your education, skills and work experience. In most cases your resume is the first document a hiring manager will connect with you, so making a positive first impression is essential.
- A one page resume = 6 -10 years of work experience. As a college student applying for an entry-level position, one-page should be enough space to convey your experiences and qualifications. If your resume is longer, then hiring managers may miss important information on your resume OR not read it at all.
- The goal of a resume is to GET AN INTERVIEW. Its purpose is to get you in front of someone who can hire you (then be ready to answer questions about each and every thing on your resume).

Content Tips

- Your resume must be CLEAR, CONCISE AND CONSISTENT. It's not just a listing of qualifications, it's also a writing sample and work product. This is your chance to show off your ability, so write professionally and make a great first impression.
- Be INTENTIONAL with each and every word; search the job description for key terms and use them strategically within your resume (if appropriate, based on your qualifications) to indicate that you're a match for the job.
- List your most recent work experience FIRST and your oldest work experience LAST (reverse chronological).
- Each bullet point should begin with a strong ACTION VERB. Avoid utilizing words/phrases such as: responsible for, assist, help, aid, etc. These are "lazy" verbs and don't convey mastery of a skill or concept.
- A resume is not a personal narrative, it's a series of statements (not full sentences) reporting on work experiences and skills. So do not use pronouns (no "I statements) or periods within your bullet points.
- USE CORRECT VERB TENSE: use past tense for past positions and present tense for current positions.

Formatting Tips

- Spacing and formatting are key. Hiring managers SCAN resumes for 15-30 seconds, and good formatting makes it simple for them to take in your resume's content while scanning quickly.
- Keep resumes short and to the point, no long paragraphs. USE THE BULLET STYLE to make your resume content easy to read quickly. USE **BOLDFACE**, CAPS or *Italics* to highlight categories, schools, companies and job titles.
- Choose an easily-read font like Times New Roman or Calibri; use a font size of 10.5 – 12 point (no smaller).
- When adjusting margins to fit more content on the page, BE CAREFUL – this can make your document look cluttered. Try to keep the left and right at a minimum of 0.8. However, you can decrease top and bottom margins to about 0.5 without it affecting the overall look of a document.
- Ensure your resume is easy to read and skim by using correct spacing – include enough white space to separate jobs and headings/sections. Remember, you only get 15-30 seconds to impress a hiring manager!
- Save your resume as a PDF if you plan to email it or upload it to an online application. When printing your resume, use resume quality paper for the copies you bring on your interview or intend to mail.
- PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD!

Resume Content

→ CONTACT INFORMATION

List your name, email address, phone number, and ONE physical address (choose either your home or JMU address based on where you're applying for jobs). List your LinkedIn account if the content is edited, professional, and says something DIFFERENT than what's already on your resume.

→ EDUCATION

List most recently acquired degrees and course work first. Include courses taken at another school that are relevant to your degree. You can list either your cumulative or major GPA here – and only offer this information if your GPA is above a 3.0. Generally your major GPA is going to be the higher of the two numbers, so choose whichever score shows off your academic achievement in the best light.

→ WORK EXPERIENCE

List professional experience *reverse chronologically*, beginning with your most recent experience. For each employer, list 3- 5 accomplishments and/or responsibilities beginning the statements with strong action verbs. *Choose action verbs that demonstrate your level of responsibility.* Include part-time jobs, paid/non-paid experiences, internships and practicums here. SOME volunteer experiences may qualify as “work experience” if they took place over a longer period of time (ex: a semester, not an afternoon) and allowed you to develop valuable transferrable skills. *Bullet points should be CLEAR, CONCISE, AND QUANTIFIABLE.*

→ RELEVANT ACADEMIC COURSEWORK

This section is a great way communicate to a hiring manager that you are qualified for an HM/SRM position even if you don't have a lot of work experience in that industry. You are qualified simply by having learned about the industries in your Hart School classes! Choose 1-3 class projects and write 3-4 bullet points that encapsulate your work product. If it was a team project, focus on the specific role you played on the team and the tasks you completed to work towards the group goal (see sample resume #5 for an example).

→ LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Leadership experience is more than being a general member of a club or organization. If you've been a committee member, committee head, planned fundraisers or events, or served as an Exec member of an organization then you will have plenty to write about. Focus on high-level tasks (supervising, managing, communicating, collaborating, developing, etc.) and demonstrate your ability to accomplish organizational goals and lead others within your bullet points.

→ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Only list meaningful involvements that you can speak about knowledgeably and with passion. Was this a one-time, one-day volunteer experience or something requiring a longer commitment? Did you establish a relationship with someone (a staff member or advisor) so that you can request a reference? It's more about demonstrating a genuine interest and involvement with an organization, industry or cause than it is about citing a long list of less meaningful involvements. Focus on quality involvement over quantity; hiring managers will understand and appreciate the difference.

→ SPECIAL SKILLS/AWARDS

List your specific skills and software program knowledge in this section. Highlight skills that are specific and unique to YOU. Listing knowledge that every other college students has (i.e. “Proficient in Microsoft Word”) doesn't set you apart from other college students/grads. However, if you hold a certification in Microsoft or Adobe Suite, or have another valuable skill, then list it. List any foreign languages you speak and/or write. Don't list anything that could be mentioned in a bullet in your Work Experience section. Ex: Don't list “Great communicator” under Special Skills. Instead, list “Communicated clearly and openly with staff in order to provide the best customer service possible” as a bullet under one of your current or past work experiences. ANYONE can list skills on a resume – ***your goal should be to demonstrate mastery of that skill.***