

Guide to Resume Writing

Strategies and Best Practices

Northwestern College Center for Calling & Career

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RESUME OVERVIEW

There is no single right way to do a resume. This guide will give you an overview of current best practices in resume writing and show you some examples to give you ideas. It will help you avoid common resume pitfalls and create a document that will represent your skills and abilities well. This guide is meant to equip you to make strategic decisions as you create a resume that will suit your specific career needs.

The following pages will help you understand the type of information that is commonly included on a resume. Creating your own resume means that you will consider carefully whether or not a particular section applies to you; you will also carefully consider the content it should contain if you include it. Common resume sections are:

Heading
Objective, Summary or Highlights
Education, Training, Professional Development
Experience (academic experience as well as Work, Volunteer, or Internship experience)
Awards and Honors
Community Service
Extra-Curricular involvements

In addition to determining content, you'll also need to consider format. This guide will show you three common formats you may wish to consider:

Chronological (experiences listed in reverse chronological order)
Functional (skills emphasized over experiences)
Combination (elements of both)

Be strategic about what you include on your resume. Everything should have a purpose and value to the reader. You have a unique story to tell, so there will not be one resume style or format that fits every job seeker. Instead, consider the types of things commonly seen on a resume, and ask yourself if they apply to you. Take ownership of your resume content and format so that it becomes the best reflection of what you have to offer a prospective employer.

GENERAL RESUME PRINCIPLES

- Content first, format second. Decide WHAT you need to say, and then pick a format that enhances that message and makes it easy for the reader to pick up relevant information.
- Relevance to the employer matters more than anything else. Your resume content should show that you understand what skills and knowledge matter to each job and employer. If you fill your resume with irrelevant content, you're sending the message that you don't understand what it takes to be successful in that job or industry.
- Tweak and customize your resume for every job and employer. You may even consider having two resumes if you are seeking two very different types of jobs. For example, the skills you

would reflect on an accounting resume would be different from what you would reflect on a customer service resume.

- Typographical errors are a major complaint of recruiters. Have other people proofread your resume.
- Become familiar with the KEYWORDS of your major/industry. Keywords are the “hot” words associated with a specific industry, profession, personality or personal characteristics, or job function. They are generally nouns, short phrases, abbreviations, or acronyms. When used effectively, a keyword shows that you know how to apply your knowledge, and allows you to communicate an entire message with just a word or two.
- Infuse your resume and cover letter with keywords, used correctly. This is especially important on e-resumes, where scanning for keywords is how recruiters identify potential candidates.

TOP TEN THINGS YOUR RESUME SHOULD BE

1. **Employer Centered:** Your resume should tell the employer what they need to know to determine if they want to interview you. Your resume is a marketing tool, not an autobiography.
2. **Focused:** Include an objective for a single job target. This is the “thesis sentence” of the resume. It should clearly state what sort of job you are looking to get. There is no “one-size-fits-all” resume. Everything on the resume should relate to the job target.
3. **Strategic:** Things should be listed in order of importance to the objective. Always make your strongest case first—list the skills that most relate to your job target right away. Use a format that best allows you to showcase your skills (not necessarily in chronological order). Remember that not all experiences have equal value in demonstrating skills.
4. **Skills Based:** Demonstrate your skills as they relate to the position you are seeking. That means you have to know the skills required for the position – look at job descriptions or check out www.iseek.org to find out more about types of positions.
5. **Inclusive:** You are not limited to showing paid positions. You may include internships, volunteer experiences, special training, extra curriculars, etc. The criterion for inclusion is whether or not the experience has significantly prepared you for the type of position you seek.
6. **Relevant:** Do not include something just because “it was on the template”. You must know why every item on your resume is there, and you must do everything you can to make sure the reader will know why it is there, too. Don’t waste space on things that don’t make a case for your employability.
7. **Brief but Descriptive:** Write as powerfully, clearly, and concisely as possible. Communicate essentials in the least amount of words. You want them to READ, not SKIM.
8. **Organized and Logical:** Your resume must make sense. It should be formatted and organized in a way that is easy to follow, and that lets the reader easily spot key information.
9. **Grammatically Correct:** Proofread at least twice and then have at least two other people proofread also. Be consistent in your use of formatting, punctuation and verb tense.
10. **Visually Appealing:** A good resume is both eye catching and functional. Make sure design elements do not distract from the information being presented. Choose a font size that is easily readable.

A WORD ABOUT RESUME FORMATS

There are three basic resume formats: chronological, functional, or combination. While any of them is acceptable, you may find that one particular format suits your needs better than another.

- The **chronological** resume focuses more on dates, positions and duties in reverse chronological order and is best suited for someone with much work experience that relates to one's goals or objectives.
- A **functional** resume emphasizes transferable skills, qualifications and accomplishments and is good if you lack work experience or are trying to enter a new occupation.
- A combination resume combines the best elements of both formats. It is a good choice for recent graduates with some job experience.

You can schedule a resume consultation by stopping by at Career Development N4140, or by calling our office at 651.631.5265. You can also get a quick resume review at one of our frequent Resume Blitz events. Watch CareerConnect for dates and times.

PARTS OF A RESUME

HEADING

Include the following parts in your resume heading:

Name

- Easily visible, at the top, in a larger font.

Single Address

- Good for about 6 months from the date your resume is created.
- Should be an address where you can reliably receive mail.
- Remember, most employers will contact you via phone or email, so the address just needs to work. It doesn't have to be where you will be living for the next 6 months.

Phone number

- Single phone number
- Indicate if it's your cell phone so employers won't be confused by "out of area code" numbers.
- Make sure your voice mail greeting is extremely professional.
- Use the phone number where you will most reliably receive messages.

