



## Resume Guide

Office for Alumni Affairs & Career Advancement

### Getting Started

A resume is a concise and informative summary of your education, training, experiences, skills and accomplishments **as they relate to the type of employment you are seeking**. It should highlight your strongest assets and differentiate you from other candidates seeking similar positions. It is often your first introduction to an employer and is an important element towards obtaining an interview. When writing a resume, think about it from the employer's perspective and be sure to tailor your resume content to your reader and the job description. Prioritize and select information that enhances your qualifications and only include what is relevant to the position.

### Style

The choice of design and format depends on personal preference and career goals. Our office recommends a style that is easy to read and visually appealing with no typos or grammatical errors.

- Use Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, Calibri in size 10-12 point (11pt font recommended) throughout the document with a minimum of 0.5 inch and maximum 1 inch margins (.8 – 1" recommended).
- Bold section headings (e.g., Education, Experience)
- Consistent use of **bold**, *italics*, and underlining
- Use bullet points to direct the reader's attention
- Start each bullet point with action verbs
- If your resume is more than one page long, insert your name and page number in the header or footer

### Resume Sections

Sections in your resume should be tailored to each position for which you are applying. Choose the section heading that best organizes your experiences and accomplishments. **Make sure to present information in reverse chronological order and use consistent formatting in each section.** Here are some common sections to be included in resumes:

**Name & Contact Information** - Provide your current mailing address, email, and telephone number. You can include a url to your LinkedIn profile or your website.

**Education** - Write the full name of your school and its location, full name or abbreviation of your degree(s), major or field of study, and expected date or date of completion. If you have credentials from institutions outside of the US, use the exact name of the degree as provided by the granting institution. If necessary, you may add a phrase to clarify the training attained, for example "equivalent to US MD". You may also include in this section relevant or select coursework, dissertation thesis, academic honors and awards.

**Experience** - You can organize your experience with different headings that make it easier for an employer to identify relevant skills and experience, e.g. "Public Health Experience," "Research Experience," "Teaching Experience," "Industry Experience," "Community Health Experience," "Clinical Experience," "International Experience," "Military Experience," "Other Professional Experience," etc.

For each experience, list the name of the employer, the location, the dates of employment, and your job title. You can include internship, practica, volunteer, and part-time experience in this section if they are relevant to the types of positions to which you are applying. Make sure to indicate whether it is an internship, practica or volunteer position and if it is less than full-time, you should indicate this on your resume.

Optional Sections:

**Executive Summary or Profile or Summary of Qualifications** – Some people include this section at the top of the resume. It is recommended for more senior and experienced candidates or people with very diverse experiences. It can be an effective way to present why you are a good fit for a job and can give your resume a context/focus. It is tailored to a specific audience or job application and highlights the synergy between your skills and experience and an employer's needs.



**Leadership Experience** – This can include extracurricular activities in which you had a leadership role, e.g, chair of a student group or professional association. If the organization is not well-known and its mission is not evident from its name or context, you may add a one-line descriptive phrase.

Additional optional sections: technical skills (including computer skills), language skills, academic honors, awards and fellowships, select publications and presentations, professional associations.

#### *What's the difference between a resume and a CV?*

A resume in the U.S. is used to present your professional identity and a CV is used to present your scholarly identity. A CV is generally used when applying for academic, scientific, or certain government research positions. The CV includes a broader range of topic areas including an extensive list of academic engagements, publications, and presentations, including honors and awards. The goal of a CV is to highlight one's academic accomplishments. There is generally no limit on the length of CVs (2 – 5 pages recommended early in your career), while resumes are typically 1-2 pages long.

#### *What's the similarity between a resume and a CV?*

Both resumes and CVs need to be tailored to your audience. For example, highlight your leadership experiences when applying to a management level position; emphasize your business or consulting experiences when seeking employment in the consulting industry and highlight policy experience for government positions.

## Writing About Your Experience

For each position, give an overview of what you did, with an emphasis on what you were able to accomplish in the position. If you are describing a research project, give a brief introductory statement indicating what you set out to accomplish and the results obtained. If relevant, go on to indicate important research techniques you used.

- If possible, quantify experiences to convey size and/or scale of projects, budgets, and results
- Describe current positions in the present tense and past positions in the past tense
- Do not use personal pronouns
- List relevant accomplishments and skills, NOT job duties and responsibilities
- Incorporate keywords from the job description as much

as possible

- Make sure to organize the bullets so that the most “important” information is presented first
- Make sure the format is consistent! – For example, if you choose to include periods at the end of bullet point phrases, include them in all bullets and if you choose not to, do not include them in any. They are optional.

## Tips

Your resume is a personal marketing tool – Make sure it is easy to read and highlights your most relevant training and experience. Be aware that employers may spend as little as 30 seconds to review it!

