Step-by-Step Resume Guide & Templates

Your resume is a marketing piece that will help employers determine if your skills and experience meet the requirements to perform a specific job within their organization. Its purpose is to get you an interview. This guide will help you create a resume that clearly and concisely describes pertinent information about your skills, experiences, and accomplishments. A resume is made up of sections that help employers learn about a candidate; some sections are essential, while others are considered optional. Through the resume writing process you will receive feedback from other people and ideas from sample resumes, but you must decide what best communicates the most important information about you to a potential employer and what will resonate most with the employer's hiring goals.

Examples have been included in this step-by-step guide to emphasize basic resume structure and to guide the development of your resume. Resume templates are located at the end of the guide.

Resume Guide Contents and Links to Sections:

THE RESUME - FORMAT & CONTENT AT A GLANCE:

Format---The Basics:
- Use only one font for the body of the resume
- Use an easily readable font that is 10-12 point (Times New Roman or Arial). Your name may be larger
- Use formatting, such as boldfacing, underlining, and italicizing for emphasis only and not in combination
- Abbreviate states with capital letters (PA) when applying for positions within the United States
- If including a location outside of the United States, include City, Country
- Keep margins and spacing uniform/consistent
- Length: Master's Degree Students' resumes should be one page. PhD students' resumes should be two pages for industry job searches (see sample templates)

Content---The Basics:
- Within each heading, items should be listed in reverse chronological order
- Headings/sections should be listed in order of importance/relevance
- Avoid jargon that isn't universal to your field. Simple, common language is best when possible
- Ensure experience and qualifications are accurately represented
- Avoid abbreviating names of organizations, titles and descriptors
- Include your personal phone number
- List an e-mail address: use your CMU email and/or a professionally named personal account (ex: first_last@gmail.com)
- You should include your customized LinkedIn profile link in your contact information section
- Do not list references or "References available upon request"

THE SECTIONS OF A RESUME

RESUME HEADINGS
The top of your resume should highlight your name, address, email and phone number. Unlike the remainder of your resume, no heading is required for your contact information. All sections that follow should have headings that accurately describe their content. This guide will review the basic headings that you may include in your initial resume. You must evaluate the most important items from your background and determine the most appropriate order for the sections of your resume. Your career consultant can assist you in this process.

CONTACT INFORMATION
You should begin your resume with this information at the top. Be sure that the phone number you list will be answered by YOU and has a professional outgoing voicemail message. You SHOULD also list your email address (same rule applies, use one that you check often, preferably your CMU email) and LinkedIn address in this section.

For example:

<div align="center">

Firstname M. Lastname
xxx1234@andrew.cmu.edu ♦ (412) 555-5555 ♦ www.linkedin.com/firstlast

</div>

You SHOULD NOT include:
- Personal information: birth date, marital status, height, weight, personal identity information (social security number, passport info), etc.
- Any pictures.
- References: It is not necessary to indicate references are available upon request. You should have contact information for your references, on a separate document, as some companies may require them.

EDUCATION

Education should appear as the first section of a graduate resume. Start with your most recent educational experience: Carnegie Mellon University. Bold university names and spell them out completely. List your Degree Program and Graduation Date.

Must include:

Name of Institution and location	Month & Year of graduation OR anticipated graduation date
Major and Minors/Field of study	Degree awarded or to be awarded

Optional to Include:

GPA	Foreign Study and Exchange Programs
Selected Coursework	Name and brief descricption of thesis topic (if applicable)

Below is an example of the education section:

EDUCATION
Carnegie Mellon University   Pittsburgh, PA
Master of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering   May 2015
GPA: 3.71/4.00

Indian Institute of Technology   Mumbai, India
Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering   May 2012
GPA: 9.0/10.0

- **GPA**: If you include your GPA, make sure you include the scale (ex. 3.3/4.0 or 8.7/10.0). If it is above a 3.0, include it. See your Career Consultant to discuss if you have questions.

COURSEWORK

Any relevant coursework that you include is recommended to be listed under a separate heading or subheading (within Education), as "Relevant Coursework" or "Selected Coursework." Do NOT simply list every course you've taken. Only highlight those courses that are most relevant to the positions/field that you plan to pursue.

For Example:

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Energy (Conversion and Utilization)	Energy (Policy and Economics)
Combustion and Air Pollution	Energy System Modeling
Advanced Thermodynamics	Industrial Ecology
Sustainable Engineering	Environmental Life Cycle Assessment

It is sometimes of greater value to instead include the skills you learned in the courses in a more robust "skills" section. Information in the "skills" section is included later in this document.

The location of the "coursework" section varies depending upon the contents of your other sections. Contact your career consultant for advice on the order of your resume content.

