RESUME WRITING OVERVIEW

All that we know about you is what is listed on this page, so make it count.

CREATE A MASTER RESUME

Start by making a complete list of experiences. Focus on the past four years if you are a current student, the past ten if you took time off to work. Use the categories below to organize your information.

Required sections are noted with a *

- Contact Information *
- Objective or summary
- Education *
- Work Experience (Related and Other)*
- Volunteer Experience
- Professional Affiliations
- Exhibitions
- Performances
- Publications
- Skills

CREATE TARGETED RESUMES

It is ok (and expected!) to have several versions of your resume. Your master resume may take up three pages, or you may struggle to fill a page. **The ideal resume is one page in length–** no more, no less. So the way you cut or expand information, and how you arrange content depends on what the industry expects AND what you want to emphasize.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Resume expectations vary depending on what you want to do and where you want to work. **Gather information about employer expectations** for content, format, and in-demand skills and experience. Sometimes there are very specific expectations (i.e., an actor's resume), but often you have the flexibility to arrange your resume in the way you feel best reflects your experience.

KNOW YOUR VALUE

A strong resume goes beyond listing your work history- it should show off your strengths and uniqueness. Start with an honest assessment of **what makes you worth hiring**- and make sure your resume reflects this. Choose your 3 or 4 top skills- communication, organization, expert Photoshop abilities, for example. This will become your message. You may explicitly state your message in an Objective or Summary, but more importantly, your message will help you decide what to include, what to cut, and how to arrange your resume.

MAKE IT LOOK GOOD

Your resume has to reflect your experience, but it is also a branding opportunity. If you have a portfolio, website, or business card, be sure they all fit together visually. If you are in a portfolio-based field, be sure that your resume is designed to match your type treatment and color scheme.

THINK OUTSIDE THE PAGE

A print resume is no longer the center of a job search. Online resumes and portfolios are standard at this point. Embed links in your PDF or website so you can link to companies you have worked for, examples of your work, or anything else **(professional)** you can think of.

GET FEEDBACK

When you spend hours on your resume, sometimes it's hard to see your own mistakes. Be sure to have at least two professionals review your resume before you send it out. This can be your instructors, supervisors, or Career Initiatives staff.   They will help check for errors, but can also help you judge whether your resume is representing you well.

DESCRIBING YOUR WORK

Write job descriptions carefully so they paint a clear and accurate picture of your role on the job. Go beyond 'responsibilities' to think about what you contributed.

- Use bullets to make descriptions easy to read.

- Write in phrases, not sentences.

- Start with strong, action verbs.

- A cheat sheet is available on another PDF if you get stuck.

- Provide context. Try to include the who, what, why, and how often for each duty. Who were you calling? What were you copying? Why were you filing papers?

Think about **why your job was necessary for the company to operate**, what you were complimented or praised for, and what you were proudest of on the job.

FORMAT/DESIGN TIPS

There are a few general rules for anyone thinking about resume format and design:

- Font size should not go smaller than 10 or larger than 12.

- Avoid cursive or other hard to read fonts.

- Bold, underlining, and indents are all good ways to separate content. But centering your content is not ideal and can make it harder to read.

- Keep it simple. Good design adds to a resume and bad design definitely detracts. Avoid background images or large, distracting design. Simple use of color, lines, and spacing is usually all you need.

- Know Illustrator/In Design/Photoshop? Use them! If you can use them well, don't feel tied to a Word document.

- Templates: don't use them. This is a good way to guarantee that your resume looks just like someone else's! They also make it hard to move content around, and we definitely want content to be mobile. You can do just as well on your own.

COVER LETTERS

Cover letters should always accompany a resume- whether or not a company specifically asks for them. A good cover letter will add something to the application. It should cover:

1. What are you applying for?

2. Why are you interested?

3. Why are you the person for the job?

Cover letters allow you to tie your experiences in to the job at hand. If you have a job description, start by mapping out skills required to do the job, and how you can show them that you have the skills they need.

Then work this into a 3 – 4 paragraph letter. Research the company you are applying to, and integrate what you learn into the cover letter to show how you would fit with their main initiatives. Take a look at the guide on our website for an idea about how to break it down. But the standard rules apply- make sure it's **free of errors, well written, and interesting to read.**

Job Duties and Requirements

Evidence You Can Do It

Your Name
2003 South Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
312-555-1992
aemmstudent@gmail.com

June 2, 2010

Name and Title of Recruiter
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____, (do not say "To Whom it May Concern"!)

Paragraph one: Your first paragraph relays important logistic information and sets the tone for your cover letter. Start by indicating what you are applying for and how you heard about it. If you were referred by someone connected to the company, mention their name here. End the first paragraph with an overview of your interest and qualifications- consider it your thesis statement or message.

Paragraph two: Use this paragraph to elaborate on your background. Don't simply regurgitate what is in your resume. Start by referring back to your resume and giving a brief, one sentence overview of your background. Now choose one or two experiences- academic, work, internship, or extracurricular- to elaborate on and tie into the position.

