

Resume Writing

Résumés

A résumé is a summary of your education, experiences, skills, and qualifications. A strong résumé successfully demonstrates the strength of your candidacy for a particular position.

Effective Résumés:

- ❖ Focus on the position description and the employer's needs
- ❖ Describe your career direction and job-related skills/interests
- ❖ Emphasize your potential contributions and previous accomplishments
- ❖ Use power verbs to begin statements describing your experiences

Types of Résumés

There are three common types of résumés. The style you choose should highlight your unique skills and experiences in the most user-friendly manner. The most commonly used type of résumé is chronological.

CHRONOLOGICAL

A chronological résumé highlights your experience and education in reverse chronological order. Many employers prefer a chronological résumé and it often works well for new graduates and alumni. One disadvantage of the chronological résumé is that it may reveal employment gaps.

FUNCTIONAL

A functional résumé highlights your qualifications, skills, and related achievements with little emphasis on employment dates. The functional résumé stresses selected skill areas and promotes the idea of transferable skills. The disadvantage is that employers are less familiar with this format and undergraduates seldom use it effectively.

COMBINATION

A combination résumé includes aspects of both chronological and functional formats. Qualifications, skills, and related achievements are highlighted and employment history is included as a separate section. The disadvantage of a combination résumé is that it is difficult to write effectively, and employers prefer to see when and where your experiences and accomplishments were achieved.

BUILDING BETTER BULLETS

Often the most difficult part of developing a résumé is learning how to articulate your experiences in a way that will impress potential employers. Regardless of how trivial an experience might seem to you at the time, every job results in the acquisition of skills which are transferable to other work settings. Follow these easy steps to better identify and express your skills to potential employers:

1. Make a list of each experience you've had, whether it was a volunteer position, a full-time job, an internship, or a student organization role. Picture in your mind what you did on a typical day, during a busy week.
2. Use the Power Verbs list to brainstorm all of the skills you employed during this day.
3. Select three to five of the words you feel best convey your responsibilities.
4. For each verb, ask yourself 'Who, What, When, Why and How?' to expand upon your statement.
5. Whenever possible, quantify the impact your work had on the customer, process, or overall organization. What difference did your work make? What were your accomplishments?

action verb + task + result

Main Street Café, Server, Evanston, IL

February 2013 – Present

- Awarded 'Employee of the Month' recognition based on customer feedback and supervisory staff reviews.
- Train 15 new hires on restaurant policies, customer service skills and problem solving techniques.
- Created and implemented a comprehensive marketing plan that resulted in a 30% increase in business from the Northwestern community.
- Manage point of sale operations and address customer concerns and inquiries to ensure superior customer service.

POWER VERBS

Accomplished	Invented
Achieved	Investigated
Administered	Maintained
Advised	Managed
Analyzed	Maximized
Arranged	Motivated
Assessed	Navigated
Collaborated	Negotiated
Communicated	Operated
Completed	Organized
Conducted	Oversaw
Consulted	Performed
Contributed	Planned
Coordinated	Prepared
Corresponded	Presented
Created	Processed
Designed	Produced
Determined	Provided
Developed	Published
Directed	Recorded
Drafted	Regulated
Encouraged	Repaired
Enhanced	Reported
Established	Represented
Evaluated	Researched
Examined	Resolved
Expanded	Reviewed
Facilitated	Revised
Formulated	Scheduled
Fostered	Secured
Generated	Served
Guided	Specialized
Handled	Strengthened
Identified	Supervised
Illustrated	Supported
Implemented	Taught
Improved	Trained
Initiated	Validated
Inspected	Verified
Integrated	Wrote

Résumé Categories* *It is not necessary to use all of the categories below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

At the top of the résumé, include your full name, permanent and school address (if applicable), telephone numbers that you want employers to call, and e-mail address.

OBJECTIVE

An objective statement summarizes the type of work desired and key qualifications. Tailor your statement for the specific position and indicate what you can offer the employer.

EDUCATION

Include your school's name, location, degree type, graduation date/anticipated graduation date, major(s), minor(s), and GPA. If you have more than one degree, place the highest or most recent degree first. Within this category, you also have the option to list relevant coursework and/or academic honors and awards.

EXPERIENCE

This section highlights experiences including: full-time, part-time, and summer employment; student teaching; internships; practicum experiences; and volunteer work. List your experiences in reverse chronological order. For each position, provide the company name, position title, location of the company, and dates employed. For each experience, describe the work performed, contributions, achievements, and demonstrated skills and abilities. Use power verbs to begin each statement. When appropriate, use the technical or specific terminology and language of your chosen field.