Email

- Use a professional email address, preferably related to your name.
- Do not use numbers that hint at your age or special dates in your life. These are obvious and unprofessional.
- Minimize the use of numbers and characters. You should be able to give out your email address over the phone and have it easily understood in order to minimize the chance of error.
- You may wish to consider establishing an email just for the job search to minimize the chances of missing something important. Sign up for RSS feeds and other notices, and shut it down when your job search has ended.

E-Portfolio (optional)

- Include the address of your e-portfolio if you have one.

Sample Headings

Sally Jo Student
3003 Snelling Avenue North
Saint Paul, MN 55113
sjstudent@gmail.com
651.111.2222

Sally Jo Student

3003 Snelling Avenue North | St. Paul, MN 55113 | sjstudent@gmail.com | 651.111.2222

SALLY JO STUDENT

3003 Snelling Avenue North
St. Paul, MN 55113

sjstudent@gmail.com
651.111.2222

OBJECTIVES, SUMMARIES, & HIGHLIGHTS

Objectives, summaries, and highlights help the employer quickly see what you want to do and what you can offer. You may use all of them, or only those that suit you. The Career Development Center strongly recommends the use of an objective to aid the employer in grasping your employment goals and to aid you, the writer, in strategically determining resume content. A “highlights” or “summary of qualifications” section lists the key achievements, skills, traits, and experience relevant to the positions for which you are applying. This shows the employer you understand what they need and that you are qualified for the job.

There are several purposes for these sections:

- Describes the job you want and qualifications you have as they relate to the job you seek.
- Similar to the back of a book, it motivates the reader to keep reading.
- A customized objective or summary describes why you are the perfect candidate for the job and can help your resume stand out from the crowd.
- A well written objective or similar section also helps you determine what content needs to go in other sections of your resume in order to support and prove statements made.
- These sections must be clear, concise, focused, exciting and readable within 30 seconds.
- They **MUST** be related to the stated or implied needs of the employer and the position. No matter how good you are at something, if it doesn't matter to the employer, it's not going to help your job search.

It is tempting to write vague, open-ended statements to “not miss any chances”. Doing so will more likely result in your appearing undirected and unclear about the type of job you want, and more importantly, it will make you seem like you have no clue what sort of person would be a good fit for the company and the position.

Avoid meaningless phrases like:

- a challenging position
- opportunity for growth/advancement
- working with people
- a progressive company
- a fast growing organization
- contribute to the bottom line
- enhance the vision of the company
- entry level/full time

Content you may include:

- Prior experience
- Skills and abilities stated or implied in the job description
- Personality traits or values that are relevant to the job
- Areas of expertise or knowledge
- Educational background

REMEMBER: *Anything you say you can do in the objective, highlights or summary section **MUST** be demonstrated in the examples you give in other parts of your resume. Failure to do so makes it difficult for the employer to know if you actually possess the qualifications you are claiming.*

Sample Objectives

Conference and Program Planning position using prior conference planning and project management experience.

Advising position utilizing student service experience and a proven ability and commitment to apply excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Assistant Product Manager position using business education, marketing experience and well developed communication skills and detail orientation.

Accounting position where strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and producing timely results are rewarded.

Management Trainee position. Can contribute well-developed speaking and writing skills, knowledge of marketing techniques, and understanding of consumer behavior.

Sample Summaries and Highlights

Highlights

- Coordinated four semi-annual student organization conferences increasing attendance by 30%-40% from prior years.
- Developed media marketing packages for print, campus radio and student online portal.
- Integrated use of e-mail and organization web-sites for registration and publicity.
- Supervised teams of two to fourteen people to achieve specific goals.
- Designed and produced program brochures.

Skill Summary

- Market research, strategic planning, and promotional campaign experience.
- Extensive technology skills including Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Proven verbal and written communication skills.
- Exceptional work ethic and ability to work independently or as part of a dynamic team.
-

Summary of Qualifications

Highly motivated college graduate with marketing and sales experience in both for-profit and non-sectors. Strong entrepreneurial initiative with ability to manage all aspects of an independent business including sales, operations, finances, and customer relations. Superior communication and meeting facilitation skills.

EDUCATION, TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- List institution name, post secondary degree(s) received and dates earned or expected in reverse chronological order.
- State your graduation month and year, even if it's in the future.
- Include major, minor, area of concentration, specialization, or certifications. List city and state when looking outside of state where employers may be unfamiliar with the location of your college.
- Don't include institutions you attended, but didn't receive a degree from (unless the area of study was highly relevant), GPAs under 3.0, or span of years enrolled.
- Place this information at the top of your resume if you are a new grad or seeking an internship.
- Education goes at the bottom of your resume if you have lots of experience, or if your degree is substantially unrelated to the position you seek
- Make sure your degree is easy to spot – it is what the reader is most interested in knowing. You may spell out (e.g. Bachelor of Art or Bachelor of Science) or abbreviate (BA, BS)
- Include your GPA if it's above 3.0
- Do not include high school unless there's a strategic reason for doing so, such as you're applying to work there or your high school was in another country.
- You may also include professional development, specialized seminars or workshops, or additional licensures or certifications if they are relevant.

Sample Education, Training & Professional Development Entries

Bachelor of Science, Accounting, Summa cum Laude
Second Major in Bible; Minor in MIS
Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2010

Bachelor of Arts, Graphic Design, Second Major in Art
Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN Dec 2009 GPA 3.65

Minnesota CPR Certification (license valid through April 2011)

Conference Presenter, American Marketing Association National Conference
Chicago, IL April 2007

Conference Attendee, National Religious Broadcaster's Annual Conference
Nashville, TN 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009

Charter Member, **Toastmaster's International**, MN Chapter 351, St. Paul, MN, 2007 – present

Remember, use bolding, underlining and other formatting to draw the reader's attention to what you want them to see.

