Washington Semester Program Resume Guide

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, but you must decide what best communicates the most important information about you to a potential employer.

Examples have been included in this step-by-step guide to emphasize basic resume structure. A resume template is located at the end of the guide.

Resume Guide Contents:

Sections of a Resume:
- Contact Information
- Education
- Coursework
- Research/Course Projects
- Professional Experience
- Leadership/Volunteering
- Skills

Strong Verbs List Template

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 size; 10-12 is the norm. Your name and section headers may be larger
- Use formatting, such as boldfacing, underlining, and italicizing for emphasis
- Abbreviate states with capital letters (i.e. 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

Content---The Basics:
- Within each heading, items should be listed in reverse chronological order (i.e., start with most recent position followed by second most recent position & so on)
- Headings/sections should be listed in order of importance/relevance
- Avoid jargon that isn't universal to your field. Simple, common language is best
- Ensure experience and qualifications are accurately represented
- Avoid abbreviating names of organizations, titles and descriptors. Do not use "etc"
- Include your personal phone number
- Include an e-mail address - CMU email and/or personal email (non-CMU). Your email address should be professional and not *FanGirl0087@gmail.com. Stick with Gmail as opposed to Hotmail, Yahoo, and AOL*
- 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. 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 resume. You must evaluate the most important items from your background and determine the most appropriate order for the sections of your resume.

CONTACT INFORMATION

You should begin your resume with this information at the top. Make sure that the phone number you list will be answered by YOU and has a professional outgoing voicemail message. You should list your email address and LinkedIn address in this section. You can also include links to a personal website or portfolio – within reason. Base your decision on the industry/field you are applying to. **NOTE: If you are applying to a congressional internship, we recommend you include your permanent address if it demonstrates that you are a constituent of the district or city to which you are applying. If you are not from Pittsburgh but are applying to a Pittsburgh congressional position, it can be helpful to include your CMU address. Otherwise, a physical address is not necessary on your resume.** If there could be a question around your citizenship, it is fine to list that you are a U.S. Citizen (provided that is the case.)

You SHOULD NOT include:
- Personal information: birth date, marital status, height, weight, social security number, passport info
- Photographs

For example:

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

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EDUCATION

Education should appear as the first section of your 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. Do not include your high school.

Must include:

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

Optional to Include:

GPA (list if it's above a 3.5)	Foreign Study and Exchange Programs

Below is an example of the education section:

EDUCATION
Carnegie Mellon University   Pittsburgh, PA
Bachelor of Science in International Relations and Politics   May 2018
GPA: 3.71

University of Sussex Study Abroad Program   Brighton, UK
                                                                                                            Fall 2017

COURSEWORK

Any relevant coursework that you include should be listed under a separate heading or subheading (within Education), as "Relevant Coursework" or "Selected Coursework." Do not list every course you've taken, but highlight the courses that are most relevant to the positions/field that you plan to pursue. You can simply list the course name – do not include course numbers or "currently enrolled."

For Example:

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Policy Analysis	French Grammar
Negotiation	Creative Writing
Principles of Economics	Data Analysis
Statistics	Ethics and Global Economies

Typically, the "Relevant Coursework" section will follow the "Education" section of your resume.

RELEVANT RESEARCH EXPERIENCE / COURSE PROJECTS

We also suggest that you select a number of academic and/or research projects to highlight on your resume. This serves to provide examples of your experience and to illustrate practical applications of your skillset, especially if you don't have much relevant work experience to feature yet.

For Example:

ACADEMIC PROJECTS
Money and Morality   Fall 2017
Carnegie Mellon University   Pittsburgh, PA

- Produced a research paper that examined the effects of economic development in relation to societal issues
- Examined the period from Communist revolution to modern day, and its relationship to demographic change and women's status in society

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

We advise you to have your resume reviewed by the WSP Program Manager/Career Advisor so that they can provide feedback regarding the customization of your resume/experience section(s) and what content to include. **"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 ("Research Experience" or "Volunteer Experience", for example.)** Also, if your professional experience is directly relevant to the job(s) to which you are applying, consider ordering it before your research/course projects. If it's not directly applicable, it should come afterwards.

A header for each employment experience entry should include:
Organization Name
Job/Position Title
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
Atlanta Community Law Center
Development and Planning Intern

Atlanta, GA
May-August 2015

- Updated donor database using Excel resulting in a 10% increase in donations

- Researched information on former donors to identify trends

- Performed administrative duties including answering phones, sorting mail and ordering supplies

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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. The bullet points do not require periods.

Try to write no more than two lines per bullet point. Review the Action Verbs List (enclosed) for assistance in selecting a variety of strong verbs for your resume. Also pay attention to the tense of your verbs. **If the experience is over, use past tense. If you're still working at the organization, use present tense.** (In the above example, the verbs would change to "Update", "Research" and "Perform" if you were still employed at the Atlanta Community Law Center.)

Also, do not include "I" (our, us, we, their, etc.) statements.

FOCUS ON RESULTS - Experience & Projects

Employers assess resumes 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.

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

Look at the following examples:

- Analyzed methodologies of various studies conducted by different organizations, including the United Nations and the US Department of Justice, resulting in a presentation of an ideal methodology to be used to conduct studies in Bangladesh
- Provided support to the Advocacy department to conduct a literature review for content development for a proposed study on gender violence
- Led two labs every week, teaching and assisting 45 students with using the Minitab software package for data analysis
- Counsel students on personal and academic issues, and responsible for budgeting $9,000 for the hall while working in a team of 6 other Resident Assistants
- Assisted 2 senior researchers on projects focusing on child labor and minority ethnic groups in Cambodia to help 200 children get out of child labor and admitted into school

Leadership Activities / Honors / Volunteer Experience

Leadership Activities

List memberships on 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.** Do not include high school activities.

Honors

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

Volunteer Experience

List experiences that show your involvement in the local or global community, and specify the number of hours of service. This section can be particularly relevant if you are applying to a non-profit organization. Development organizations can be particularly interested in your experience volunteering in a foreign country, but generally you should not list personal travel on your resume unless you were involved with a service project or organization while abroad.

For Example:

HONORS & LEADERSHIP
Dean's List, Dietrich College   Fall 2016, Spring 2017
Chapter President, Society of Women   Fall 2017 - Spring 2018

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Outreach 360   Belize City, Belize
-Taught English in a rural elementary school   June-July 2017

SKILLS

List any relevant skills specific to your field including technical, writing, and knowledge-based skills you can apply to your field. Sub-categorize your skills whenever possible. List/label skills in order of proficiency (i.e. most to least proficient). Do not include soft skills such as "teamwork" or "leadership" in this section.

For example:

SKILLS
Software: MATLAB, Minitab, Advanced Excel and PowerPoint
Programming Languages: C/C++, Java, HTML
Languages: Spanish (fluent), French (intermediate)
Professional Writing: research grants, proposals, white papers
Other: data analysis, data visualization, social media marketing (Hootsuite, Sprout Social)

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

Firstname M. Lastname

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

EDUCATION

Carnegie Mellon University   Pittsburgh, PA
Bachelor of (Degree Program)- Major   Graduation Date (Month Year)
[Optional- List high academic honors]

GPA: XX [Optional- List if 3.0 or higher]

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

| Course Name | Course Name | Course Name |
| Course Name | Course Name | |

ACADEMIC PROJECTS / RESEARCH

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

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

LEADERSHIP / VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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

SKILLS

Category 1: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Category 2: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Languages: [Multiple proficiencies may exist. i.e.: German (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)]

Contact your WSP Program Manager/Career Advisor Career Consultant if you have questions and to schedule an individual appointment to review your resume.