LEADERSHIP

Include offices/positions held, organization name, dates, significant contributions, projects, and demonstrated skills and abilities. It is common to format this section in a similar manner as the experience section, including the use of bullet pointed descriptions.

ACTIVITIES AND/OR COMMUNITY/CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Include offices held, organizations, dates, significant contributions, projects, and demonstrated skills and abilities. This section is most commonly organized in a list format.

HONORS/AWARDS

You can elect to put all your honors/awards in this section or split them between education and this category. Include the name of the honor/award and the date(s) granted. A brief statement describing the honor/award is optional.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Content in this section often includes organizational memberships and offices held, projects, certifications, and licenses.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Include rank, service, assignments, dates, significant contributions/achievements, demonstrated skills and abilities, and reserve status.

SKILLS

This category commonly lists computer competencies and foreign language skills. You may also list any other job-related skills.

INTERESTS

This is an optional section that is typically included only if the interests support the objective and are career-related.

Content to Exclude from Résumés:

- Reasons for leaving previous employers
- Social security number
- Salary history
- Physical characteristics
- Health or physical problems
- Race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, etc.



“Before coming to UCS, I had received zero interview requests and had probably submitted 50 résumés. After meeting with a UCS staff member, I submitted my new résumé and cover letter about ten times and received one job offer and an interview request. Once again, I am incredibly thankful and definitely should have utilized career services earlier in my job search.”

BEN WOLDENBERG
Senior in the McCormick
School of Engineering



Résumé Formatting

Develop a résumé format that highlights your candidacy. Employers receiving numerous résumés for one position may have a limited amount of time to review the number of résumés submitted. Keeping this in mind, condense your content to one page if you are an undergraduate student. If you are a graduate student or a more experienced applicant, a two-page résumé is often an acceptable option. Additionally, formatting expectations may differ depending on the industry, so make sure you understand the specific standards of your field.

Formatting Tips:

- ❖ Do not use a résumé template program; rather, start with a blank document.
- ❖ Place the most important information first and group related experiences together.
- ❖ Use underlining, bolding, and italics to emphasize categories and important topics.
- ❖ Keep your format consistent (e.g., font size/type, order of information, layout, etc.).
- ❖ Use professional, easy-to-read fonts (e.g., Arial, Times New Roman, etc.).

Application Procedures

Once you have developed your résumé, the next step is to determine the appropriate application method for each employer. Some employers prefer a formatted document version of your résumé attached to an e-mail message, while other employers may not open attachments due to company policies, concerns about viruses, and/or incompatibilities among word-processing programs. Employers may also ask you to cut and paste the contents of your résumé directly into the body of an e-mail, use an online application, or apply through their website. Completing an applicant profile is another possibility, which can include uploading a résumé and additional employment information. Remember to review the application procedures in the job description to determine submission requirements for each specific employer.

Application Review

In some cases, your application materials are reviewed by a human resources representative/hiring manager, while other agencies will screen your materials using an electronic system. Tailor your résumé and cover letter for the specific position to which you are applying. Do not send a generic, "one size fits all" résumé and cover letter. If you know the hiring manager for the position, it is recommended that you send a copy of your materials to this person and mention that you have submitted your materials formally.

Résumé Posting on Commercial Sites

A number of commercial sites invite job seekers to post their résumés online to large databases that a range of employers access. Only post information you are comfortable sharing about yourself, since you do not know who is accessing your information. Also, decide if you want your current employer or others to know you are applying for positions. Posting your résumé on commercial sites may communicate to others that you are engaged in a job search.

Résumé DO'S

- Tailor for each position
- Use bold/caps to highlight section headings
- Choose categories that emphasize your individual strengths
- Quantify and qualify your accomplishments
- Include relevant non-work experiences
- Use power verbs to strengthen your statements
- Emphasize transferable skills
- Edit and proofread multiple times
- Produce a quality and professional product

Résumé DON'Ts

- Use personal pronouns, abbreviations, or acronyms
- Include confidential information
- Provide irrelevant information
- List references
- Use fancy and unusual fonts
- Exaggerate your experiences or accomplishments
- Repeat information offered in another category
- List inaccurate information
- Use a résumé template

Action Verbs

Start each bulleted statement with an action verb to give your resume power and direction. In choosing your action verbs, select verbs that highlight your qualifications and that align with the position you are seeking.