EXPERIENCES – Academic & Educational

For most new grads, your education is the primary asset you have to offer an employer, yet many new professionals overlook this rich source of “proof of employability”. Expanding your **coursework** section to show course highlights allows you to demonstrate what knowledge you have acquired. **Projects and presentations** represent the type of work you will do in the professional world. In fact, your educational experiences may actually be the very best representation of your job-relevant skills and abilities.

Consider expanding the education section of your resume when it:

- demonstrates a powerful area of qualifications
- contains skills/experiences that relate directly or indirectly to the job being sought
- highlights important skills that are not adequately demonstrated within the other parts of your resume

The education section may be longer than other parts of the resume if education is your main sales point.

Sample Project and Presentation Statements

Describe the depth and scope of the project just as you would describe tasks you performed in a job.

COMPUTER RELATED PROJECTS

- Created Visual Basic interface in semester-long team project. Collaborated with users to determine needs through several on-site visits. Interfaced existing database with existing esoteric on-site scheduling program.
- Programmed several accounting modules used by student clubs and tested I/O results. Program interface is currently being used by three organizations with a zero error rate over six weeks.
- Completed projects using C++ object-oriented programs and implementing class, structure, inheritance, overloading, and templates advanced Input and Output techniques. Frequently led group projects.

ACCOUNTING PROJECTS

- Analyzed financial statements of a local small business. Computed ratios and compared to industry benchmarks. Prepared program to audit risks. Used substantive testing and Microsoft Access and Excel as well as QuickBooks regularly.
- Reviewed transactions and financial statements for the Village of Oconomowoc Lake. Adjusted and closed books. Redesigned budget lines for new and ongoing business needs. Prepared new financial statements. Worked effectively within a team.

MARKETING PROJECTS

- Analyzed case study and developed marketing mix of recommendations which included product, price, promotion, and distribution.
- Presented findings in a formal class presentation using PowerPoint software.
- Designed, administered, coded, and analyzed a marketing research survey.

Sample Course Descriptions and Highlights

Don't just list coursework; no one is surprised to see that Finance majors took Macro Economics or Finance I & II. Instead, describe what you've learned. When you can describe the key points of your education, and use keywords to do so, your reader finds it easier to believe that you both understand and know how to apply what you have learned. Take a look at the examples below for some ideas.

OBJECTIVE: Psychology related position using previous mental health experience, dedication, and ability to help people with problem solving and goal setting.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Minor: Sociology Major GPA 3.5
Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2002

Learned various aspects of human development, behavior and theoretical application.

- Overview of Counseling Skills – Studied widely used theories. Practiced eye contact, open-ended questions, summarizing, reflecting feelings and providing encouragement.
- Psychopathology – Gained knowledge of various mental and psychological disabilities such as schizophrenia, depression, and bi-polar disorder.
- Applied Behavior Analysis – Studied and practiced various forms of behavioral treatment methods such as behavioral modeling and use of reinforcement schedules.

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OBJECTIVE: Corporate training position using prior training experience and diversity focused education.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Concentration in Journalism GPA 3.6
Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2006

Multicultural/Diversity Communication Coursework – Studied and presented on issues such as ethnocentrism, racism, and ageism. Gained awareness of verbal and nonverbal communications specific to various cultures and subcultures. Participated in and conducted several sensitivity/awareness raising activities.

Mediation/Peace Certification Coursework – Gained knowledge of and practiced various mediation and peace keeping techniques. Utilized mediation process in critiquing and participating in role-plays of potentially hostile disputes.

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OBJECTIVE: Business Analyst position in transportation or distribution field using strong analytical and problem solving skills.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Business

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN December 2009

- Examined corporate business financial statements in several courses and made profitability projections.
- Multiple classes exploring issues of corporate ethics and best practices trends.
- Studied economics with a focus on economic development and effective policy analysis

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OBJECTIVE:

Staff Writer/Reporter position using well developed research abilities and oral and written communication skills.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, History

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2002

- Researched various topics using print media, internet, and personal interviews.
- Analyzed materials and information to produce reports for classes and oral presentations.

EXPERIENCES - Work, Volunteer, & Internship

Your experience section(s) describes to an employer skills and abilities you have developed and applied in various settings. These should be chosen based on an understanding of what things you have done in the past related to or prove you ability to do the job you hope to have in the future.

Remember these key points:

- All experience counts – paid, unpaid, volunteer, internship, course projects, presentations, self study. Experience is experience, period, and when it comes to illustrating skills, your paid employment may be the least relevant early in your career.
- Don't list responsibilities; list accomplishments and outcomes. Employers don't want to know what you were *supposed* to do (responsibilities); they want to know what you've actually done (accomplishments).
- Include only those aspects of each experience that illustrate how you applied job relevant skills and knowledge in real life situations. No matter how good a skill is, if it's not valuable to the employer, it doesn't belong on the resume.
- Make sure that you include enough adjectives to adequately describe your experience. You want to show depth and scope of experience, and numbers and descriptors help you do that.
- Give each experience a title, organization name, place, and dates. If you didn't have an official title, use a *descriptive* title that will help the reader understand your role. Lead with the title rather than the business name or the dates of the experience.
- Make your points in the order of importance to the job you're applying for. Use more than one section if it's helpful in pulling out the most relevant experiences.
- You control how much you say about each experience. Significant experiences go near the top, with more detail. Supporting experiences go near the bottom, with less detail, or even NO detail.
- The amount that you say about an experience shows how important you think it is in the context of the job you're applying for. Don't give everything equal space unless it actually has equal value to the reader. Say more about the most related experiences and less about the unrelated ones.