When sending your resume electronically, a pdf version is the best for preserving the format. When printing, use high-quality bond paper in neutral color such as white or cream.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *Should I include references?*

If a list of references is required as part of your application, prepare it on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to include your name at the top, e.g., “References for \_\_\_\_\_” and current contact information (name, title, e-mail and phone number) of referees.

### *What personal information should I include?*

U.S. law prohibits employers from asking any personal information. Do not provide your date of birth, height or weight, marital status, number of children, or attach photos to your resume. However, keep in mind that this may not apply to personal information that is required when submitting an application to positions outside of the US.

## Need more help?

Resume workshops are held multiple times throughout the semester and Career Coaches hold drop-in hours in Kresge Cafeteria for resume assistance. Students and alumni may also have their resumes reviewed as part of an individual career coaching appointments. To schedule an appointment, please login to CareerConnect at <https://hsph-harvard-csm.symplicity.com/> See Sample resumes in the [Career Resources](#) Library.



## ACTION VERBS for RESUMES/CVs

Each description of experiences should begin with a strong action verb. Try to remove phrases like “responsible for” and “duties include” and replace them with the action verbs below.

### **Communication**

Advertised  
Addressed  
Arbitrated  
Authored  
Collaborated  
Composed  
Conferred  
Contacted  
Convinced  
Debated  
Discussed  
Edited  
Enlisted  
Expressed  
Furnished  
Informed  
Influenced  
Interpreted  
Interviewed  
Judged  
Listened  
Mediated  
Negotiated  
Outlined  
Persuaded  
Promoted  
Publicized  
Recruited  
Reinforced  
Resolved  
Solicited  
Summarized  
Translated

### **Creative**

Acted  
Adapted  
Combined  
Conceptualized  
Created  
Designed  
Developed  
Directed  
Drew  
Established  
Fashioned  
Founded  
Formulated

Generated  
Illustrated  
Initiated  
Instituted  
Integrated  
Introduced  
Invented  
Modeled  
Originated  
Performed  
Photographed  
Planned  
Produced  
Revitalized  
Shaped

### **Finance**

Administered  
Adjusted  
Allocated  
Analyzed  
Assessed  
Balanced  
Budgeted  
Calculated  
Conserved  
Determined  
Developed  
Estimated  
Managed  
Marketed  
Measured  
Netted  
Planned  
Projected  
Quantified  
Reconciled  
Reduced  
Retrieved

### **Helping**

Advocated  
Aided  
Answered  
Assessed  
Clarified  
Collaborated

Counseled  
Cooperated  
Demonstrated  
Educated  
Ensured  
Expedited  
Facilitated  
Furthered  
Guided  
Helped  
Intervened  
Led  
Mentored  
Prevented  
Referred  
Rehabilitated  
Represented  
Simplified  
Supported

### **Management**

Achieved  
Administered  
Analyzed  
Assigned  
Approved  
Attained  
Chaired  
Contracted  
Consolidated  
Controlled  
Coordinated  
Delegated  
Developed  
Drafted  
Directed  
Eliminated  
Evaluated  
Enhanced  
Executed  
Expanded  
Handled  
Hired  
Implemented  
Improved  
Increased  
Inspected  
Merged



Navigated  
Organized  
Oversaw  
Presided  
Produced  
Reorganized  
Restored  
Scheduled  
Selected  
Strengthened  
Terminated

**Administrative**

Approved  
Arranged  
Coordinated  
Categorized  
Classified  
Collected  
Corrected  
Distributed  
Executed  
Generated  
Filed  
Implemented  
Incorporated  
Logged  
Monitored  
Operated  
Organized  
Processed  
Purchased  
Registered  
Responded  
Routed  
Screened  
Supplied  
Systematized  
Tabulated  
Validated

**Research**

Analyzed  
Clarified  
Collected  
Compared  
Conducted  
Detected  
Determined  
Diagnosed  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Experimented  
Explored  
Identified

Inspected  
Gathered  
Interviewed  
Investigated  
Measured  
Reported  
Researched  
Reviewed  
Searched  
Summarized  
Surveyed  
Systematized

**Teaching**

Advised  
Adapted  
Coached  
Enabled  
Encouraged  
Evaluated  
Explained  
Facilitated  
Guided  
Informed  
Instructed  
Persuaded  
Planned  
Stimulated  
Tested  
Transmitted

**Technical**

Applied  
Assembled  
Built  
Calculated  
Coded  
Computed  
Constructed  
Converted  
Designed  
Debugged  
Determined  
Devised  
Engineered  
Fortified  
Maintained  
Overhauled  
Programmed  
Regulated  
Repaired  
Restored  
Solved  
Specialized  
Standardized

Studied  
Upgraded  
Utilized

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<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/career-services/>