RESUMES

A resume is used to highlight your skills and demonstrate why you're the right fit for a position. While the content of your resume is unique to you, it's important to ensure the formatting and content of your resume is consistent with the expectations of the industry you're applying to.

HOW TO TAILOR YOUR RESUME

Start by reviewing the job description to identify required skills and qualifications. Match these with your own skills and experience. In your experience section, use bulleted 'accomplishment statements' detailing how you applied your skills, the tasks you completed, and the results achieved. This helps hiring supervisors see the value and contributions you could bring to the role.

WHAT IS AN APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM?

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) help many companies streamline hiring by scanning resumes and cover letters submitted through platforms like Indeed, LinkedIn, or employer job portals. The ATS uses algorithms to assess your qualifications and predict your success in the role, assigning a score to each resume. High-scoring resumes are recommended for further review. To improve your chances in online applications, follow the formatting recommendations in this guide to ensure ATS compatibility

TIPS

- Use action verbs in past tense for your bullet points, even if you're still in that position. You're highlighting accomplishments that have already occurred.
- Think of your resume as a writing sample you're giving to a prospective employer. Proofread carefully to ensure there are no spelling, grammar, or punctuation mistakes.
- Do not include information in headers or footers.
- Edit your resume using the same software each time to avoid data corruption that interferes with the file being properly read.
- Avoid using acronyms or abbreviations.

ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

Accomplishment statements refer to the bullet points in each experience block on your resume. Writing about your experience in accomplishment statement format helps provide 'evidence' of having specific skills, demonstrates how you've used your skills, and highlight your accomplishments. If possible, quantify your achievements numerically to give your statements even more credibility. Try using this 'formula' to make your statements stand out:

What was the task you completed? + CONNECTING WORDS: by, through, utilizing + **How did you complete it/gain skill?** + CONNECTING WORDS: resulting in, in order to, for + **What was the benefit or reason you did it?**

START with an action verb that describes the skill you want to highlight.

WHAT: State the task you completed clearly and concisely to provide context to the reader

HOW: List the skills you used to complete this task. The skills you choose to highlight should align with those listed in the job description.

WHY: State the outcome of the task, focusing on what was accomplished, or how the organization benefitted, to show the value you brought to this role.

Original statement: *"Improved recycling options on campus"*

WHAT: Improved recycling options on campus

HOW: By partnering with campus organizations to install 20 recycling centers on campus

WHY: To reduce excess waste

Accomplishment Statement: *"Improved on campus recycling options by partnering with PLU's Green Club to install 20 new recycling centers, resulting in a 15% reduction of excess waste"*

Teamwork

Administered	Delegated	Managed
Advised	Designated	Negotiated
Approved	Directed	Networked
Collaborated	Informed	Resolved
Connected	Integrated	Supervised
Co-produced	Led	Trained

ACTION VERBS

Each bullet point should start with an action verb. Here's a list of possible verbs to use. Avoid using first-person words like "I" or "me."

Planning

Arranged	Facilitated	Processed
Created	Generated	Revised
Designed	Instituted	Scheduled
Developed	Monitored	Solved
Distributed	Operated	Transformed
Executed	Organized	Utilized
Established	Prepared	Implemented

Leadership

Assembled	Evaluated	Mentored
Communicated	Facilitated	Organized
Conducted	Guided	Oversaw
Coordinated	Instructed	Reorganized
Counseled	Led	Supervised
Developed	Maintained	Taught
Directed	Managed	

Communication

Advertised	Endorsed	Presented
Articulated	Exchanged	Produced
Clarified	Informed	Solicited
Contacted	Interpreted	Transferred
Delivered	Negotiated	Translated
Encouraged	Persuaded	Transmitted

Research

Analyzed	Diagnosed	Organized
Assessed	Evaluated	Projected
Calculated	Experimented	Researched
Computed	Extracted	Reviewed
Created	Investigated	Studied
Critiqued	Observed	Verified

(1)

Firstname Lastname

Tacoma, WA • (253) 555-XXXX • email@plu.edu

(2)

EDUCATION

Pacific Lutheran University – Tacoma, WA   **May 20xx**
Bachelor of Arts/Science in XXXX | Minor: XXXX

South Seattle Community College – Seattle, WA   **June 20xx**
Direct Transfer Associate Degree

(3)   **(5)**

EXPERIENCE

Equality Health – Phoenix, AZ   **Sept 20xx – May 20xx**
Accounting Intern

(4)
- Collaborated with a team of four accounting professionals to perform month-end closings to develop a comprehensive understanding of the firm's financial reporting processes
- Analyzed market research by cross-referencing data using Excel spreadsheets leading to a 6% reduction in discrepancies for 25 vendor contracts
- Reviewed daily reconciliation reports to identify inventory shortages and assisted in the implementation of control measures that reduced losses by 15%

