



CAREER BRIDGE RESUME GUIDE

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A RESUME?

Your resume is your personal sales and marketing document. The goal is to create enough interest to generate contact with your desired employer and land an interview! Resume writing is more of an art than a science, which means there is no one correct way to formulate a resume. However, there are plenty of recommended best practices.

In this guide, we will walk you through some of these best practices. To begin, we will go through each part or section of a resume.

FORMATTING

- **CONSISTENCY IS KEY:** Keep your resume 'single spaced' and formatting consistent. Avoid the use of templates, tables, or fancy bullets. Keep formatting clear and simple.
- **EMPHASIZE** major headings using capital letters and bold font.
- **DATES** should be listed on the right-hand side of the page for jobs, internships, and education.
- **LENGTH:** 1 page is best, but 2 pages is the maximum
- **FONT:** Use only conservative black font types. We recommend using Times New Roman, but Arial, Calibri, Tahoma, or Verdana will work as well. Preferably, keep font size at 11pt for content and 12pt for headings.
- **MARGINS:** Set margins to no smaller than .5" and no larger than 1" inch on all sides. Margins should be equal on all sides.
- **Don't include pictures, graphics, or personal information** – (ex. age, children, religion, leisure activities, etc.)
- **Don't abbreviate or use acronyms** – spell out words like HR, Info, Mgmt, and Prof
- **Don't forget to proofread** – Check & correct ALL spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
- **References should NOT be listed on your resume**, nor should there be a statement such as "References Available Upon Request" - this is no longer used. Be ready to supply a separate References document when asked.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Your name goes on the top line of the document (font size for your name can be larger - 14pt or 16 pt)
- Do not include a complete mailing address, just your **City, State, and Zip Code** will do
- Include one telephone number with area code - (be sure it is a number where you can be reached and that you have a professional voicemail message)
- Provide one email address. Make sure your email address is professional (e.g. firstlast@gmail.com) and one that you check regularly.
- Include your *customized* LinkedIn URL. (If you don't know how to customize it, contact Career Bridge)
- Don't place your contact information inside the document header.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY & OBJECTIVE

- You can use a **PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY** or an **OBJECTIVE** statement.
- Professional summaries and objective statements are brief (2-3 sentences) yet catchy. The goal is to highlight the **years of experience** you have, the **related industries** you have worked in, and **accomplishments/skills** that are transferrable to the job for which you are applying.
 - A strong summary creates an image of what you have to offer that is distinctive—just like brand marketing does for a consumer product or service. Think of it as your **branding statement**.

A branding statement includes four key components:

1. **Who you are:** Begin with two traits that describe your work ethic or student status (if you are currently entry-level). For instance, "Compassionate and client centered professional," "Dynamic and solutions-focused individual," or "Driven and creative student"
2. **Where you've been:** Identify the industries, notable companies, or fields at which you worked or in which you have experience. We recommend adding the combined years of experience you have in your industries, if you have 5+ years of work experience. If you are an entry level student with little to no experience, adding the years is optional.
3. **What you offer:** Describe your top 2-3 skill competencies that you have or are acquiring. This begins to communicate why your candidacy is related to a particular search. As a student, this can include work assets or areas of interest in which you hope to gain more experience. Through this information, you are telling your reader what you can do for them.
4. **What you are seeking:** Consider adding a sentence at the end describing what type of position you are seeking along with the main value you are looking to bring to the employer.
 - Do not use personal pronouns such as "I, me, or my" anywhere in the resume.

Examples:

Dedicated and analytical individual with 10+ years' experience in office coordination, administrative and supervisory roles. Expertise in managing employee relations solutions and confidential employee information in large companies. Seeking a Human Resources Generalist role in a mission-driven organization.

Driven and imaginative Communications student with expertise in writing, customer service and social media integration. Proven success as a contributor in social media strategy and internet marketing efforts. Looking to apply research and creative skillset as a Communications Intern.

EDUCATION

Include your degrees following one of the sample formats listed below...