Analytical

Analyzed
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Conducted
Determined
Evaluated
Examined
Experimented
Explored
Extracted
Formulated
Gathered
Identified
Interpreted
Interviewed
Investigated
Measured
Organized
Proved
Researched
Reviewed
Screened
Searched
Specified
Solved
Summarized
Surveyed
Systematized
Tested
Validated

Creative

Combined
Composed
Conceptualized
Condensed
Created
Customized
Designed
Developed

Devised
Entertained
Established
Formulated
Illustrated
Initiated
Integrated
Introduced
Modeled
Modified
Originated
Performed
Photographed
Revised
Revitalized
Shaped

Financial

Administered
Adjusted
Allocated
Analyzed
Appraised
Assessed
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Conserved
Controlled
Decreased
Determined
Developed
Estimated
Forecast
Managed
Marketed
Measured
Planned
Prepared
Programmed
Projected
Purchased

Reconciled
Reduced
Researched
Retrieved

Interpersonal

Adapted
Advised
Advocated
Answered
Assessed
Coached
Collaborated
Contributed
Cooperated
Counseled
Demonstrated
Enabled
Encouraged
Ensured
Expedited
Facilitated
Focused
Furthered
Guided
Initiated
Interacted
Intervened
Listened
Mediated
Moderated
Motivated
Negotiated
Prevented
Provided
Referred
Rehabilitated
Represented
Resolved
Simplified
Supplied
Supported
Volunteered

Leadership

Accomplished
Advanced
Administered
Appointed
Approved
Assigned
Attained
Authorized
Chaired
Completed
Coordinated
Decided
Delegated
Developed
Directed
Diversified
Enforced
Enhanced
Established
Founded
Generated
Headed
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Initiated
Inspected
Instituted
Integrated
Introduced
Led
Managed
Motivated
Organized
Oversaw
Planned
Presided
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Recruited

Reorganized
Replaced
Represented
Reviewed
Revitalized
Secured
Selected
Solidified
Stimulated
Streamlined
Strengthened
Supervised

Communication

Addressed
Advertised
Arbitrated
Articulated
Authored
Clarified
Collaborated
Communicated
Composed
Consulted
Contacted
Conveyed
Convinced
Corresponded
Debated
Defined
Demonstrated
Described
Developed
Directed
Discussed
Drafted
Edited
Explained
Expressed
Familiarized
Formulated
Illustrated
Incorporated

Informed
Interpreted
Interviewed
Marketed
Mediated
Moderated
Outlined
Participated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Proposed
Publicized
Published
Reconciled
Recruited
Referred
Reinforced
Reported
Responded
Solicited
Specified
Spoke
Summarized
Synthesized
Wrote

Organizational

Approved
Arranged
Catalogued
Categorized
Charted
Classified
Collected
Compiled
Coordinated
Corrected
Corresponded
Distributed
Expedited
Executed
Filed

**Organizational
(Cont.)**

Generated
Implemented
Incorporated
Logged
Maintained
Monitored
Obtained
Operated
Ordered
Organized
Planned
Prepared
Processed
Provided
Recorded
Registered
Reserved
Responded

Restructured
Reviewed
Scheduled
Screened
Set up
Submitted
Supplied
Standardized
Systematized
Updated
Validated
Verified

Marketing

Achieved
Attained
Completed
Conceived
Delivered
Earned

Exceeded
Expanded
Generated
Increased
Improved
Launched
Led
Marketed
Promoted
Resolved
Restored
Saved
Shaped
Succeeded
Surpassed
Transformed
Won

Teaching

Adapted
Advised
Appraised
Coached
Communicated
Conducted
Coordinated
Critiqued
Developed
Educated
Enabled
Encouraged
Evaluated
Facilitated
Focused
Guided
Individualized
Informed

Instructed
Motivated
Simulated
Stimulated
Taught
Tested
Trained
Tutored

Technical

Adapted
Applied
Assembled
Automated
Built
Calculated
Computed
Conserved
Constructed
Controlled

Converted
Designed
Developed
Diagnosed
Drafted
Engineered
Inspected
Installed
Maintained
Monitored
Operated
Overhauled
Programmed
Regulated
Remodeled
Repaired
Restored
Specialized
Standardized
Upgraded
Utilized

Resume Thesaurus

Rather than using the same action verbs repeatedly on your resume, use the list below to find alternatives.

