RESUMES

A Few Simple Principles

Resume styles – There are three basic resume styles used to apply for most private, nonprofit and many public sector jobs (CVs and Government Agency Resumes have their own rules and are covered in separate handouts).

- *Chronological* – The most widely used resume format. Your education and most relevant experiences (both paid and unpaid) are listed in reverse chronological order with the most recent first. It demonstrates upward growth in skill and knowledge.
- *Functional/Skills Based* – The format least preferred by employers because it lacks context, but still useful in selected cases. In a functional resume you do not list your jobs as you do on a chronological resume, but rather create skill categories.
- *Hybrid* – This style uses the best qualities of chronological and functional resumes. You will see it in most of our resume examples. In this style, you review your most relevant paid and unpaid experiences for themes, then create 1-3 skill categories and list experiences in reverse chronological order within the categories. (*Also see our Resume Section Headings handout).*

First Draft – Start by gathering **EVERYTHING** you might include in a resume: jobs, volunteer experiences, campus involvement, major class projects, campus leadership roles, etc...and start writing down ideas about what you accomplished or learned in each.

Arrangement – Recent grads usually begin with the Education section followed by one or more Experience sections, but not always. A career advisor can help you decide the most suitable arrangement to meet your prospective employer's needs.

Length – One page is the rule of thumb, but like all rules, there are exceptions. If you have extensive experience, a Masters or PhD, or can otherwise "prove" that you need it, then a two-page resume may be warranted. If you do have a second page, make sure the content takes up at least half of the page, and include your name and the page number at the top right.

Content – You don't have to list everything you've ever done; keep it short and to the point. Make sure that the items on your resume answer the following questions: "Which of my skills and experiences will most benefit a prospective employer based on their needs?" "How does this bullet point relate to the job I am applying for?" "What intangible qualities do I need to communicate about myself to the employer?"

Proofread – Get a second or third pair of eyes to review your content before you apply.

Always Tailor Your Resume

It is important to carefully review your resume *each time* you submit it and that is to tailor the items you highlight to the needs of the prospective employer. Remove information irrelevant to different jobs/employers and organize entries so that the most important information for that job is listed first. This will not take long and can have a lot of impact!

Things *NOT* to Include on Your Resume

- Height, weight, age, date/place of birth, marital status, sex, race, photos/graphics, or social security number (some of these may be expected on resumes for jobs outside the US – check standards by country to be sure before you add them).
- Abbreviations and jargon – If in doubt, spell it out! Never assume the recipient will know what it means.
- Salary, supervisor's contact information, or reasons for leaving previous jobs (these items often go on an application).
- References (These go on a separate page)or the words "References available upon request."

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The Header

Your Name
Current Street Address | City, State, Zip Code | name@wisc.edu | Phone Number

The Education Section

List your current college and information. Do not list the name of your high school and only list transfer institutions if you received a degree from them or are referencing experiences you had while attending them.

University of Wisconsin-Madison | Madison, WI   **Month Year**
Bachelor of Science/Arts: Major-Concentration   GPA X.XX/4.00
- Certificate(s) [If applicable]
- Languages: Spanish (highly proficient), French (conversational)
- Relevant Coursework: [Optional. Awards and honors can also be listed here.]
- Relevant Honors, Awards, Etc.

Study Abroad | City, Country   Month Year – Month Year
- Study abroad coursework in _____.

Experience Section(s)

Entries should combine paid and unpaid experiences such as jobs, internships, student organizations, major class projects, and volunteer activities. **Roles listed in reverse chronological order (according to end date) in each section.**

Position Title | Company/Organization| City, State   Month Year – Month Year
- Describe your responsibilities, achievements, skills, and resulting outcomes in bullet or paragraph form.
- Begin each line with an action verb and include details that will help the reader understand your accomplishments, skills, knowledge, abilities, or achievements.
- Include outcomes and quantitative data when appropriate (increased _____ by 25%)
- Avoid having 1-3 words go to a second line with a bullet point.
- Do not use personal pronouns; each line should be a phrase rather than full sentence.

Involvement Section(s)

Memberships (student clubs or organizations), or Professional Affiliations (student chapters of professional organizations or societies).

Role | Organization | UW-Madison | Madison, WI   Month Year – Month Year
- Begin each line with an action verb and include details that will help the reader understand your accomplishments, skills, knowledge, abilities, or achievements.

"Skills"

Each of these could be a section by itself if the skill/experience is a major component of qualifying for the job.

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint (proficient), Microsoft Access, Adobe Page Maker and Photoshop (familiar), Comfortable using both Windows and Mac operating systems

Always save as a PDF unless requested in different format by employer!

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Results-Oriented Bullets

In your resume, you probably highlighted skills that you developed through jobs, student organizations, and other experiences. While that makes sense for some bullet points, we need to dig deeper to showcase the *results*, *purpose* and *impact* of your actions.

The structure for your bullets should follow this formula:

Action Verb + What You Did + How You Did It + Results/Purpose/Impact

Action Verbs: They help describe the skills you've used to potential employers' examples are analyzed, communicated, brainstormed, adjusted, and built. Refer to SuccessWorks Power Verb Worksheet for additional action verbs.

(Pro-tip: the order of these elements may vary depending on your sentence structure)

- Ask yourself, "So what…why did this matter…what did my action(s) contribute towards?" Incorporating the answers into your bullet points makes your resume stronger and more attractive to recruiters and employers.
- Make sure to quantify wherever you can—numbers help give a more detailed description of the scope of your work/experience.

Action Verb

Communicates: Skill, Knowledge, or accomplishment.

What you did, how you did it, and the result or purpose!

Context, detail, and quantifiable information make stronger bullet points.

The goal is to transform your resume bullets from good to great!

Examples

Good Resume	GREAT Resume
Expanded Spanish communication skills through collaboration with Spanish-speaking employees	Collaborated with 7 Spanish-speaking colleagues to increase store efficiency and decrease merchandise order errors by 10%
Developed organizational and leadership abilities by leading committee meetings	Led bi-weekly committee meetings of 8 members by facilitating discussions and monitoring goal progression; planned semester fundraiser resulting in $2,000 raised for Special Olympics
Attended bi-weekly sessions to become a Leadership Ambassador	Participated in bi-weekly professional development sessions on leadership, teamwork, and goal-setting that led to certification as a Leadership Ambassador

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Creating Results-Based Oriented Bullet Points Activity: A Day in Your Life

Below is a quick activity to get you refining your bullet points into result-based bullet points. Fill out the chart below as you reflect upon one experience you had in the past.

List all the actions and tasks that you completed during your experience and remember everything is important!	
Pick only one of the actions and tasks you have listed above.	
What action verb best describes the skills you were using and what were you doing? Write out only the first two parts of your bullet point the (Action Verb/s + What you did)	
How did you complete that action or task? Now you should have (Action Verb+ what you did + How you did it)	
Now we just need to add in the results/importance of our work. Refer to the examples below. Now you should have (Action verb + what you did + how you did it + result or purpose)	

Example of Quantifiable vs. Non-Quantifiable.

Peer Learning Association, Events Coordinator Intern   August 20XX
University of Wisconsin- Madison
- Create marketing materials and publicize events through social media to increase attendance at several club programs by 75% (Quantifiable)

Or
- Create marketing materials and publicize events through social media to increase attendance at several club programs throughout the year (Non-Quantifiable)

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