DEVELOPING EXPERIENCE DESCRIPTIONS

Before describing your experiences, it is important to identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities developed in those experiences that relate to your career objective. Plan on spending a fairly substantial amount of time examining these questions so that you begin your resume writing with plenty of powerful content to choose from. In fact, you may want to actually create some sort of journal where you write down the knowledge, skills, and abilities that your experiences speak to, because it's much easier to edit too much information than to struggle to fill gaps on your resume.

You won't necessarily *include* everything you identify, but it's good to have a large body of information to start with.

Use the following questions to help analyze your experiences:

- What skills did you develop or use? (oral or written communication, organization, planning, or administration, problem solving, creativity, technology, interpersonal skills, and so forth)
- In what way did you use those skills?
- What was the outcome when you applied your skills and abilities
- Did you work with co-workers? Demonstrate teamwork/teambuilding?
- Did you train, supervise or assume leadership roles?
- Did you solve problems? Make decisions or recommendations?
- Did you gather and/or analyze information?
- How well were you able to meet deadlines and handle pressure?
- Did you utilize and/or develop technical/computer skills?
- Did you produce documents and/or reports?
- Can you quantify the results of your work? (number of customers served, percentage increase in sales, number of employees supervised, frequency of using the named skill)

Guidelines for writing your descriptions:

- Use **bold type**, underlining, and CAPITALIZATIONS to highlight information, and apply these stylistic elements consistently across your resume for these headings. Consistent format helps your reader understand what you are communicating.
- Write in a telegraphic style (short phrases). Complete sentences are not needed.
- You may use bullet points or paragraphs. Aim for the format that makes it easy to grasp key information and that fits well on the page.
- Begin each statement with an action verb.
- Write objectively - no I's, me's, my's, etc.
- Don't vary verb tense within an experience section.
- Don't just list responsibilities. Describe what you did, and how you did it. Highlight the skills that relate to the job you seek.
- **Don't include** street address, zip codes, phone numbers, names of supervisors or reasons for leaving prior positions. You will only need this information for applications.

ORGANIZING YOUR RESUME BY CREATING EXPERIENCE HEADINGS

Once you have your experience statements, you want to organize how you will present them on your resume. You will accomplish this by using experience headings. Divide your experiences into sections to:

- help your reader find what is most relevant
- enable you to move older, but more relevant experiences to earlier sections in the resume
- make your main areas of experience easy to spot

There is no one single method of choosing headings – consider what works best and makes your overall message clear and strong. You could use headings such as Relevant Experience, or Related Experience. You could also consider using skill words from your career field or transferable skill words. Finance Experience or Counseling Experience.

Sample Experience Headings

Relevant Experience
Related Experience
Finance Skills
Leadership Skills

Interpersonal Skills
Other Business Experience
Cross-cultural Skills and Experience
Planning and Administration Skills

Sample Experience Statements

Advertising Sales Manager, The University Post, Minneapolis, MN, September 2000-June 2001
Controlled advertising for biweekly college newspaper with circulation of 20,000. Increased advertising space revenue by 20%. Generated 20 additional advertisers increasing base by 25%. Trained new sales force. Streamlined new billing system.

Desk Clerk, The Sleeping Inn, Roseville, MN, Summers 1999-2001

- Managed registration desk of hotel averaging 200 guest rooms per night
- Reserved rooms on computerized system and modified existing reservations
- Solved reservation and service problems; received 2 employee of the month recognitions
- Directed room service and housekeeping functions to ensure guest comfort.
- Substantially reduced check-in and check-out time by revamping procedure.
- Supervised assistant desk clerk.

Server, August 1999-June 2001
Alice's Coffee Shop, St. Paul, MN
Harry's Sports Bar, Andover, MN

Provided quality customer service in fast paced team environment. Trained new staff. Utilized organizational and problem solving skills to prioritize multiple responsibilities. Received numerous compliments on service from employer and customers.

It is acceptable to combine similar positions that do not contain primary information. This example demonstrates similar positions with one full description.

Research Assistant (Intern), City Gas and Electric, St. Paul, MN June 2001 - present

- Prepare reports for regulatory commissions, management, and stockholders.
- Enhance methods and formats for presenting statistical information in written reports.
- Perform data entry using MS Excel, Access, and QuickBooks.

Le Grand Marketing, Duluth, MN March 2001 - present

(Food Service Brokerage with over 100 clients and \$1 million in annual sales)

Administrative Supervisor

Promoted from Assistant in June 2001. Supervise staff including hiring, training, and scheduling.

Serve as liaison between over 100 clients and 40 distributors. Solve ordering problems to provide quality service. Order office supplies for staff of 25.

Administrative Assistant

Answered client inquiries over the phone and in person. Created more efficient filing system.

Developed and maintained company literature library. Performed data entry. Utilized well-developed organizational and multi-tasking skills in various administrative areas.

ACTION VERBS

accomplished	generated	recommended
achieved	handled	reduced
adapted	identified	reorganized
administered	implemented	reported
analyzed	improved	restructured
approved	increased	revamped
arranged	instructed	reviewed
assisted	interpreted	revised
balanced	lectured	saved
calculated	led	scheduled
communicated	maintained	selected
compiled	managed	set up
completed	motivated	simplified
conducted	negotiated	solved
constructed	observed	streamlined
controlled	operated	strengthened
coordinated	organized	structured
created	originated	supervised
decreased	participated	taught
delegated	performed	tested
demonstrated	planned	trained
designed	prepared	translated
determined	presented	tutored
developed	produced	uncovered
directed	programmed	updated
eliminated	promoted	upgraded
established	proved	utilized
evaluated	provided	verified
facilitated	qualified	won
formulated	received	wrote

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Academic awards can be included under education. You need not list everything, and shouldn't list things that won't have meaning to the reader.

