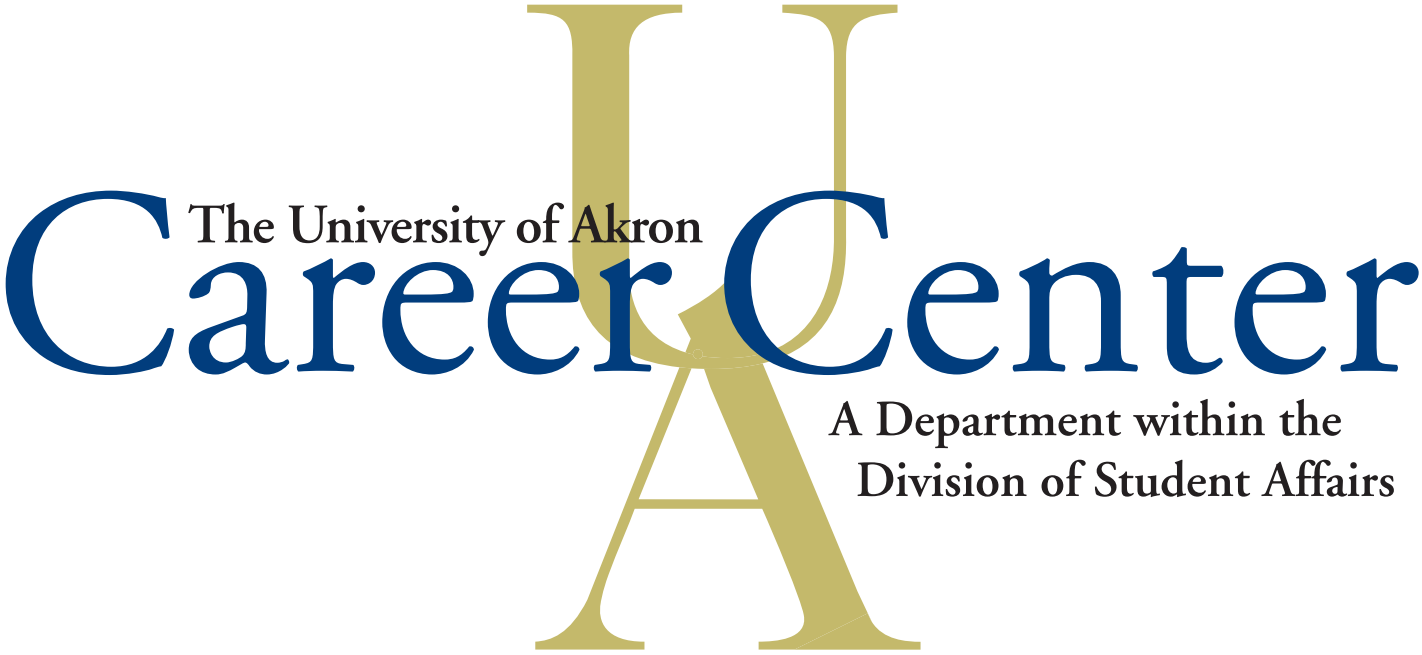
Resume Writing Guide

The University of Akron



Career Center
Simmons Hall 301
(330) 972–7747
http://www.uakron.edu/career

Connecting You to Your Career Success

The University of Akron is an equal education and employment institution

What is a Resume?

When you apply for a job, internship, or scholarship, you will often be asked for a resume. A resume is a summary of your work and educational experiences.

What is an Effective Resume?

An effective resume does more than convey a summary of your experiences. A well crafted resume will also be tailored for every job application to show how your experiences, skills, knowledge, and abilities are a good fit for that particular position at that particular organization. Your resume needs to stand out from other well-qualified candidates, demonstrating how you:

- fit the job description;
- have the skills, abilities, knowledge, and qualities the employer needs, and;
- can potentially contribute to the overall success of the organization.

Always keep the employer's point of view in mind. You are most likely to stand out from other applicants if you convey what you can do for that potential employer's organization.

What is a C.V.?

If you have a graduate degree (Master, Ph.D., J.D., or M.D.), you may be asked to send a "C.V." instead of a resume. C.V. is an abbreviation for the Latin phrase "*curriculum vitae*," which means "course of one's life." A C.V. is very similar to a resume, but it includes more details and additional headings not found on most resumes. For additional details on C.V. formats for your career field, please contact the Career Center, see our "Graduate and Professional School Guide," and/or your faculty advisor.