EXPERIENCE

We advise you to have your resume reviewed by your Career Consultant as she may provide feedback regarding the customization of your resume/experience section(s) and what content to include. As you gain experience you may have more narrowly focused sections such as "Academic Research Experience," "Professional Experience," etc. "Experience" as a standalone title implies employment. If the information you have previously included in an "Experience" section is not in fact employment, then you should rename that section to more accurately reflect the nature of the entry.

A header for each employment experience entry should include:
Job/Position Title
Organization name
Location (city and state or equivalent)
Dates (month and year format or term and year for academic year related experiences)

Bold the most important piece of information which is typically your **job title or the company**.

For Example:

EXPERIENCE
Best Engineering Company   *Palo Alto, CA*
Hardware Engineering Intern   *June-August 2014*
- Led a four-week project evaluating the design of a product in development to identify cost reduction of 10%
- Developed factory test requirements and participated in factory site visits to oversee successful testing
- Presented project proposal and findings to senior leadership, resulting in favorable feedback and recommendation for inclusion in the new product's design

After the header, describe your experience and results using action-oriented statements. Start each statement with an action verb. You should use consistent punctuation for your bullets (remember, these bullet points do not require periods, semi-colons, etc.).

Try to write one phrase per line when possible, but no more than two lines per bullet point. Use bullets to indicate new lines. Review the [Action Verbs List](#) (enclosed) for assistance in selecting a variety of strong verbs for your resume.

PROJECTS

We also suggest that you select a number of academic and/or research projects to highlight on your resume. This serves to further provide examples of your experience and to illustrate practical applications of your skillset.

For Example:

ACADEMIC PROJECTS
Robot Design and Build   Fall 2015
Carnegie Mellon University   Pittsburgh, PA
- Designed and constructed circuits using a protoboard to power a beeper, LED, clock, memory chip, and two motors
- Combined circuits to create a mini programmable robot and successfully programmed the robot to complete a test course with zero failures or errors

FOCUS ON RESULTS- Experience & Projects

Employers assess your resume to determine if candidates have the appropriate proven results and experience for their organization/position. List your key achievements and add details which show your demonstrated results.

Begin sentences with action verbs (past tense unless it's a current activity/project) and be specific when detailing your results and the value you added to each experience.

<u>Use this formula to get started</u>:
Action Verb + Context (tell the what) + Result (Metrics, Outcome, and/or Impact)

Look at the following samples:
- Combined circuits to create a mini programmable robot that was successfully programmed to complete a test course with zero failures or errors
- Developed MEP 3D model using Revit, collaborated with architectural and structural groups to integrate models in Solibri and performed clash detection to overcome discrepancies in design and model
- Designed a carry-on suitcase that can increase storage capacity by 133% to reduce the need for checked luggage as part of a team of five
- Researched and analyzed the data of different cells to determine the optimal experimental parameters and to understand the diameter-dependent lithium storage performance
- Developing a tool using Qt for urban and highway driving that will enable more human-like autonomous behavior

When constructing the detail of this section, as a graduate student, your resume should encompass the most relevant experience from your undergraduate work to present day. The more current/recent an experience, the more detail you should provide.

SKILLS

List any relevant skills specific to your field including technical, lab, and knowledge-based skills you can apply to your field. Sub-categorize your skills whenever possible. List/label skills and foreign language proficiencies (if your proficiency levels vary). Do not include soft skills such as "teamwork" or "leadership" in this section.

For example:

SKILLS
Application Software: MATLAB, Minitab, Maple
Programming Languages: C/C++, Java, Python, Visual Basic, MIPS Assembly, Verilog, HTML
Languages: English (Fluent), French (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)

ACTIVITIES, HONORS, PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES & PATENTS

Activities

List memberships in campus and professional organizations or other activities that show involvement in your academic community or profession. Especially include those in which you had a leadership position.

Honors

Honors, Scholarships, Fellowships, and Awards should be listed, if received. Depending on the type of honor, these honors may be imbedded within other sections or experiences OR if robust/ varied enough, included as a standalone section. Select only those awards or honors that represent your strengths and are timely (i.e. you likely will not include high school honors).

Publications

Publications can be listed in a separate section if numerous, or under the relevant research/work experience.

Conference Presentations

Conference presentations can be listed in a separate section if numerous, or under the relevant research/work experience section to which they apply.

For example:

HONORS & LEADERSHIP	
Dean's List, College of Engineering	Spring 2014-Fall 2016
Chapter President, Society of Women Engineers	Fall 2015- Spring 2016

OBJECTIVE/SUMMARY

The use of an objective/summary is optional.

If you decide to include an objective or summary, describe the career path that you are pursuing, and your skills/experiences that will enable you to add value to an organization. If your objective/summary isn't adding clarity and advancing your purpose and resume, remove it. If you have questions, contact your Career Consultant for a resume review.