Paragraph three: Tie your experiences in with the position and company. Research the company and the position so you know what they are looking for. Prove that you are a fit.

Final paragraph: End the letter by thanking the company for their time and reiterating your interest in an interview.

Sincerely,

(signature if mailed)
Your Name

ACTION VERBS

COMMUNICATION/PEOPLE SKILLS

Addressed	Edited	Participated
Advertised	Elicited	Persuaded
Arbitrated	Enlisted	Presented
Arranged	Explained	Promoted
Articulated	Expressed	Proposed
Authored	Formulated	Publicized
Clarified	Furnished	Reconciled
Collaborated	Incorporated	Recruited
Communicated	Influenced	Referred
Composed	Interacted	Reinforced
Condensed	Interpreted	Reported
Conferred	Interviewed	Resolved
Consulted	Involved	Responded
Contacted	Joined	Solicited
Conveyed	Judged	Specified
Convinced	Lectured	Spoke
Corresponded	Listened	Suggested
Debated	Marketed	Summarized
Defined	Mediated	Synthesized
Developed	Moderated	Translated
Directed	Negotiated	Wrote
Discussed	Observed	
Drafted	Outlined	

CREATIVE SKILLS

Acted	Displayed	Invented
Adapted	Drew	Modeled
Began	Entertained	Modified
Combined	Established	Originated
Composed	Fashioned	Performed
Conceptualized	Formulated	Photographed
Condensed	Founded	Planned
Created	Illustrated	Revised
Customized	Initiated	Revitalized
Designed	Instituted	Shaped
Developed	Integrated	Solved
Directed	Introduced	

HELPING SKILLS

Adapted	Demonstrated	Motivated
Advocated	Diagnosed	Prevented
Aided	Educated	Provided
Answered	Encouraged	Referred
Arranged	Ensured	Rehabilitated
Assessed	Expedited	Represented
Assisted	Facilitated	Resolved
Clarified	Familiarized	Simplified
Coached	Furthered	Supplied
Collaborated	Guided	Supported
Contributed	Helped	Volunteered
Cooperated	Insured	
Counseled	Intervened	

DATA/FINANCIAL SKILLS

Administered	Computed	Netted
Adjusted	Conserved	Planned
Allocated	Corrected	Prepared
Analyzed	Determined	Programmed
Appraised	Developed	Projected
Assessed	Estimated	Qualified
Audited	Forecasted	Reconciled
Balanced	Managed	Reduced
Budgeted	Marketed	Researched
Calculated	Measured	Retrieved

MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Administered
Analyzed
Appointed
Approved
Assigned
Attained
Authorized
Chaired
Considered
Consolidated
Contracted
Controlled
Converted
Coordinated
Decided
Delegated
Developed
Directed
Eliminated
Emphasized

Enforced
Enhanced
Established
Executed
Generated
Handled
Headed
Hired
Hosted
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Initiated
Inspected
Instituted
Led
Managed
Merged
Motivated
Navigated

Organized
Originated
Overhauled
Oversaw
Planned
Presided
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Reorganized
Replaced
Restored
Reviewed
Scheduled
Secured
Selected
Streamlined
Strengthened
Supervised
Terminated

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Approved
Arranged
Catalogued
Categorized
Charted
Classified
Coded
Collected
Compiled
Corrected
Corresponded
Distributed
Executed
Filed
Generated

Incorporated
Inspected
Logged
Maintained
Monitored
Obtained
Operated
Ordered
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Provided
Purchased
Recorded
Registered

Reserved
Responded
Reviewed
Routed
Scheduled
Screened
Submitted
Supplied
Standardized
Systematized
Updated
Validated
Verified

RESEARCH SKILLS

Analyzed
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Conducted
Critiqued
Detected
Determined
Diagnosed
Evaluated
Examined

Experimented
Explored
Extracted
Formulated
Gathered
Inspected
Interviewed
Invented
Investigated
Located
Measured

Organized
Researched
Reviewed
Searched
Solved
Summarized
Surveyed
Systematized
Tested

TEACHING SKILLS

Adapted
Advised
Clarified
Coached
Communicated
Conducted
Coordinated
Critiqued
Developed
Enabled

Encouraged
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Focused
Guided
Individualized
Informed
Instilled
Instructed

Motivated
Persuaded
Simulated
Stimulated
Taught
Tested
Trained
Transmitted
Tutored

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Adapted
Applied
Assembled
Built
Calculated
Computed
Conserved
Constructed
Converted
Debugged
Designed
Determined

Developed
Engineered
Fabricated
Fortified
Installed
Maintained
Operated
Overhauled
Printed
Programmed
Rectified
Remodeled

Regulated
Repaired
Replaced
Restored
Solved
Specialized
Standardized
Studied
Upgraded
Utilized