Accomplish

Complete
Finish

Achieved

Executed
Reached
Realized

Adapted

Accommodated
Adjusted

Advised

Conferred
Consulted

Assessed

Appraised
Evaluated

Audited

Analyzed
Examined
Inspected

Calculated

Computed
Estimated
Figured

Completed

Concluded
Finished

Composed

Comprised
Created
Formed

Consulted

Advised
Conferred

Coordinated

Accommodated
Arranged

Created

Composed
Generated
Produced

Designed

Arranged
Created
Planned

Developed

Created
Expanded
Planned

Enhanced

Deepened
Heightened
Intensified

Established

Constituted
Created
Instituted

Estimated

Appraised
Approximated
Assessed

Evaluated

Appraised
Assessed
Classified

Expanded

Developed
Elaborated
Increased

Fostered

Cultivated
Encouraged
Promoted

Implemented

Completed
Fulfilled
Performed

Increased

Expanded
Heightened
Raised

Initiated

Commenced
Introduced
Launched

Integrated

Coordinated
Incorporated
Unified

Lead (led)

Conducted
Directed
Guided

Maintained

Provided
Supported
Sustained

Managed

Conducted
Directed

Oversaw

Overlook
Supervised
Surveyed

Planned

Designed
Devised
Organized

Presented

Addressed
Directed
Offered

Provided

Supplied
Transferred

Researched

Investigated
Probed

Revised

Redrafted
Restyled
Rewrote

Studied

Examined
Inspected
Surveyed

Surpassed

Exceeded
Excelled

Taught

Instructed
Trained

Updated

Refreshed
Renewed

Used

Applied
Employed
Utilized

Won

Accomplished
Achieved
Attained

Worked

Handled
Operated
Performed

Resume Examples

Michael McCormick

michaelm@u.northwestern.edu ▪ (650) 759-9227

CAMPUS ADDRESS
2133 Sheridan Road
Ford Building
Evanston, IL 60208

PERMANENT ADDRESS
123 Main Street
Apartment 10
Anywhere, IL

EDUCATION

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

Robert R. McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science,
GPA: 3.425/4.000

June 2013 (anticipated)

Relevant Courses: Multivariable Calculus, Fundamentals of Computer Programming I, Macroeconomics

Anywhere High School, Anywhere, CA

Valedictorian

June, 2009

COURSE PROJECTS

Northwestern University, Design Thinking and Communication Course, Evanston, IL

Client: Chicago Company, Chicago, IL

Fall 2009

- Designed support device that relieves muscle pain experienced by flute players
 - Incorporated feedback from client and professionals to improve design
 - Led team in building working prototype of design
 - Wrote final report and presented project to client at design fair
-

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

California University, Department of Bioengineering, Palo Alto, CA

Research Intern, Professor's Lab

Jan 2010 – May 2010

- Developed procedure to modify virus genomes during replication
- Used genome analyzing software to generate database of locations of potential undiscovered genes in virus
- Presented final research findings to panel of professors and graduate students

California Biotechnology Career Pathway, Los Angeles, CA

Trainee

Aug 2011 – May 2013

- Received over 200 hours of technical training in state-of-the-art biotech lab
-

WORK EXPERIENCE

Golf & Country Club and KOA Aquatics, Peninsula, CA

Swim Instructor

May– Sept 2013

- Designed and led group practices for swimmers ages 4 to 13
- Provided one-on-one instruction to beginning swimmers in order to teach fundamental techniques
- Coordinated swimmers during swim meets to ensure maximum participation

General Retail Store, Anywhere, CA

Sales Associate

July – Nov 2011

- Provided personalized consultations to diverse customers based on specific needs
 - Upheld company policies on work conduct and customer service
-

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Laboratory: PCR, Gel Electrophoresis, Gibson Assembly, Transformations, Bacterial Cell Culture, DNA Extraction & Concentration Determination, Solution/Media Preparation

Computer: MATLAB, Meta/Scheme, Microsoft Office (Word®, PowerPoint®, Excel®) Language: Basic Spanish and Mandarin

Steve Sheridan

SteveSheridan@u.northwestern.edu
(207) - 735-3478

Education

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
Robert R. McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science
Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, GPA: 3.3/4.0

Anticipated graduation: June 2013

Engineering Experience

Engineering World Health, Evanston, IL October 2011 – Present

- *Client:* Hospitals in rural Africa
 - Work with a team to perform reverse engineering and research on current devices and products
 - Analyze and utilize research to inform ideas for a new device
 - Assist in the design and build of a device that can calibrate hospital equipment in extreme environments

Design For America, Evanston, IL July – September 2011

- *Problem:* How can we encourage and maximize the utility of school vegetable gardens?
 - Conducted more than 20 hours of user observation and interviews
 - Developed and designed prototypes and performed more than 10 hours of user testing

