

Résumé Purpose and Best Practices

The purpose of a résumé is to convince employers to invite you for an interview. It is a marketing tool - not a laundry list of duties. Hiring managers take 6 seconds to scan a résumé – make a quick impression!

When constructing bullet points, put yourself in the context of the job and highlight accomplishments representing your skills that employers describe in the job posting.

Be Accomplishment-Orientated: Employers want to read about when you successfully utilized skills they seek. Describe achievements, quantify outcomes, and highlight your technical proficiency (industry/job-specific)

Customize to your Audience: Each résumé you create is customized for the particular job

Use Action Verbs: Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb relevant to your career goal

Ask Yourself: What did you accomplish that you can illustrate with facts and figures? Was there something your professor/boss praised you for? Did you win an award/promotion?

BULLET POINTS: Think of the acronym: **A-S.T.A.R.** (**A**ction Verb, **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, **R**esult):

- Begin your statement with a strong relevant action verb
- Outline the Situation or Task - What did you do or what were you involved in?
- Describe the Action you took - What skills did you use?
- Include the result, outcome, or learning of your action; quantify with #, \$, % when possible

REMEMBER:

- Emphasize transferable and technical skills and knowledge along with how you applied them
- Give specifics using #, \$, or % (quantity, frequency, population), and impact of your work
- VARY ACTION VERBS throughout your résumé
- Resume = Job Description, so use actual words in the job description to appeal to the employer

Examples:

“Tutored up to 12 students in Math and Physics resulting in a 3-letter grade jump on average for each pupil”

“Organized fundraising event drawing \$500,000+ in contributions to provide scholarships for underprivileged students”

“Trained 70+ student workers in office procedures to provide optimum client satisfaction”

“Established personalized approach to customer's shopping experience, decreasing returns by 23% over 6 months”

“Coordinated check in, scheduling, and verification of 25+ patients daily to ensure appointment accuracy”

“Memorized a 50+ drink menu before innovating 10 new cocktails resulting in a boost of regular clientele”

“Created innovative database using Salesforce resulting in 50% reduction in client query response time”

Cover Letter Purpose and Best Practices

The purpose of a cover letter is to make a connection between you and the employer in hopes of obtaining an interview. It is a conversation, not a repeat of your résumé!

REMEMBER:

- Highlight skills particular to what the employer is seeking in the job description
- Give examples of how your story connects you to the company culture
- If necessary, explain things your resume wasn't able to: large gaps in employment, re-entering the job market, changing career focus – gives you a chance to explain circumstances in a positive way

Action Verbs List (DO NOT USE: “Assists”, “Aids”, “Helps”, “Handles”, or “Works with”)

GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Accelerate	Complete	Double	Expedite	Launch	Overhaul
Achieve	Convince	Earned	Found	Master	Pioneer
Appoint	Customize	Eliminate	Improve	Originate	Reduce
Attain	Discover	Expand	Increase	Overcome	Select

MANAGEMENT / LEADERSHIP

Administer	Conceive	Evaluate	Lead	Produce	Strategize
Analyze	Consolidate	Executed	Manage	Recommend	Streamline
Arrange	Delegate	Implement	Motivate	Reorganize	Strengthen
Assign	Develop	Improve	Organize	Review	Supervise
Assess	Direct	Increase	Oversee	Revitalize	Transform
Attain	Encourage	Inspire	Plan	Spearhead	Visualize

COMMUNICATION

Address	Correspond	Draft	Mediate	Presented	Recruit
Advise	Compose	Edit	Moderate	Promote	Speak
Advocate	Counsel	Illustrate	Motivate	Propose	Summarize
Arbitrate	Debate	Influence	Negotiate	Publicize	Translate
Author	Direct	Interpret	Persuade	Publish	Write

TECHNICAL

Align	Diagnose	Identify	Observe	Report	Summarize
Compile	Evaluate	Inspect	Program	Research	Survey
Critique	Examine	Interpret	Publish	Review	Systematize
Detect	Extract	Investigate	Repair	Simplify	Sort

RESEARCH

Analyze	Design	Fabricate	Operate	Prove	Troubleshoot
Assemble	Devise	Install	Overhaul	Remodel	Upgrade
Build	Engineer	Hypothesize	Pinpoint	Solve	Validate
Calculate	Extrapolate	Observe	Program	Survey	Verify

CREATIVE

Act	Develop	Fashion	Integrate	Pioneer	Shape
Compose	Direct	Found	Introduce	Plan	Streamline
Conceive	Discover	Illustrate	Invent	Produce	Structure
Create	Envision	Innovate	Originate	Revise	
Design	Establish	Institute	Perform	Revitalize	

TEACHING / TRAINING

Adapt	Communicate	Enable	Guide	Motivate	Stimulate
Advise	Conduct	Encourage	Inform	Persuade	Teach
Assess	Coordinate	Engage	Initiate	Prepare	Train
Clarify	Define	Evaluate	Instruct	Present	Tutor
Coach	Develop	Facilitate	Lecture	Simplify	Write

CLERICAL

Approve		Execute	Maximize	Process	Specify
Arrange	Collect	File	Monitor	Purchase	Systematize
Assemble	Compile	Generate	Operate	Record	Tabulate
Catalogue	Dispatch	Implement	Organize	Retrieve	Update
Classify	Edit	Inspect	Prepare	Screen	Validate

FINANCIAL

Adjust	Appraise	Calculate	Estimate	Manage	Reconcile
Administer	Audit	Compare	Forecast	Market	Reduce
Allocate	Balance	Compute	Increase	Plan	Research
Analyze	Budget	Develop	Invest	Project	Track
				Quantify	Verify