COMMUNITY SERVICE and EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENTS

- Don't list these unless they are substantive. You'll be embarrassed if you list one 2-hour experience under community service, and then have to admit in an interview that's all that it was.
- Give each experience a title, organization, place, and dates. Keeping the format the same makes it easy for the reader to pick up on the information.
- Even these things should be strategic. Don't list your hobbies, interests, etc. unless they tell the employer something that will help you get an interview or shows how you fit into the company culture.

RESUME CRITIQUE

Always seek out constructive feedback on your resume before submitting it to employers. Use a current and customized resume – don't just recycle old information that isn't adjusted for the current job search and each specific employer.

See a CDC counselor for a professional critique. Get multiple critiques focusing on people who know about the career field, grammar, writing resumes, and how to market content. Synthesize the information you receive and make strategic decisions about what best suits your particular situation. Remember, there is no one right way to do a resume, but there are a few mistakes to avoid. Use the checklist below to evaluate your resume readiness.

Content Guidelines

- Contact information is current and will stay current for about 6 months (the end of the resume lifespan for an employer).
- Email address is professional. Avoid numbers that signal significant dates or years of birth. If you can't relay it easily when speaking, it's not going to work well in writing either.
- Resume content and transferable skills relate to the job being sought. Anything else is a waste of valuable resume real estate.
- Results and achievements are shown. Adjectives and descriptive words are used to convey depth and scope of experience.
- If a career objective is used, it is specific and gives focus to the resume.
- All statements on the resume relate to the requirements of the job and "prove" any claims made in the objective or summary statement.

Appearance Guidelines

- Resume format is not cramped or empty. There is balance of white space and words.
- Bold type, underlining, and CAPITALIZATIONS are used highlight information. These stylistic elements are applied consistently and used to draw attention to important headings and subheadings.
- The font is non-decorative (such as Times or Helvetica) and the text font size is 10-12 points. Generally speaking, a smaller font looks more professional; too large looks juvenile.
- If printed, the resume uses high quality paper and a professional color such as white, or ivory. DO NOT use low quality, generic printer paper. If there is a second page, it includes the candidate's name and the page number on it.
- References (if included) are on a page separate from main resume content, with the same heading as Page 1 of the resume.

Length Guidelines

Aim for content that is essential, powerfully written, and concise. When the content is sharp, the length is less of an issue. Resumes (not curriculum vitas) should typically be confined to one page. However, in some fields it is okay to have two pages, but never more than two pages. Resume length is influenced by industry and level of experience. Most business positions with less than 7 years experience should be a single page.

- Name and page number are on second page (if there is one).
- Paragraphs are no longer than eight to ten lines or five to seven bullets. Too much information and the reader will stop actually reading.

Writing Style Guidelines

- There are no grammar, spelling, or formatting errors.
- There resume is written in concise phrases. Complete sentences are not necessary.
- Writing is objective - no I's, me's, my's, etc.
- Verb tense is consistent within sections/entries.
- Action verbs and keywords are used liberally.
- Grammar and punctuation is correct and consistent throughout (e.g., periods and capital letters are used in the same way).

Organization Guidelines

- The organization of experiences is immediately obvious and meaningful. The reader can scan all the key points in seconds.
- The most important material with greatest amount of detail is at the beginning of each job description and resume section.
- Format makes the main messages of the resume easier to grasp.

Bottom Line: Does the resume tell the employer why you qualify for the job?

ELECTRONIC RESUMES

A search friendly electronic resume has become an essential job hunting tool. More than 95% of large companies, and a growing number of small ones, use computers to sort, rank and prioritize the hundreds of resumes they receive. You will want to develop BOTH kinds of resumes.

When hiring managers need to fill a position, they search their resume databases for those that match the **keywords** (the same way you search the web with *Google* or other search engines) that describe the qualifications they want in a candidate. The more keywords found in your resume, the stronger it will be weighted in the ranking of the search results. Resume banks like Monster, HotJobs, and Career Builder also allow recruiters to search resumes in this way.

Computer software extracts from your electronic/text resume a summary of basic information, pulling out factors like your name, contact information, skills, work history, years of experience, and education. Scanned resumes and their extracted summaries aren't actually reviewed by a real person until an HR specialist or recruiter searches the summaries by keywords to retrieve candidates who match the requirements of a job opening. The technology ranks candidates, from the most qualified to the least qualified. The relevant resumes get a wake-up call and pop to the recruiting screen, where human eyes take over the recruiting tasks.

Therefore, the goal of an electronic resume is slightly different than for a paper resume. The electronic resume is first intended to get you ranked high up on the results list in the search process, so that the recruiter will then actually look at your resume. You must describe your skills, education, and experiences using the keywords likely to be used by recruiters and hiring managers, or your resume won't be found and you won't get an interview.

How do you know if you should submit an electronic resume or your nicely formatted version? The key question is whether or not your resume will be first reviewed by a person or a computer.

- Thoroughly read the application instructions provided by the employer. If the employer asks you to fill out an online application or cut and paste your resume into a box, use the electronic version. It's likely a computer is getting the first "look".
- If you are sending your resume as an email attachment to a real person or to a smaller company, use a PDF version of your formatted resume. It's likely that it's being read by a real person first.
- When in doubt, submit both!

