



RESUME GUIDE

NJCU Center for Career & Professional Development

Your resume is the first thing an employer sees when they learn about you, and it's important you make a good first impression! To get started with writing your resume, you should have clear ideas in mind of what the resume will be for. Look at job descriptions, read other people's resumes, and get a sense for what potential employers want to see.

A resume is (generally) a 1-page marketing document that showcases your skills, abilities, experiences and education through clear examples and detailed descriptions that help the employer to understand how you might be a fit for the job at hand. It's not a work history, rather, a highlight reel.

RESUME VS CURRICULUM VITAE

Curriculum Vitae is Latin for "course of life" and Resume is French for "Summary" and these two things perfectly encapsulate how you should think of each. CV's are generally used for more academic pursuits, research roles, and anything in academia. Resumes are used for most jobs and internships in the U.S., but you should be mindful of what the standard is in the country in which you're applying

CV's tend to be long, while Resumes (especially for undergraduate students) should be 1 page in length.

FORMATTING

There are endless formats to choose from when creating a resume, but especially for online applications, simple is best. Don't download templates from Indeed, Word, Canva etc. It's best to use one of the NJCU recommended templates. Based on employer feedback, they've been created to meet the industry standards. It's important to keep in mind that the reader is looking for the content, not decorations (of course this doesn't apply to fields in creative disciplines)

- 1 page is standard
- Margins .5- 1 inches
- Font size 10-12 for whole document, name up to 14
- Standard fonts (Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, Sans Serif)
- Consistent style throughout (if one header is all CAPS, then ALL headers should be all CAPS)
- Avoid tables/charts/graphics
- No headers/footers
- Proofread carefully!

SECTIONS

There are many sections to include on a resume. Use only the ones that are relevant to you!

- OBJECTIVE
- EDUCATION
- HONORS OR AWARDS
- RELEVANT COURSEWORK
- EXPERIENCE (could divide this into Related Experience and Additional Experience to bring more important roles to the forefront)
- ACADEMIC PROJECTS
- VOLUNTEER WORK
- TECHNICAL SKILLS
- LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES
- EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- SKILLS
- INTERESTS

CONTENT

It's important to know who is reading your resume, and to tailor your content to those people. Sometimes, this means making sure your content can be read easily by Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). These systems use keywords to identify strong candidates, so it's critical to make sure your resume includes the necessary keywords from both the job description and from the standards for the industry.

- Review the job description in detail for key words and phrases
- Include industry specific language in your descriptions of your work
- Quantify your experiences using (#%\$)
- Think about where you have had an impact in your experiences, don't stick to writing about your tasks, think about your accomplishments

STRONG BULLET POINTS

The key to a strong document is having strongly worded bullet points to describe your experiences. Each bullet point should use the ACTION + RESULT format. Each sentence starts with what you did (ACTION) and tells the reader what happened because of what you did (RESULT). You don't need to have lots of experience in your field. You can work at a supermarket, clothing store, deli etc. and still have valuable skill and experiences!

- **Example:** Created a new electronic filing system for the department using Excel which enabled staff to more efficiently find student data resulting in shorter wait times for students
- **Example:** Developed a protocol for assisting customers on the sales floor which included greeting and directing them to their products which increased sales of sneakers by 10%
- **Example:** Managed point of sale register with daily sales of approximately \$2000 per shift with consistent accuracy

SAVING YOUR RESUME

Resumes should be saved in the following format and be sent as a PDF when applying to a job (but as a Word document when sending to your Career Counselor)

FirstNameLastName_ResumeNameofjob

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Resumes can vary by industry, career counselors who specialize in your area can help to make sure it best fits what companies are looking for.
- References do not need to be included or mentioned, but have them ready if an employer asks

AI AND YOUR RESUME

AI can be helpful in creating content, however, be mindful that AI isn't perfect, and can make assumptions that might not be true. It's up to you to ensure your resume is truthful, and that you can speak to what is on the resume when you're called for an interview.

Always proofread very carefully, but especially if using AI assistance. Many employers are aware of how often students use ChatGPT and other AI tools for creating their resumes and are on the lookout for resumes that have phrases that appear in lots of students' resumes. When in doubt, use your own voice, and schedule a time with a career counselor to help you articulate what you've done on various jobs and internships.

FINAL NOTE

Resumes take time, you won't get it perfect on the first try, but that doesn't mean you should give up. Put your best foot forward and career counselors will help to get it to a place you feel good about!

SAMPLE ACTION WORDS (just a FEW!)

accelerate	clarify	edit	increase	perform	revamp
accomplish	close	effect	incur	pinpoint	review
achieve	co-author	elect	inform	pioneer	revise
acquire	collaborate	eliminate	initiate	plan	revitalize
activate	collect	employ	innovate	prepare	salvage
actuate	combine	encourage	inspect	present	save
adapt	communicate	enforce	inspire	preserve	schedule
address	compile	engineer	instigate	preside	segment
administer	compose	enhance	instruct	prevent	select
advise	compute	enlarge	insure	process	sell
affect	conceive	enrich	install	procure	serve
allocate	conceptualize	establish	instill	produce	service
amend	conclude	estimate	institute	program	settle
amplify	condense	evaluate	interface	promote	shape
analyze	conduct	examine	interpret	prompt	simplify
anticipate	consolidate	exceed	interview	propose	solve
appoint	construct	execute	introduce	prove	specify
appraise	contact	expand	invent	provide	stage
approve	contribute	expedite	investigate	publicize	standardize
arbitrate	contrive	explain	isolate	publish	stimulate
arrange	control	expose	issue	purchase	streamline
assemble	convert	extend	launch	react	strengthen
assess	coordinate	extract	lead	recommend	structure
assist	correct	facilitate	lighten	reconcile	study
assume	counsel	forecast	liquidate	record	suggest
attain	create	form	localize	recruit	summarize
attract	cultivate	formalize	locate	rectify	supersede
audit	decentralize	formulate	maintain	redesign	supervise
augment	decrease	fortify	manage	reduce	supply
author	define	find	market	refine	support
authorize	design	frame	minimize	regain	surpass
automate	demonstrate	fulfill	moderate	regulate	survey