Where Do I Start?

Before you begin to write your resume, pull together all of your "stuff" -- your files, certificates, old resumes, calendars, and whatever else will help you remember all of your achievements. You can also start with your unique story…

What Is Your Unique Career Story?

Along with gathering together your achievements, you also need to take a moment and look at the "big picture" of who you are as a potential employee. A good start for this is to list your top 3 strengths or abilities in the workplace:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What life experiences helped you develop those skills? Consider your education, volunteer or community service, leadership, work experience, class projects, or other life experiences. Take a moment and for each strength describe in one or two sentences how you gained those skills or put those skills/abilities into practice:

Strength #1:_____

Strength #2:_____

Strength #3:_____

This exercise helps you begin to see the connection between your skills and abilities, and your experiences. These are the items you need to convey in your resume, cover letter, and interviews.

What is Included on a Resume?

Once you have all of your information together, you will need to begin placing your information into categories. The following categories appear on all resumes, regardless of what style you choose to use to display your information (see examples on pages 8-11):

Personal Information
At the top of your resume should be your name, address, one best phone number to reach you, E-mail address, and if applicable, your web page address.

Objective or Professional Summary (may be optional)
Your objective is a one sentence summary of what you are applying for, and how your skills, abilities, and knowledge can assist that organization in achieving whatever it is they say they exist to achieve (e.g.: service to society, or increased profits for stockholders, etc.). Your objective should be tailored for each job to which you apply.

Education
Your degree(s), major(s), minor(s), graduation date (month/year), institution, city, and state for every college degree. Do not include high school information, unless you are in your first or second year of college. Include either your major or overall GPA, whichever one is higher. Keep in mind that some employers will only interview students with at least a 3.0 GPA. Some employers will assume you have a low GPA if no GPA is listed. So, what to do? If your overall or major GPA is greater than 3.0, include it on your resume. If it is 2.5 or below, leave it off. In the middle? Ask for advice.

Honors or Awards
Provide the names of the awards, scholarships, fellowships, and special recognitions. Include year(s).

Related Courses or Projects
Include courses or course projects directly related to the job or career field to which you are applying. If you include this information under Education, do not repeat it within this separate category.

Work or Related Experience
Provide your job title, name of organization, city and state, and inclusive dates of employment (month/year you began to month/year you ended) for each job. Under that information, include your achievements – what you accomplished that was unique to you. Focus on measurable, quantifiable accomplishments, and the skills and knowledge you used in that experience. A simple listing of job duties does not convey your unique experience. Your related experience may include any experiences that relate to your career (cooperative education, internships, student teaching, student organizations, part-time or full-time work, or volunteer positions).

Leadership Experiences
List your leadership positions, organizational membership, community involvement (if not listed under separate Community/Volunteer Service heading), athletic team membership, and any other leadership experiences you want to showcase.

Campus/Community or Volunteer Service
Your role, name of the organization, city, state, dates, and achievements. Do not list separately if already included in your "Related Experience" section.

Professional Affiliations
List your memberships in student or professional organizations, but do not repeat information under your "leadership experiences" section. Include year(s).

Technical Competencies/Computer Skills
Provide a simple list of computer programs, hardware, software, laboratory/research skills, or other technical expertise.

Licensures and Certifications
Include all current licensure or certifications you have and expiration dates.

Languages
List the languages you can speak, read, write and understand and include your level of proficiency for each language (fluent, conversational, novice).

Write, Write, and Write Again

Typically, it takes three drafts to get your resume to a point that it is ready to be sent out as a shining example of your professional potential for employment.

Draft #1: Include everything.
Don't worry about format at this point. Focus on writing. Your resume might be too long but that is fine for your first draft ... put it aside, and come back to it the next day.

Draft #2: Pare down to the essentials.
Remember those three words that described your strengths? When you read over your resume, would someone who does not know you pick up those three strengths from your resume? If not, you are missing something … go back to your "stuff," and make sure you have included everything. As you write descriptions on your resume, do not use "I" statements. Since a resume is a summary of your accomplishments, you will use summary language where the "I" is inferred. Start with the action verb for your descriptions (see page 7 for a list of action verbs to help you best describe your achievements). Once you have your second draft, have someone critique your resume (the Career Center offers free resume critiques).