FORMAT

The format of the electronic/scannable resume is important. The software used to scan resumes tends to be disrupted by things like bolding, tabs, underlining, and so forth, so you'll want to avoid these things on your resume.

- Don't use multiple columns or "newspaper" format.
- Lines should be no longer than 65 characters.
- Keep layout and organization simple – don't confuse the computers!
- Use common, non-decorative fonts such as Times, Helvetica, Arial, Courier.
- Avoid italics, boldface, script, underlined passages, graphics, and shading.
- Capitalized words are okay.
- Avoid tabs if possible.

- Left justify text.
- Do not compress spaces between letters. Letters cannot touch each other.
- Avoid bullets, horizontal and vertical lines, parentheses/brackets, hyphens/dashes, and symbols.
- Your name should be the first readable item on each page and on its own line.
- Use standard address format below your name. List each phone number on its own line.

CONTENT

- All resume content will be scanned, so use keywords in as many places of your resume as you can.
- Spell out keywords AND use abbreviations. You never know which the recruiter will search for.
- Consider adding a "summary of accomplishments" section that focuses on results you achieved in your field rather than specific duties and responsibilities.
- A "Key Skills" section is also an option. The idea behind this section is to allow you to use more of the words, phrases, and jargon that resumes may be searched with by the potential employer. This section can simply be a list of key terms and phrases, separated by commas.
- To learn what people typically work with or do in the type of position you are applying for and to identify keywords that are hot in your industry research, make use of:
 - The words used in the actual job listing
 - Job descriptions specific to the position or for similar positions
 - WebPages for companies or organizations that hire people in the field
 - Lists of keywords you've searched for on the internet
 - Informational interviews with professionals
 - Company/organization literature

ACCOUNTING STUDENT

123 My Street Anywhere, MN 55111 astudent@students.nwc.edu 111.222.3333

OBJECTIVE: Senior accounting student with extensive technology experience and prior accounting internship seeks auditing position.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Accounting, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2009

Accounting Award: Excellence in "Principles of Accounting I and II"

Significant Coursework

Accounting information systems, financial statements, the accounting cycle, corporate accounting, cost accounting, present value techniques, long-term debt, investments, financial statement analysis, managerial accounting principles and systems, the techniques and methods of job order costing, standards, ethics, and legal responsibilities of an auditor. Completed company cycle by hand and in QuickBooks.

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

- Strong ability in QuickBooks Pro; More than 250 hours in accounting class projects using QuickBooks.
- Frequent use of Excel and PowerPoint for Business Management presentations and Advanced Accounting projects.

ACCOUNTING EXPERIENCE

Accounting Intern, MicroQuest, Summer 2008-present

- ACH three-million dollars a month in funds to over 200 vendors for school district 403b accounts
- Generated checks to investment companies and recorded general ledger entries for wire transfers using QuickBooks
- Reconcile bank statements to QuickBooks
- Interface with vendors to verify receipt of money
- Work with electronic funds transfer (EFS) in directing transfer of funds

Personal Bookkeeper, Alive Communications, Plymouth, MN, June 2006-March 2008

- Used QuickBooks to process monthly transactions
- Recorded accounts receivable/payable
- Reconciled bank statements

RELATED BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Assistant to Manager, Lund's and Byerly's Food Holding Inc., Minnetonka, MN, June 2006-Present

- Complied with OSHA and Corporate policies and assisted with quality control
- Completed quarterly inventory counts and organizing products
- Inventoried 700 piece product loads via truck deliveries such as Coke, SuperValu, and dairy deliveries
- Responded to requests of front end managers, customers, and other Byerly's stores via phone or personally

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Packing Volunteer, Feed My Starving Children, Plymouth, MN, Spring Semester 2007

FINANCE MAJOR

3003 Snelling Avenue North, Saint Paul, MN 55113

111.222.3333

ftmajor@students.nwc.edu

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Successful Finance graduate with demonstrated ability to apply knowledge of financial principles, provide effective customer service, and utilize well-developed analytical and problem-solving skills. Strong technical abilities, detail orientation and critical thinking. Performance-driven, goal-oriented leader with exceptional work ethic.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Finance, December 2010
Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota
GPA 3.68, Dean's List 2006-2008

SKILLS SUMMARY

Appraisals, Budget Analysis, Capital Services and Mergers & Acquisitions, Claims Analysis, Commercial Lending
Commercial Sales, Credit Management, Financial Analysis, Financial Reporting, Institutional Bond and Equity Sales
Investment Management, Marketing, Mergers and Acquisitions, Mortgage Loans, New Venture Analysis, Real Estate
Trust Management, Risk Analysis, taxation, Corporate and Personal Financial Planning, Investments, Cost Accounting and
Financial Analysis.

FINANCE EXPERIENCE

Finance Teaching Assistant, Business Department, Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota, Sept. 2009-present

- Teach principles of corporate finance, including NPV analysis and long-term financial planning, to individual college undergraduate business students
- Evaluate Finance and Economics course projects in support of college business professors
- Comply with FERPA confidentiality guidelines to process and maintain student records

Finance Intern, RG Corporate Solutions, Maple Grove, Minnesota, May-August 2010

- Conducted financial analyses as part of consulting team to Twin Cities small business community
- Assisted in preparing and presenting corporate financial planning seminars
- Sourced business development opportunities and created customer information database

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Music Academy Assistant, Northwestern College Academy of Music, St. Paul, Minnesota, September 2008-May 2009

- Hosted new students during Academy orientation programs
- Delivered quick solutions to students, parents, and other program attendees
- Provided highest quality customer service to Academy clients

Service Associate, Northwestern College Facilities Services, St. Paul, Minnesota, September 2006-October 2009