Examples:

National Louis University	Chicago, IL
Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration	06/2018

National Louis University	Chicago, IL
Master of Arts in Clinical Behavioral Health Counseling	June 2018

- Include your graduation year, or the month and year of expected graduation (if you are still in school).
- Write the full name of your degree, do not shorten or use acronyms.
- You may wish to include your GPA (if it is 3.5 or higher) and include the scale (example: 3.8/4.0).
- List the highest degree first, and then list the rest in the same order. Only list a school if a degree was earned. Do NOT include your high school.
- **Related Coursework:** Only include courses when they are related to the job to which you are applying. Write course names; do NOT use course numbers.
- Include Honor Societies, Dean's Lists, Scholarships, and Awards if you were a recipient.
 - If you are an Educator, list your Licensure and Endorsements in this section. Follow this example:
Licensure: IL Professional Educator License
Endorsements: English as a Second Language

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE/INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

List your experiences (professional, internship, and volunteer) using the sample provided below:

Company Name	Location (City, State)
Job Title	Start Date – End Date (Month and Year)

- Identify your unique achievements in at least **3-5** bullet points.
- Write in the **present tense for current jobs** and in the **past tense for previous jobs**.
- Every bullet statement should begin with a strong **action verb**. (Review Action Verb Guide)
- **Write Accomplishment Statements** – Employers are most interested in contributions and results achieved through your experiences. Whenever possible, select concrete examples that illustrate your success. Be sure to provide numbers or data to support your accomplishments as much as you can.
- The **CAR Method** is an effective technique to help you develop Accomplishment statements and demonstrate your value and uniqueness:
 - **Challenge** – What was the challenge you had to overcome or goal you worked to achieve. **Action** – What actions/steps/processes did you take to address this? **Result** –

Examples:

Counseled 30+ adults with severe mental illness in the areas of living skills and interpersonal relationships which resulted in many clients landing jobs due to their ability to demonstrate appropriate behaviors

Resolved 50+ customer inquiries and complaints in a polite and efficient manner, thus increasing overall customer satisfaction by 60%

Created and implemented de-escalation and criminal apprehension training, engaging 100+ staff and boosting confidence through mock scenarios using brainstorming and practice sessions

- Most people find constructing accomplishment statements as the most challenging part of resume writing. Use the actual words and phrases found in the description of your desired job to guide you. For more information on writing Action-Benefit statements, connect with a Career Advisor.
- Include any **Internship Experience** or **Volunteer Experience** in separate sections and list them just as you would your professional experience, indicating that you were an Intern or Volunteer as part of your job title.

TECHNICAL & RELATED SKILLS (Optional Section)

- List related technical skills and include skill level (Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, etc.).
- Include language skills or create a separate “LANGUAGE SKILLS” section only if you speak more than 1 language.
- Don’t include vague generalities (such as “strong communication skills”). These broad skills are best demonstrated as Accomplishment Statements in your specific work experiences. This gives your reader a clearer understanding of exactly how and where you utilized these skills.

LEADERSHIP & ACTIVITIES (Optional Section)

- Include Title, Organization, Location, and Dates of Participation.
- Don’t include organization names that reveal political affiliation, religious preference, etc. If you are unsure, ask a Career Advisor.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS OR ASSOCIATIONS (Optional Section)

Listing professional organizations in your field is optional. Include name of the organization, your role and the dates of involvement/membership.

Examples:

Chairperson, American Psychological Association	2019 – Present
Member, Illinois Counseling Association	2018 – Present

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

- Use additional categories such as: Research, Publications, Certifications, Licenses, Military Service, and Presentations, if related to the position being sought.
- If including Certifications or Licenses, only include ones that are current and up to date. Do NOT include ones that have lapsed or no longer active. For active Certifications and Licenses, provide expiration date.

OTHER TIPS FOR RESUME WRITING

Many companies use Applicant Tracking Systems to screen applicants. Consider the following tips to optimize your resume and to ensure that your resume is not eliminated:

- Tailor your resume using keywords and phrases straight from the job description. Recruiters will search for these keywords and may filter out applications that don't contain them.
- Carefully complete all fields in online applications, even if not required. Recruiters may use those fields as filters, and if left blank, your application might not make it through the system.
- Many organizations have employee referral systems to fast-track your application. If you have a contact at the organization, ask them to submit a referral on your behalf.

We are confident this information will equip you with the knowledge needed to get a head start on your resume. If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment with a Career Advisor, please visit nl.joinhandshake.com. You can also contact us at careerbridge@nl.edu or 312-261-3270.