WHY INCLUDE A CAREER OBJECTIVE OR SUMMARY ON YOUR RESUME? If you have a diverse or varied background, it may help to focus your resume and provide clarity to an employer on your career goals, your related skills and the value you can add to the prospective organization.

Consider the following when writing an objective/summary:
- Focus on what skills, experiences and abilities that you possess that would bring value to the employer and position to which you intend to apply.
- Avoid broad/generalized statements such as, "To pursue the electrical and computer engineering field."
- Avoid listing several fields or positions.
- It is acceptable to have two resumes with two different objectives or summaries and to tailor resumes to different job searches.

Strong Verbs List

accomplished	collected	elevated	increased	performed	salvaged
achieved	communicated	eliminated	inferred	persuaded	saved
adapted	compared	empathized	influenced	pioneered	schedule
addressed	compiled	empowered	informed	pioneered	screened
administered	completed	enabled	initiated	planned	searched
administrated	composed	encouraged	innovated	prepared	secured
advised	compromised	enforced	inspected	presented	selected
aided	computed	engineered	inspired	prioritized	served
allocated	conceptualized	enhanced	installed	processed	shaped
altered	concluded	enlisted	instilled	procured	sold
analyzed	conducted	ensured	instituted	produced	solicited
applied	confronted	established	instructed	programmed	solved
appraised	consolidated	estimated	integrated	projected	spearheaded
approved	constructed	evaluated	interpreted	promoted	specified
approximated	consulted	examined	interviewed	provided	spoke
arbitrated	contacted	exceeded	introduced	publicized	sponsored
arranged	contributed	excelled	invented	published	started
ascertained	converted	executed	investigated	purchased	stimulated
assembled	convinced	expanded			strengthened
assessed	cooperated	expedited	justified	rated	suggested
assigned	coordinated	explained		recommended	summarized
assisted	counseled	extended	launched	reconciled	supervised
attained	created	extracted	lectured	recorded	supplemented
attended	critiqued		led	recruited	supported
audited	customized	fabricated	listened	reduced	surveyed
augmented		facilitated		referred	synthesized
authored	debugged	finalized	maintained	refined	systematized
automated	deciphered	forecasted	managed	reflected	
	decreased	formalized	marketed	reformed	taught
balanced	delegated	formed	mastered	remedied	tested
boosted	delivered	formulated	measured	remodeled	traced
briefed	demonstrated	fostered	mediated	reorganized	trained
broadened	designed	founded	mentored	repaired	transformed
budgeted	determined	fulfilled	minimized	reported	translated
built	developed		modeled	represented	troubleshot
	devised	gained	moderated	researched	tutored
calculated	diagnosed	gathered	modernized	resolved	
captured	directed	generated	monitored	responded	uncovered
catalogued	disassembled	grew	motivated	restored	updated
centralized	discovered	guided		retrieved	upgraded
chaired	dissuaded		negotiated	revamped	utilized
charted	distributed	helped		reviewed	
clarified	documented		operated	revolutionized	validated
classified	drafted	identified	orchestrated		verified
coached	educated	illustrated	organized		
collaborated	elaborated	implemented	overhauled		wrote
			oversaw		

RESUME SELF-REVIEW

GENERAL FORMATTING

- ☐ Margins are the same for the top, bottom, and sides and no smaller than 0.5 inches, no larger than 1 inch
- ☐ Font size is between 10 pt and 12pt font for the body of the resume, the same font is used throughout the resume
- ☐ Bullet points and sections are aligned uniformly throughout the resume
- ☐ Dates are written consistently
- ☐ Bullet point punctuation is consistent
- ☐ A consistent format is used throughout the entire document and within each section
- ☐ Sections/headings are listed in order of relevance/importance
- ☐ Information within each heading/experience is listed in reverse chronological order

CONTACT INFORMATION

- ☐ Full name (First and Last), cell phone number and professional email address (CMU or professionally named private email) are located at the top of your resume

EDUCATION AND COURSEWORK

- ☐ College/university names are spelled out (i.e. Carnegie Mellon University not CMU)
- ☐ The official name of your degree and program is listed
- ☐ You have listed only the month and year you earned your degree(s) and/or expect to earn it/them (no date ranges)
- ☐ GPA is listed (where applicable) and GPA scale is included (i.e. 3.75/4.0)
- ☐ Coursework list is limited to the courses most relevant to your job search and does not include future coursework

WORK, PROJECT AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- ☐ Organization/Company name and location are clearly listed (city, state in United States; city, country if international)
- ☐ Job title is clearly displayed (when applicable)
- ☐ Course name and/or project name listed (when applicable)
- ☐ Dates of experiences are listed for each position, company and /or project
- ☐ Dates and location are on the right side of the page, organizations and titles are on the left side of the page
- ☐ Each phrase starts with an action verb in the appropriate tense (present for current, past for completed experiences)
- ☐ Bullet points include accomplishments, results, metrics, outcomes, etc. whenever possible