- Recognized for leadership abilities, teamwork, and strong work-ethic
- Maintained high GPA while working an average of 20 hours per week
- Demonstrated time-management and organizational skills for efficient and effective task completion
- Achieved consistent solid performance, safe environment, and quality customer service

SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Leadership: Completed Two-Year Leadership Development Program, Northwestern College, 2007-2009
Technology: Microsoft Access, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, QuickBooks, HTML, Windows and Mac Platforms
Distinctives: Public Speaking and Presentation, Organization and Administration

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Program Coordinator, Living Hope Ministries, Minneapolis, Minnesota, September 2008 - present

- Create Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to track volunteers
- Organize events including program meetings and volunteer training for groups of 10-50 people
- Mentor diverse groups of at-risk elementary students

GEN. BUSINESS STUDENT

222 E Avenue North • Minneapolis, MN 55411 • 111-113-1110 • business.student@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a business administration position in a non-profit serving at risk youth.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Business

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN projected graduation Dec 2009

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

QuickBooks, Excel, Banner (Oracle), Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Access

KEY SKILL SETS

Business Applications

- Regularly processed accounts receivable/payable and performed bank reconciliations
- Generated payroll checks for 30 employees on a weekly basis
- Created graphs, pivot tables and imported information in and from Excel for monthly sales summary reports
- Created and generated reports in MS Access, designed queries
- Imported databases to be used in mail merge function of Word
- Developed marketing plan with a team as part of a class project; made formal presentation using PowerPoint
- Performed company research and conducted a S.W.O.T. analysis of that organization
- Input data into Oracle based product (Banner); recognized by supervisor for accuracy

Organizational Skills

- Helped to streamline data entry processes, resulting in fewer errors and increased output
- Followed instructions on administrative tasks without being directly supervised
- Developed discipleship program for teens that incorporated money management skills that is still being implemented

Interpersonal Skills

- Encouraged and built mutual trust, respect, and cooperation among team members as a residential advisor and lead counselor
- Gave presentations to groups of 10-15 prospective students on a weekly basis
- Mediated interpersonal problems between residents

Intercultural Skills

- Lived in multicultural housing community established to encourage understanding and communication across diverse cultures such as Hmong, Native American, African-American and European-American
- Participated in focus groups to help identify needs of diverse populations
- Speak Spanish at a basic conversational level

WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Accounting Intern, Youth Enterprise, South Minneapolis, MN Summer 2008

Resident Assistant, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN 2007-2008

Admissions Ambassador, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN 2005-2008

Lead Counselor, Union Gospel Mission, St. Paul, MN 2005-2007

Young Life Staff Volunteer (400+ hours), Shoreview, MN September 2004-2006

Bob International-Business 3003 Snelling Ave. N., St. Paul, MN 55113 bib@nwc.edu 651.111.2222

SUMMARY

International Business graduate with extensive cross-cultural experience seeks operations position where leadership skills and orientation to excellence can be utilized.

EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

B. A. International Business - GPA 3.89 *Elected to Sigma Beta Delta International Honor Society*

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2009

- Improved international cultural awareness through classroom instruction and practical experience in 5 Central American, European and Asian countries
- Exposed to international manufacturing and vendor management through office and factory visits in China, Italy, and Mexico
- Increased understanding of corporate strategy, supply chain management, and marketing through corporate site visits and case study analysis
- Demonstrated quantitative skills through superior achievement in accounting and financial coursework
- Enhanced language skills through an 8-week Spanish immersion program in Costa Rica

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

Spanish: Speak, read, and write at an intermediate level

Mandarin Chinese: Speak at a basic level

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

International Ministries Intern, EQUIP, Atlanta, GA, July 2009 - Present

- Launch new conference site in Azerbaijan; first conference drew over 4,000 attendees
- Provide conference logistical support to EQUIP conference sites in 20 nations serving over 10,000 people
- Develop and maintain relationships with over 10 Country Coordinators in primarily Africa, Europe and the Middle East
- Redesign conference tracking system utilizing Microsoft Excel and Outlook
- Manage conference reporting and financial tracking systems

Fulfillment Manager (Summer Internship), Home Essentials, Hong Kong, May – July 2008

- Managed vendor and customer delivery schedules ; daily solved product delivery problems
- Reduced incomplete or late deliveries by over 50%
- Trained new full-time Fulfillment Supervisor to manage the order fulfillment program
- Implemented a higher performance quality standard within team

Volunteer Coordinator, Hospitality Center for the Chinese, St. Paul, MN Spring Semester 2009

- Conversed daily in Chinese with international students
- Coordinated schedules for staff of 40 volunteers and provided formal training

Teaching Assistant, Business Department, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN, Aug 2006-May 2008

- Communicated with 10+ Chinese organizations and businesses to plan and schedule 2-week
- China business trip for 25 participants
- Led 8-member Student Advisory Council for the Business Department
- Coordinated and promoted 12 guest lectures for the 250-student Business Department

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Assistant Resident Director, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN, Aug 2008- May 2009

- Supervised 8 Resident Assistants
- Planned and executed quarterly student events for 100-200 participants
- Served as Ex Officio member of Northwestern College Student Government

Student Leadership University Summer Staff, Washington D.C., 2008

Mary Marketing

3003 Snelling Ave. N
Saint Paul, MN 55113

651.111.9999
mjmarketing@students.nwc.edu

OBJECTIVE/HIGHLIGHTS

Successful marketing professional with experience in market research, promotions, sales, and client relations. Seeking position where attaining established goals through building client relationships is rewarded.

