

Resume Guide

GENERAL FORMATTING

- The resume font should be at least 10-point; though 12-point is ideal.
- Avoid using different font sizes, with the exception of your name at the top, which can be slightly larger.
- Avoid using special fonts. Calibri, Times New Roman, and Arial are generally recommended.
- Your margins must be at least .5" and no greater than 1".
- Use capitalization, spacing, and bolding to draw attention and divide sections.
- Avoid using underline, italics and textboxes can interfere with scanning software used to evaluate resumes.
- A two-page resume is perfectly acceptable at the graduate level in most industries. Do include your name and "p. 2" in the header of the second page, if applicable.
- You should avoid having more than two pages, except when creating a Federal Resume or Academic CV.
- Do not include "References Available Upon Request" or contact information besides your own on the resume. It is generally assumed you will be able to provide references and be able to do so on a separate sheet.
- Never use personal pronouns (I, my, we, etc.) in a resume.
- Use reverse chronological order with your most recent experience at the top of each section.
- Start off your resume with your contact information! Name, email, phone # and address.

OBJECTIVE/ SUMMARY OF SKILLS/ HIGHLIGHTS SECTION

Sometimes an objective on a resume can be considered a little obvious. By applying for the position, you are hoping to obtain it. If you do choose to include one, make sure it is a short statement that includes the position title, department/organization/industry & the skills to bring to the position

Sample objective: I seek to obtain a position as a policy analyst within the international affairs field and to effectively use my skills in research, analysis, crisis management, and writing.

You may also consider including a summary of skills or a highlights section to provide direction to your resume. Generally, these sections include 4-8 bullet statements that focus on your most relevant skills to the position you are applying. This summarizes your most relevant skills to the employer and demonstrates how strong a fit for the position you are at the beginning of the resume. Further along in your resume, the different action words and responsibilities listed under your experience help support this skills section.

EDUCATION

- List your most recent degree first.
- Include the month and year of graduation; if the degree is in progress, add "expected" in front of it.
- Include only post-high school education.
- Do include study abroad experience.
- Include GPA (only if above a 3.0), class rank, and/or honors (i.e.: Dean's List).
- Only list courses if degree is in progress or you have taken coursework in an area relevant to position.
- For University or College location, list the city or location where your degree will be conferred.

Below is an example of an Education section:

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication
Minor: Sport and Entertainment Management
Related Coursework: Social Media Management, Public Relations Campaigns

May 2018
GPA: 3.8, Magna Cum Laude

EXPERIENCE

You are in full control over what experiences you list on your resume. In terms of what to include, here are a few concepts to keep in mind:

- You do not have to list every experience you have ever had on a standard resume.
- List the most relevant positions to the opportunity, this will make it easier for the reviewer to conclude how strong a fit you are based on your previous experiences.
- You should list at least 3 or more bullet points for each experience.
- You can label specific sections however you like, just be sure they are skills relevant to the position.
 - For example, you can list a section as the standard “Professional Experience,” or you could be more direct and label it “Policy Experience”, “Analysis Experience,” or “Relevant Experience.”

OTHER SECTIONS TO CONSIDER

The following are sections that you might consider including on your resume in order to demonstrate skills and/or experience relevant to the position for which you are applying.

- LEADERSHIP
- PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION/PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS
- MAJOR PROJECTS AND RESEARCH (Very important if applying to research or project management positions)
- AWARDS AND HONORS
- SPECIAL PROJECTS
- CONFERENCE/PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

THE EXPERIENCE BULLET POINTS

Below are some guidelines in terms of what bullet points to place under each experience:

- Begin each bullet with a strong verb.
- Avoid phrases like: Responsible for, Duties included, Assisted, etc. which can be considered too passive.
- Use past tense for previous positions and present tense for current positions.
- Being that the title of the position says a lot about your role, you want it to be listed first in the experience. List the position title either furthest to the left, or at the top of the experience.
- For uniformity purposes, put the time on the left margin and express it in a Month Year – Month year format.

For Example:

Policy Analyst

June 2016- Present

GPHB Group, Washington, DC

- Coordinate...
- Present...
- Analyze...
- Research....

SKILLS

- Describe “Technical Skills” (computer, language, research, etc.) rather than “Soft Skills” (team player, communication, negotiation—these are generally demonstrated to an employer through your experience and during the interview.)
- Be sure all skills listed are relevant to the position.
- You may need to qualify your skills listed, which means that for something like foreign language, you need to describe your level of proficiency in conversation, reading, and writing.
- Typical levels for language are basic, intermediate, or fluent.
- Likewise, other technical skills range in description. Ex: basic, intermediate, advanced, professional, or expert.