



CAREER SERVICES

# Resume Writing Student Checklist

1681 5th Avenue | (304) 696-2370 | [www.marshall.edu/career-services](http://www.marshall.edu/career-services)

A resume is a marketing tool in the job search and graduate/professional school application process and should be created to highlight and summarize your knowledge and abilities. In addition to the resume, there are cover and thank-you letters, networking, and, when an interview is landed, excelling in the interview. The research and effort that goes into resume writing will assist you in the latter stages in your search and interview. Keep in mind that one size does not fit all when it comes to resumes—each position or organization (company/school) applied for should be targeted, focusing on how your skills match the qualifications and requirements.

## General Resume Guidelines:

- ☐ **Templates** – Have you used a template in Microsoft Word or Publisher? These can be helpful for gathering ideas, but they can be hard to change for future edits if you choose to use one.
- ☐ **First Person** – Do not use personal pronouns such as “me” or “I.”
- ☐ **Page number** – Your resume should be one to two full pages in length, but preferably one full page.
- ☐ **Limit Information** – A resume is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Include only the items that will help you get the job you want. Target your resume to a specific position or industry.
- ☐ **Readable** – Your document should look balanced, be pleasing to the eye, and easy to read.
- ☐ **Consistency** – Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) must be consistent throughout your document.
- ☐ **Font Choice and Size** – The body text should not be too small (no less than 10 pt.) or too large (no more than 12 pt.). Never use more than 2 fonts. Avoid serif fonts (**Times New Roman** or **Georgia**) because they have small little lines and tails on the end of most letters. Use sans-serif fonts (**Arial**, **Verdana**, **Trebuchet**, **Century Gothic** or **Tahoma**) because they do not have these little lines and appear blockier.
- ☐ **Omit References** – Do not include a list of professional references on your resume. This should be a separate document in the same format as your resume. If you include a reference section, list as “Available upon request.” Always ask for permission before you list 3-5 professional references (a mentor, advisor, instructor, current supervisor or former employer).
- ☐ **Objective** – When writing your objective, be specific to what type of position you are applying for. If you are using a general resume, it is okay to leave the section out.

## Contact Information:

- ☐ **Name** – Use a font size larger than the largest font in the resume so it stands out (14-16 pt.). The rest of your contact information can be in the smaller font size.
- ☐ **Address** – Include a current mailing address; you may also include a permanent mailing address if necessary.
- ☐ **E-mail and phone number** – Be sure to include your email address and phone number; avoid using “cute” or inappropriate e-mail usernames.
- ☐ **Portfolio Link** – If you have an online portfolio, add the link under your e-mail address to let employers see your previous work.

## Education:

- ☐ List degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent listed first with only month/year obtained).
- ☐ High school information should be removed from the resume as you near graduation.
- ☐ Know the difference between your major, minor, and concentration and include this information on the resume.
- ☐ Include the city and state after the institution name.
- ☐ List the month and year of your graduation or “Expected graduation: May 2015.”
- ☐ Include a GPA if it is a 3.0 or above. Round the number (e.g. 3.25, not 3.249). Consider including your major GPA if your overall GPA falls below a 3.0.
- ☐ Consider adding Relevant Coursework, listing courses that are most impressive to the employer (particularly useful when applying for internships, co-ops or graduate school).

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## Skills:

- ☐ Some possible example labels for this section include Skills Summary, Summary of Qualifications, or Professional Highlights or Professional Profile.
- ☐ Include computer skills and name the software programs in which you are proficient. Rather than including Microsoft Office, list specific programs. Include transferable skills such as communication skills and problem solving/analytical skills.
- ☐ Include language skills if applicable. **(Non-native English speakers should not include English since this is assumed.)**
- ☐ Quantify skills by including how well you know each. For example, "Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint"; "Familiar with Microsoft Access and FrontPage."
- ☐ Refer to the *Skill Statements* handout for ideas.

## Experience:

- ☐ List your experience in *reverse* chronological order, starting with the most recent position.
- ☐ List your job title and company/organization name. Include city and state only for employer, not the complete address.
- ☐ When listing dates, include the month and year, or semester and year. You do not need to include exact dates.
- ☐ Omit unnecessary information such as supervisor's name, salary, type of job, etc.
- ☐ List job descriptions/duties with bullets instead of paragraphs.
- ☐ Use action skill statements to describe what you did in your past job (avoid passive phrases such as "responsible for" and "duties included").
- ☐ Eliminate personal pronouns from your descriptions. Use appropriate verb tense: present tense to describe current employment and past tense for finished employment.
- ☐ Include numbers to quantify experience where possible. For example, # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught or projects coordinated, \$ amount saved by your resourcefulness.
- ☐ Focus on accomplishments/results and how you were valuable to past employers, not on your responsibilities. For example, instead of "Responsibilities included excellent customer service and communication with coworkers," try "Consistently met sales goals and provided training in opening/closing procedures to new employees."
- ☐ Consider splitting Experience into two sections to highlight particular types of jobs. For example, a Relevant Experience or Internship Experience section with jobs and duties most impressive to the employer, and then Additional Experience lower on the page with less detail.

## Activities and/or Honors:

- ☐ If you only have one entry, combine the section with another section, i.e. Honors & Activities.
- ☐ For Activities, include any professional or student organizations, volunteer work, or extracurricular activities.
- ☐ Include dates of membership, and avoid saying, "Member of..."
- ☐ If you hold leadership positions or have additional duties, you may even add action skills statements to give details.
- ☐ For Honors, you may 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:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honors or Awards           | <input type="checkbox"/> Activities      | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Work or Community Service   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certifications or Licenses | <input type="checkbox"/> Course Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Research                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publications               | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations   | <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant and/or Additional Experience |

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