- Conducted several market research studies
- Experienced in design and implementation of marketing strategies and promotions
- Able to juggle multiple projects while handling clients in professional manner

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, **Marketing**, 2010
Northwestern College, Saint Paul, MN
Cumulative GPA: 3.8

- Course projects included market research for product launch in foreign market, creating marketing plans independently as well as in a team environment, making formal presentations for peers and faculty
- Awarded second place in campus-wide competition to create an innovative marketing plan for an existing student group

MARKETING EXPERIENCE

Marketing Assistant, Career Development Center, Northwestern College
Saint Paul, MN, August 2007 to Present

Survey student body to determine best methods for marketing career events and services. Design and implement marketing strategies to students, staff, faculty, and prospective employers. Coordinate and promote on campus career events for groups of 5 to 250 participants. Create print and multimedia marketing tools. Advise senior staff regarding effective marketing strategies to students. Collaborate with college Marketing & Communications to design and launch new Career Center brand. Manage reception function in office visited by an average of 150 walk in clients weekly.

Events and Marketing Intern, Clay County Regional Events Center
Spencer, Iowa, Summer 2007

Conducted market research of competitive vendors. Supervised wedding receptions, concerts, and sporting events. Sold tickets via phone and in-person with consistent customer service. Exceeded weekly sales quotas 85% of the time. Created and updated media guide including media contact information. Documented print media of venue and competitors. Prepared and sent large mass-mailings to customers efficiently.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Shift Manager, ProGo Convenience Store, Sioux Falls, SD, Summer 2007
Office Assistant, South O'Brien Insurance Company, St. Paul, MN, Summer 2006

Mary Marketing
3003 Snelling Ave. N
Saint Paul, MN 55113
651.111.9999
mjmarketing@students.nwc.edu

(Sample of an Electronic Resume)
(note that lines do not exceed 65 characters)

SKILL SUMMARY

Marketing major, multi-tasking, client account management, branding, market strategy, consumer behavior, econometrics, applied behavioral economics, competitive market analysis, strategic planning skills, relationship building, business development, partnerships, alliances, direct marketing, channel marketing.

OBJECTIVE AND HIGHLIGHTS

Successful marketing professional with experience in market research, promotions, sales, and client relations. Seeking position where attaining established goals through building client relationships is rewarded. Conducted several market research studies. Experienced in design and implementation of marketing strategies and promotions. Able to juggle multiple projects while handling clients in professional manner.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Marketing, 2010
Northwestern College, Saint Paul MN
Cumulative GPA: 3.8
Course projects included market research for product launch in foreign market, creating marketing plans independently as well as in a team environment, making formal presentations for peers and faculty.
Awarded second place in campus-wide competition to create an innovative marketing plan for an existing student group.

MARKETING EXPERIENCE

Marketing Assistant, Career Development Center, Northwestern College, Saint Paul, MN, August 2007 to Present

Survey student body to determine best methods for marketing career events and services. Design and implement marketing strategies to students, staff, faculty, and prospective employers. Coordinate and promote on campus career events for groups of 5 to 250 participants. Create print and multimedia marketing tools. Advise senior staff regarding effective marketing strategies to students. Collaborate with college Marketing and Communications to design and launch new Career Center brand. Manage reception function in office visited by an average of 150 walk in clients weekly.

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ADDITIONAL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Shift Manager, ProGo Convenience Store, Sioux Falls, SD,
Summer 2007
Office Assistant, South O'Brien Insurance Company, St. Paul, MN,
Summer 2006

Mark MIS

9999 Park Way ♦ Little Canada, MN 55117 ♦ 222.888.5555 ♦ mis.mark@hotmail.com

Objective

Results oriented technology professional seeing client support position in network or telecommunications environment.

Education

Bachelor of Science, Management Information Systems, May 2011

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN GPA 3.75

Significant Coursework and Projects

System Analysis and Design- Completed analysis of company processes and documentation using case modeling to show the flow of the company's system

Management of Information Systems- Stepped through a team process of evaluating systems to identify and mitigate possible risks and provided possible proposals and solutions to these risks

Database Management- Documented, designed, developed a database architecture from the ground up including table structure, data dictionary, and reporting views

Additional coursework-Operating Systems Concepts, Data Communications, Information Security, Project Management, Computer Programming, Applications Development, Accounting, Management, Business Ethics

Technology Skills

MS Visio, SQL Server 2005 Express, MS Visual Studio.NET 2005, Eclipse, NetBeans, JCreator, VMWare Lab Manager, Windows Server 2003, Lotus Notes Developer, IBM Mainframe, Adobe Illustrator, Apple/Macintosh Computers, Excel, Access, FrontPage, Java, VB.NET, Altiris, MS Office Suite, SharePoint

Information Systems Experience

Network and Telecommunications Technician

Northwestern College Campus Technologies, St. Paul, MN Sept. 2009 – Present (promotion)

- Provide administrative tracking and troubleshooting for large network and telephone system
- Provide end user support for campus voicemail system
- Participate in network design process for a new academic building on campus

Help Desk Service Technician

Northwestern College Campus Technologies, St. Paul, MN Aug. 2007-Aug. 2009

- Interfaced with staff, faculty, parents, and students in order to answer questions, gather requests, and assist in technology issues
- Organized tasks and prioritized incidents for completion in a web-based management system
- Resolved the end user's technical issues and requests via remote assistance or on-site visit
- Analyzed and reassigned incidents that could not be successfully resolved on first contact
- Led new and transfer student orientation events to introduce students to the college's technology
- Created an internal SharePoint site to be accessed by the end-users for documentation, maintenance schedules, policies, and unplanned issues

Vice President, Association of Information Technology Professionals Club

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN Jan. 2009 – Present