PLU Dining Services – Tacoma, WA   **Sept 20xx – June 20xx**
Barista
- Leveraged effective communication skills to fulfill drink orders quickly and efficiently to maintain a smooth workflow and enhance customer's experience
- Demonstrated consistent attention to detail by processing more than 50 transactions per shift with a 99% accuracy rate

GREEN Club - Tacoma, WA   **Sept 20xx- May 20xx**
President
- Coordinated eight community clean-up projects by partnering with the Office of Diversity, Justice, and Sustainability to raise awareness about environmental issues
- Managed a budget of $5,000 by maintaining accurate, detailed bookkeeping records to ensure proper fund allocation and financial accountability

PROJECTS

Capstone Presentation, *"Title of Presentation"*   **May 20xx**
- Conducted a literature review on (research topic) using (list research methods) to prepare a 20-page research paper outlining research findings, analysis, and implications
- Presented research findings at the Spring 20xx Capstone Conference to over x attendees

SKILLS

Microsoft Office Certification   **April 20xx**
Languages: Spanish, fluent

AWARDS

Act Six Scholar - Leadership and Development Training Scholarship
- Recipient of one of five full-tuition scholarships to attend Pacific Lutheran University

(6)

KEY

1   **Header:** Your resume should include a header with your name in bold and slightly larger then the rest of the text, your email address, phone number, and the city and state where you live.

2   **Education** should be listed at the top of your resume. List the name of the school you attended, the name of your degree (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, etc.), and the month and year you earned/will earn your diploma. Including your GPA is optional unless the job description mentions it as a requirement.

3   **Experience** can be just about anything you have done, including volunteer experience, work experience, internships (paid or unpaid), research, or class projects. Each "experience block" should be formatted the same way and include these five details: (1) organization name, (2) location, (3) your title, (4) dates you were there, and (5) accomplishment statements.

4   Include **3-5 bullets** when describing experience that is very similar to the position you're applying for. For positions that are not closely related, focus on highlighting transferrable skills, and include approximately 2-3 bullets.

5   List entries in the education and experience sections in reverse chronological order (most recent at the top).

6   Length should be one page with 1/2" - 1" margins on all sides. The font size should be between 10.5-12 pt using a font that is clear and easy to read.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI can be used in the resume writing process, though it should be used carefully. While it has many potential uses, here are some things to consider before using AI for your resume.

Be aware:
- There is no way to secure personal data, avoiding inputting sensitive information.
- AI-generated content is identified and flagged by ATS screening software, which may be viewed by hiring supervisors.
- Information generated by AI may be inaccurate or biased. Always review outputs critically and do additional research.

Ways AI can help:
- Input your resume and job description into a chatbot and ask if you are a good fit you are for the position. The AI model can suggest ways to tailor your resume to the application.

Avoid:
- Copying and pasting AI outputs. While AI can offer recommendations and inspiration, your resume and cover letter should be your own writing. Additionally, AI models do not know you better than you do, so their output will often be incomplete.
- Using the AI output formatting. It's very important to make sure your resume formatting is ATS-compatible if you plan to apply online using platforms like Indeed or LinkedIn.
- Over-reliance on AI. Employers will ask you questions based on the content of your resume during an interview. If you didn't write the content yourself, it can be challenging to answer appropriately.

FAQS

Should I include an Objective or Summary section?

It depends. Objective or summary statements may be used if the position you're applying for does not allow you to submit a cover letter, otherwise they're optional.

Do I need to list every single job or experience I've ever had?

No, your resume should highlight jobs and experiences that demonstrate the skills and qualifications the hiring supervisor is looking for. If you've never held a position like the one you're applying for, focus on experience involving transferrable skills, like communication and team work, that are valuable in many positions.

Should I use a template from Microsoft Word or another resource?

It's best to use a simple, easy-to-read layout, so a template isn't necessary. Templates can interfere with online resume submission software, and many are difficult to edit, making it challenging to update your resume as needed.

How much does my formatting matter?

Formatting best practices exist so that the content of your resume can be quickly and easily read by hiring managers and ATS's. Make sure the formatting is consistent, clear, and not too text-heavy.

's

Do I need to use keywords from the job description in my resume?

Using key terms from the job description is important to ensure your resume aligns with the desired qualifications of the position you're applying for. ATS can recognize comparable terms, so the keywords you use don't have to be an exact match.

Should I have a skills section?

Your skills have the greatest impact when you write about them in the context of an experience in your bullet points. A skills section may be included if you have specific certifications, or specialized technical or language skills.

What do I do if I've never held a job?

You can still write a resume without any previous job experience. A resume is a showcase of your skills which can come from a variety of experiences such as clubs, athletics, volunteer work, and even coursework.

Do I need to list my references at the bottom of my resume?

No. If you are asked to provide references, they should be listed in a separate document. See our References Guide for more information.

To have your resume reviewed and receive personalized recommendations, schedule an appointment with a career advisor!