SKILLS

- ☐ Relevant skills are listed (Programming Languages, Software, Lab Instrumentation, Foreign Languages, etc.).
- ☐ Skills are subcategorized, specific skills are listed in each subcategory (i.e. Programming Languages: C, Java, C++)
- ☐ Skills are labeled with proficiency levels IF you have a range of proficiencies within the skills listed
- ☐ No soft skills are listed

ACTIVITIES/HONORS/LEADERSHIP

- ☐ The activities, honors/awards, and/or leadership experiences relevant and timely

Firstname M. Lastname

firstlast@andrew.cmu.edu ♦ (412)555-5555 ♦ www.linkedin.com/firstlastname

EDUCATION

University Name   Location (City, State)
Master of (Degree Program)   Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

University Name   Location
Bachelor of (Degree Program)- Major   Graduation Date (Month Year)
[Optional- List high academic honors]

GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0, 8.0/10)

Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

SKILLS

Category 1: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Category 2: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Languages: [Optional- list spoken languages multiple proficiencies exist. i.e.: English (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)]

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Company A   Location
Job Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result

Company B   Location
Job Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result

Company C   Location
Job Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Project Name   Location
University Name   Semester/Date
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result

Project Name   Location
University Name   Semester/Date
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result
- Verb + Context + Result

LEADERSHIP

Title, Organization Name- Location   Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location   Duration

Firstname M. Lastname

firstlast@andrew.cmu.edu ♦ (412)555-5555 ♦ www.linkedin.com/firstlast

EDUCATION

University Name   Location (City, State)
Master of (Degree Program)   Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

University Name   Location
Bachelor of (Degree Program)- Major   Graduation Date (Month Year)
[Optional- List high academic honors]
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0, 8.0/10)
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

SKILLS

Category 1: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Category 2: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Languages: [Optional- list spoken languages multiple proficiencies exist. i.e.: English (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)]

ACADEMIC RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND PROJECTS

Organization   Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
Organization   Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result

CONFERENCES

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Presentation/Speech." Name of the meeting and organization, Location (City, State OR City, Country), Day Month Year (i.e. 12 May 2015). Descriptor of Presentation (i.e.Keynote Address, Conference Presentation, etc.).

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Presentation/Speech." Name of the meeting and organization, Location (City, State OR City, Country), Day Month Year (i.e. 12 May 2015). Descriptor of Presentation (i.e.Keynote Address, Conference Presentation, etc.).

PUBLICATIONS

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published)

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published)

PATENTS

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was filed.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent Application number,] filed [Month Date, Year.] Patent Pending.

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was issued.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent number,] filed [Month Date, Year,] and issued [Month Date, Year.]

LEADERSHIP

Title, Organization Name- Location   Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location   Duration

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE or AWARDS/HONORS or VOLUNTEER WORK

List Teaching Assistant Positions, Competitions, Honors, Awards, etc. in associated sections as your experience dictates

Firstname M. Lastname

firstlast@andrew.cmu.edu ♦ (412)555-5555 ♦ www.linkedin.com/firstlast

EDUCATION

University Name   Location (City, State)
Doctor of Philosophy in (Degree Program)   Anticipated Date
Thesis: (State the title of your Thesis)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)

University Name   Location (City, State)
Master of (Degree Program)   Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0, 8.0/10)
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

University Name   Location
Bachelor of (Degree Program)- Major   Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]

SKILLS

Category 1: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Category 2: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Languages: [Optional- list spoken languages multiple proficiencies exist. i.e.: English (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)]

THESIS

University Name   Location
Thesis Title   Duration
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Company A   Location
Job Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
Company B   Location
Job Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Organization   Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
Organization   Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title   Duration (Month -Month Year)
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result
  • Verb + Context + Result

CONFERENCES

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Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published)

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published)

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published)

PATENTS

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was filed.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent Application number,] filed [Month Date, Year.] Patent Pending.

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was issued.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent number,] filed [Month Date, Year,] and issued [Month Date, Year.]

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

[List items like Teaching Assistant Positions, Grader roles, etc. here]

University	Location
Title/Role	Duration (Month -Month Year)

- Verb + Context + Result

LEADERSHIP

Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration

AWARDS and HONORS

Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)
Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)
Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)

VOLUNTEER WORK

Position, Organization- Location	Duration
Position, Organization- Location	Duration

Contact your Career Consultants with questions and to schedule an individual appointment to review your resume:

Marcie Foy & Shaina Tsupros
Electrical & Computer Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Energy Science Technology &Policy, Materials Science and Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, & the Integrated Innovation Institute

Shelby Ikeda
Civil & Environmental Engineering

Grad-Engineer-Careers@andrew.cmu.edu