HELPING / TEAM WORK

Advocate	Collaborate	Educate	Facilitate	Reinforce	Serve
Assess	Consult	Empathize	Guide	Refer	Strengthen
Arrange	Delegate	Empower	Inspire	Rehabilitate	Train
Clarify	Demonstrate	Encourage	Motivate	Represent	Uphold
Coach	Diagnose	Expedite	Provide	Resolve	Volunteer

SALES

Adapt	Deliver	Explain	Maintain	Persuade	Survey
Analyze	Distribute	Improve	Market	Promote	Structure
Build	Double	Increase	Negotiate	Relate	Spearhead
Conduct	Expand	Install	Order	Research	Streamline
Convince	Expedite	Launch	Perform	Sell	Triple

PROBLEM SOLVING

Analyze	Detect	Formulate	Investigate	Resolve	
Assess	Diagnose	Generate	Plan	Research	
Appraise	Evaluate	Hypothesize	Prove	Summarize	
Ascertain	Examine	Identify	Recommend	Survey	
Conclude	Execute	Implement	Review	Test	
				Validate	

Your Name (18-20 point)

City, State • Telephone number • LinkedIn address • Professional e-mail address

SUMMARY

____ (strong trait) college junior pursuing a ____ degree with (a passion for/interest in _____ (or) seeking a _____ position). Excellent ____ and ____ skills. Highly ____ with the ability to ____ and _____. (Describe hard and soft skills relevant to career goal)

SKILLS (List hard [measurable] industry/job-specific skills sorted by topic reflective of your actual abilities)

Data: Advanced Microsoft (MS) Excel (Pivot Tables, VBA, Macros), SQL, Google Analytics, Adobe Analytics (use both acronyms and spell out the full names of soft/hardware)

Marketing: Campaign Management, Digital Marketing, WordPress, Salesforce, Oracle, Social Media (HootSuite, Buffer, Facebook/Twitter/Google/Pinterest)

Language: _____ (insert foreign language/s here) (indicate reading, writing or speaking)

Use the specific level of comprehension (e.g. conversational, fluent in, proficient in) found in the job description

EDUCATION (Only include completed higher education degrees)

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN, Houston, TX

Month Year of Expected Graduation

Bachelor of Arts (or Science) in _____ Candidate

(List degree as found on the departmental website, include concentration if applicable)

(*****SUB-SECTIONS OPTIONAL*****)

Minor: List the subject in which you minored

GPA: List Overall and/or Major GPAs (**3.5 or above**)

Honors: Dean's List (number of semesters such as 4 out of 5)

Awards: List full name of each award, date awarded, and \$ amount if applicable

Activities: Name of Student Organization, Position Held, Year(s) you held that position

Relevant Courses: List class names relevant to your career goals

- Financed ____% of educational expenses through continuous employment

Study Abroad Program, Name of Country, Month Year (Optional)

- Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb
- Emphasize topics learned and specific experiences or skills gained
- Describe language skills perfected if any

RELEVANT PROJECTS (Optional)

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN, Houston, TX

Position Title (Such as Project Member, Project Leader)

Month Year – Month Year

- BULLET POINT FORMAT: Action verb + What you did/How you did it + Measurable outcomes
- Begin every bullet point with a strong action verb
- Focus on accomplishments and results, what you learned and skills you gained
- Use strong action verbs to explain what you did and quantify, if possible, using #, \$, or %

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE (Reverse chronological order, could be volunteer/internship/unpaid)

NAME OF BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION, City, State

Position Title

Month Year – Month Year

- Use Bullet Point Format- See above
- Put your strongest and most relevant selling point first
- Use industry keywords – Look at actual job description(s)!
- If it happened in the past, use past tense of the action verb

NAME OF BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION, City, State

Position Title

Month Year – Month Year

- Focus on your core skills demonstrated related to the position for which you're applying
- Quantify as much as you can using #, \$, %!

VOLUNTEERING (Optional)

Name of Professional Association/Volunteer Organization, Position Held, Year(s) you held that position

Your Name (18-20 point) ****Use same heading as used in your résumé****

City, State • Telephone number • LinkedIn address • Professional e-mail address

Date

Name of Hiring Contact (*Use individual's name – otherwise, address it to the Hiring Manager*)

Title (*If no title is known [other than 'Hiring Manager'], list Department if known*)

Organization Name

Address

City, State, ZIP Code

RE: Job Requisition # or ID and Job Title (*if you are applying to a large organization*)

Dear Mr./Ms. _____, (*Use last name of individual. Otherwise, use 'Dear Hiring Manager'*)

1st Paragraph

Explain the reason for the letter and/or identify the position you're seeking. Use active, not passive voice throughout your cover letter (i.e. "I discovered" not "It was discovered").

Mention how you learned of the position and/or where you saw it advertised (referral by a company employee, Jobs4Gators or other website, a classmate, friend, coworker, etc.).

2nd Paragraph (*Can be joined with 3rd paragraph if needed*)

Explain how specific projects, philosophies, etc. of the employer resonate with you. Make it clear to them that you have done your research and that you have thought through WHY you want to work for them.

3rd Paragraph (*Can be joined with 2nd paragraph if needed*)

Highlight your skills and accomplishments relevant to the job description/position/industry and how they could add value to the organization – provide examples! If necessary, clarify things your résumé wasn't able to: if you have had large gaps in employment, are re-entering the job market, or changing career focus – this gives you a chance to explain these circumstances in a positive way.

Closing Paragraph

You have two options:

1. Take an active approach indicating a specific day you will call to check on the status of your application. The challenge with this is that if you say you are going to do this, you MUST do it. Not following through on this will raise a 'red flag' for them.
2. State you look forward to hearing from the company, but don't indicate a specific follow-up date.

Express your thanks.

Sincerely,

Your Typed Full Name