

RESUME GUIDE

Resumes provide a concise overview of your experience and it is often an employer's first impression of you. It is essentially your sales pitch to a potential employer, with the goal of landing an interview.

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RESUME DO'S AND DON'TS

Recruiters typically spend only a few seconds reviewing each resume, so it's important to give yourself every possible advantage. Here are a few Do's and Don'ts for resume writing:



Be specific and concise

Use phrases rather than complete sentences and prioritize relevant experience

Limit your resume to one page

Two pages maximum for master's-level and experienced candidates

Use consistent formatting

Be consistent with your use of headers, boldface and italic type, columns, bullet points, etc.

Make your resume visually appealing

It doesn't have to be art, but the information on your resume should be formatted to make it accessible to a potential employer

Proofread your work

Always check for grammar, punctuation and spelling errors



Use personal pronouns

Avoid the use of "I", "me", and "my" throughout the resume

Include personal information

Such as your marital status, age, etc. Profile pictures are not recommended

Repeat information

Avoid repeating skills or experiences, even if you have overlapping experiences across similar jobs

Use acronyms

Unless it is a universally used acronym (ex. GPA, CPR), spell out items such as degrees or certifications

Mislead the reader

Avoid being vague or lying about your qualifications and skills

COMPONENTS OF A RESUME

CONTACT INFORMATION

Includes your full name, location (City, State), phone number, and email address. Optional: LinkedIn profile, personal website, or portfolio.

Notes:

- Your name should stand out (bolded, larger font, etc.)
- Remove hyperlinks from websites and emails
- Your school email is fine, but consider an alternative, professional email address that won't expire

EDUCATION

School(s) you have attended or are currently attending. Includes the school, location, graduation date, and the title of the official degree. Optional: GPA, awards and scholarships. (High school information should be removed beyond freshman year of college)

EXPERIENCE

Lists your experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Include the company, the location (City, State), dates of employment (month, year), the title of your position, and a description of your duties.

Notes:

- Start each phrase with a strong action verb - past tense for previously held positions, and present tense for current positions
- Included 3-5 bullet points instead of paragraphs (and avoid using sub-bullets)
- Describe transferrable skills instead of simply describing tasks

SUMMARY STATEMENT

A 1-2 sentence statement at the top of the page that highlights relevant core competencies. If a cover letter is included with the resume, this is not necessary. Avoid the use of personal pronouns.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

For repeated or long-term volunteer work, not one-time opportunities (though reflect on those experiences to possibly include during an interview!). Format similarly to work experience.

SKILLS

Includes skills that are relevant to the job and/or industry you are applying for. Focus on specific skills such as computer programs, language proficiencies, lab skills, etc. Soft skills ("hard-worker", "team-oriented", etc.) can be incorporated into a summary statement.

ACTIVITIES

Any activities, honors and or leadership positions that highlight transferable skills gained outside of work .

AWARDS/HONORS

If not included in the Education section: scholarships, Dean's List, etc.

CERTIFICATIONS OR LICENSES

If pertinent to your field. Ex. CPR certified

A NOTE ON REFERENCES:

References should not be included with your resume. Have them listed in a separate document to provide when requested.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

When writing statements that describe your experiences, you should highlight skills and accomplishments that demonstrate your qualifications - that is, your transferable skills. These are skills that can be applied in a variety of careers and work environments. For each experience (work, volunteer, extracurricular, etc.)...



Jot down down a list of duties, responsibilities and accomplishments - don't worry about getting the wording right just yet!



Reflect on each point. How might this experience be useful in a future job? Or, if you have a particular job in mind, how would it fit within the job description?



Using the exercise below, re-write your statements to include a strong action verb and positive outcome.

WRITING EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

Each statement can be created using three main questions:



What action did you take?

Ex. Designed...

Ex. Coordinated...

Ex. Used interpersonal skills...

What was the context?

...an inventory tracking system...

...fundraising events...

...while answer phones....

What was the result?

...to maintain accurate records of company stock.

...that raised awareness and funds for the shelter.

...to evaluate customer needs and direct to the appropriate department.

ACTION VERBS BASED ON EXPERIENCE

MANAGEMENT

Administered	Enforced
Authorized	Handled
Coordinated	Increased
Delegated	Managed

LEADERSHIP

Assigned	Led
Approved	Oversaw
Directed	Prioritized
Executed	Strengthened

COMMUNICATION

Addressed	Mediated
Advertised	Negotiated
Clarified	Persuaded
Edited	Promoted

HELPING

Advised	Guided
Cared for	Intervened
Cooperated	Motivated
Encouraged	Supported

RESERACH

Analyzed	Extracted
Compared	Interpreted
Conducted	Investigated
Evaluated	Summarized

TECHNICAL

Adapted	Operated
Coded	Programmed
Engineered	Remodeled
Maintained	Repaired

ORGANIZATION

Arranged	Monitored
Cataloged	Recorded
Compiled	Reviewed
Logged	Standardized

FINANCIAL

Adjusted	Corrected
Appraised	Forecasted
Audited	Marketed
Balanced	Reconciled

CREATIVE

Acted	Initiated
Customized	Integrated
Designed	Modeled
Illustrated	Performed

Thomas S. Aquinas

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Summary Statement

Passionate leader who advocates for underrepresented individuals and makes connections to community organizations utilizing strong communication skills, work ethic and cultural competency.

Education

Aquinas College | Grand Rapids, MI Graduation: May 2026
Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Political Science

- Dean's List: Spring 2023

Work Experience

Home and Builders Association of Greater Grand Rapids | Grand Rapids, MI 2023- Present
Policy and Advocacy Intern

- Interact daily with elected officials, administrators, and community representatives to foster relationships and promote legislation and policy
- Utilize social media to inform consumers and industry professionals about upcoming events and promote the beliefs and ideals of the Association of Planned
- Coordinated events, including a gubernatorial endorsement, state legislative candidates forum, and liaisons with county employees
- Conducted candidate questionnaires and analyses while working with the Building a Better West Michigan PAC to secure endorsements and donations while following 501C3 regulations

City of Grand Rapids Community Development Office | Grand Rapids, MI Fall 2022
Public Policy Analyst Intern

- Maintained databases of confidential personnel information and documents
- Assisted with outreach to donors and non-profits supporting the Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Analyzed the implications of existing and proposed legislation, policies and program decisions on current programs and project performance for future programs and services
- Coordinated between the City and the Federal Housing and Urban Development Department

Honey Creek Inn | Cannonsburg, MI 2021- 2022
Line Cook

- Supervised a four-person work crew and performed duties in a fast-paced environment
- Served as the designated trainer for both new hires and existing personnel
- Provided excellent customer service by anticipating customer desires
- Coordinated with local growers and suppliers for new products and product information

Volunteer Experience

Aquinas College | Grand Rapids, MI 2023- Present
Member of Community Action Volunteers of Aquinas (CAVA)

- Organize and attend service-learning events both on campus and to benefit the Grand Rapids community

Catholic Cat Cafe | Cannonsburg, MI 2021-2022
Volunteer

- Ensured a clean environment for shelter workers and cats to mitigate the existence and spread of pathogens
- Provided mental and social enrichment to cats during their stay at the shelter