Design Thinking and Communication Course, Evanston, IL

- *Client:* City of Chicago Streets and Sanitation Department April - June 2010
 - Prototyped and designed a rain garden system that can retain and recycle water after extreme street flooding
 - Served as team leader dividing tasks for a research paper, prototype testing, and user testing
- *Client:* Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago January – March 2010
 - Designed and prototyped a therapeutic system for hand and wrist mobility for a patient with Cerebral Palsy
 - Acted as team leader organizing team meetings, delegating tasks, and writing a research paper

Research Experience

Neurological Disease Center, Chicago, IL September 2011– Present
Research Assistant

- Clean up raw EEG data for analysis using EMSE
- Analyze EEG data to determine the event related potential of incorrect syntax in adults afflicted with mental illnesses

Leadership Experience

Society of Women Engineers, Evanston, IL October 2011 – Present

Project STEM, Evanston, IL October 2011 – Present

- Teach middle and high school students to help bridge the learning gap among minorities
- Focus on encouraging involvement in STEM fields

Laboratory Peer Leader, Evanston, IL August 2010

- Directed peer-led team learning for students conducting independent
- Voted by students to receive the Peer Leader Award

Middle School Tutor, Big City, ME August 2009 – May 2010

- Founded a student run tutoring program at the local middle schools
- Taught Spanish and Math
- Worked with students with learning disabilities

National Youth Science Camp, Native County, VA June 2009 – July 2009

- One of two delegates chosen from the state to participate in a month long intensive science camp

Skills

Computer

- Proficient in MATLAB, EMSE, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Photoshop

Language

- Intermediate proficiency in Spanish

Construction

- Proficient in soldering, using carpentry equipment, and using the mill and lathe

Wanda Wildcat

2133 Sheridan Road, Suite 2.350, Evanston, IL 60201 • (555)-555-5555 • wanda.wildcat@u.northwestern.edu

EDUCATION

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

Robert R. McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science

Bachelor of Science in Chemical and Biological Engineering

June 2013 (anticipated)

Minor: Biotechnology and Biochemical Engineering

Current GPA: 3.5/4.00

Nordstrom High School, Nordstrom, CA

2005-2009

National Science Olympiad, Semi-Finalist

EXPERIENCE

Oloroso Healthcare, Chicago, IL

June 2011 – present

Co-op, Device Engineering – Renal Home Therapies

- Work as a systems engineer to bring a Home Hemodialysis System to market
- Produce a variety of engineering content, including test method validations, to ensure compliance with FDA regulations
- Create risk management material and perform materials studies to determine gaps in compliance
- Identify device error root causes to assist with system debugging efforts
- Perform integration and verification testing

The Professor's Lab, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

February 2010 – present

Research Assistant

- Develop orthogonal protein translation systems involving pre-translational phosphorylation in *E. Coli* to research microtubule degeneration in neurons, a process commonly associated with Alzheimer's and dementia patients
- Assist PhD students and post-doctoral researchers with cell-free protein synthesis research involving Multiplex Advanced Genomic Engineering of *E. coli*

Design Thinking and Communication 1&2, Northwestern University

January 2010 – June 2010

Student

- Conceptualized, built, and pitched an inexpensive, waterproof, and universal cell phone case in a collaborative 4-person team environment with shared communication and design leadership roles
- Designed, constructed and presented to a large audience, with a team of four peers, a product to help a blind woman discern the color of her clothing

ACTIVITIES

American Institute of Chemical Engineers

December 2011 – present

Engineers for a Sustainable World

October 2011 – present

- Aided in the initiation of a business plan for Solid State Shear Pulverization, an experimental polymer recycling method in development at Northwestern University
- Worked closely with industry advisors to perform benchmarking and market research

Alpha Beta Fraternity, Delta Gamma Chapter

March 2010 – present

- Plan and execute brotherhood events as a committee chair, including retreats
- Assisted in a re-chartering petition, working closely with other members of the executive board and advisors to ensure information was accurate and that the chapter was represented well
- Engage with peers and promote events using the chapter's social media outlets

Northwestern Club Sports Team

October 2009 – present

- Promote and fundraise for a variety of events, and facilitate team sponsorships by networking with outside organizations and industry representatives
- Manage social media accounts in an effort to promote team activities
- Play competitively throughout the Midwest

SKILLS

Laboratory

- Crafting various forms of *E. coli* media in agar and liquid form
- Transforming then culturing bacteria colonies with specifically mutated plasmids
- Purifying, ligating and gel sequencing DNA sequences

Computing

- Coding in MATLAB and Python
- Using Microsoft Office
- Designing websites with WiX