

Résumé Guide

What is it?

A résumé serves as a highly polished, professionally written presentation of your qualifications to prospective employers. Keep in mind that friends, family, faculty, recruiters – almost everyone has an opinion about what constitutes the "perfect" résumé. No such document exists. A strong résumé needs to focus on the needs of the employer.

Why do I need one?

To portray your professional and academic achievements. Your résumé is not a list of every single thing you've accomplished; it is formatted to best portray your skills and abilities for the specific job you seek. Employers typically take around 10 seconds to review a résumé. You want to make sure it is direct, appealing, and to the point.

Should I have more than one résumé?

Yes! Alter your résumé to fit the needs of different job applications. Some of your experiences may relate more to the position you are applying to, and others are unnecessary and are taking up room that could be better used. Also, always continue to edit your résumé. It is an ever-changing document and should be updated on a regular basis.

What are some Career Development resources?

- Major specific résumé templates
- 'Just the Facts' worksheet
- Résumé beginner's worksheet
- 'Action Verbs' sheet
- 'Skills & Characteristics to Consider' sheet

All can be found in office and on www.geneseo.edu/career_development

What are some tips?

Length

Most college students and recent graduates will have a one-page résumé. If you find yourself needing two pages, be sure to fill more than half of the second page. If your second page only contains a line or two, consider adjusting the margins or font size to fit onto one, concise page. Also, additional information can be added to your professional LinkedIn page. LinkedIn is a great way to network with others and inquire about openings. Always attach a link to your résumé.

Style

A visually appealing résumé is very important. Use a consistent font throughout, preferable Times New Roman, limit the font size to no smaller than 10pt, and do not use colors. Use bolding, italics, and underlining when appropriate; there is no need to overdo these features. Be sure to balance the page, meaning to use the full page to its extent by avoiding long, blocked off paragraphs. Use bullets and consider columns. Everyone's style is different, but it should be pleasing to the eye and easy to read.

Order

Order the résumé in reverse chronological order. This means the résumé will begin with your most recent experience, and end with your oldest. Expand the most upon your relevant positions and avoid going too in depth about the least relevant.

Language

Avoid phrases such as, “My duties included...” or, “Responsible for...” Do not use personal pronouns such as “I” or “My”. Be careful not to use words that exaggerate your responsibilities. Begin each bullet with an action verb and use present/past tenses appropriately. Carefully proofread for spelling, grammar and spacing errors. One mistake can cost you an interview.

Paper/Printing

If you’re delivering your résumé by hand or mail, print on high quality bond 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper in white or off-white colors. Your résumé and cover letter paper, as well as your envelope, should match. The Department of Career Development offers this paper free to students. When sending electronically, change the Word document to a PDF to preserve the formatting.

What should I not include on my résumé?

1. Objective

This is an outdated feature that should be excluded. It can be expressed in your cover letter.

2. Summary of qualifications

This is shown throughout your résumé and cover letter. It does not need to be written out in a section on your résumé.

3. High school Degree/Accomplishments

It is recommended to remove after the end of your sophomore year of college. However, it can remain on if you’ve had serious accomplishments in high school or, perhaps, are applying to a position at that school.

4. Experiences

Anything during high school after your sophomore year of college should be removed. This saves room for more relevant positions that relate to a future career.

5. Skills

Soft skills such as ‘Good Listener’, ‘Hard-Worker’, ‘Trustworthy’ are expressed in the cover letter. Your résumé is designated to hard skills such as software’s or languages.

6. References

If asked, include at least 3 professional/academic references on a separate page.

Contact

SUNY Geneseo
116 Erwin Hall
Phone: (585) 245-5721
Email: careers@geneseo.edu

Office Hours

Monday-Friday:
8:00am-4:30pm

Walk-in Hours

Located on website
geneseo.edu/career_development

Remember, your cover letter, résumé and reference page are typically your first introduction to an employer and their presentation makes a statement about you. Are you neat, organized, do you use your words well and with impact, are your sentences coherent and enlightening? Take the time and care to make a strong impression!