Draft #3: Final edit to one (or if you have earned it, two) page(s).
The general rule is you will have one page for every 10 years of experience. All employers prefer more succinct resumes over longer ones. Compare the job description to what you have on your resume; are you clearly conveying how well you meet that employer's needs? If not, you may need another draft. If so, you are ready to apply for a job!

As you write your resume, and share your drafts with others, two things are true:

1. *You will hear conflicting advice about the content and style of your resume*. When you receive conflicting advice, listen to those who are up-to-date on resume formats in your chosen profession.

2. *The more critically you and others read your resume, the better your resume will become*. Have you clearly demonstrated your top three skills, abilities, or experiences? Do your skills, abilities, and experience match well with the type of job you are hoping to obtain?

Simple Rules For A Good Resume

Font: Use 10-12 point font, in a simple "universal" (standard on most computer systems) font style, such as Arial, Century Schoolbook, Garamond, Tahoma, Times New Roman, or Verdana. Use bold, italics, capitalization to highlight important information and to convey an easy to read, attractive document.

Margins: Set your page margins between .5 – 1.0 inch, and make the margins equal on all four sides.

Length: One page is the goal. If you have extensive life or work experiences (more than 10 years), or an advanced degree, you may have earned two pages.

Paper: Hardcopies of your resume should be printed on good quality resume paper in a neutral (beige, ivory, white, light grey) shade. Buy matching envelopes; you can use the same paper for your cover and thank you letters.

Printer: Use a laser quality printer.

Ink: Black ink, no colors.

Watch Out for These Resume Errors

- Spelling errors, or incorrect words spelled correctly (e.g.: complement or compliment).
- Hiding pertinent facts or related work/ internship experience towards the end of the resume.
- Factual errors.
- Obviously overstated accomplishments.
- Abbreviations.
- Using personal pronoun ("I").
- Using full, grammatically complete sentences on your resume.
- Failing to demonstrate the required qualifications for the job.
- Showing a pattern of leaving jobs.
- Repeating the same information.
- Using past-tense for current information or current-tense for past information.
- Conveying a sloppy or unprofessional image.

Is it Done Yet???

After you have your resume in a final, polished form, keep an electronic file of your resume that can be updated at least every six months or whenever you have new achievements, jobs, or information. Always keep your resume updated for whatever career or professional opportunities may come your way.

What Are the Most Common Formats for Resumes?

Every career field differs in terms of resume format, order of content, and creativity. Some career fields expect more traditional resumes (e.g.: accounting, finance, business), some career fields welcome more creativity (arts, advertising, graphic design). Ask the Career Center and/or your faculty adviser for guidance on what style would work best for your career field. Regardless of your career field, keep this simple rule in mind: "Hit them with the good stuff first." What is "the good stuff?" It would be the information on your resume that is most directly related to the job or career.

There are three most common formats for résumés; one will best fit where you are now on your career journey:

Chronological: A chronological format is a "traditional" resume, and the format preferred by most employers.The information is presented in reverse chronological order, with the most recent item first in each category. Use this format if you are writing a resume for the first time (see Zippy Mascot's resume, pg. 8).

Combined/Functional: A combined resume format focuses attention on the key skills or abilities you have that are related to a specific career. The combined format is non-traditional, but it can help the employer see that you have the transferable skills related to a career. If you have limited or no experience in a career field, changing careers, returning to the work place after raising a family, or have moved frequently from job-to-job, a combined resume format is a better choice for you (see Ima Writer's resume, Page 10).

Scannable Version: Many employers will ask you to send/upload a resume that is a version that can be scanned and downloaded into their human resource or applicant database. A "scannable" version of a resume can be a plain text or ASCI version of your resume, with no boxes, lines, underlining, bold, unusual font, etc. (see Anne ReTurne's resume, Page 11).

To Template or Not to Template, That is the Question …

Word processing programs all contain resume templates. The template tools can be helpful for those who are not comfortable with computers, or simply need to throw together a resume quickly. Two drawbacks to templates are that the finished resume may look like many other resumes, and the templates get a bit "fussy" when you try to change things.

A Word About References

When you apply for a job, you may be asked to include a list of references with your resume. Who should you ask to be a reference? References should be able to provide employers positive and excellent information about your abilities, skills, accomplishments, and potential as a future employee. Select three to five individuals who can speak to your professional abilities, such as:

- Employers or supervisors (past or present)
- Faculty or academic advisers (past or present)
- Internship or volunteer experience supervisors (past or present)

Who should you not ask to be a reference?

1. Relatives or significant others
2. Friends
3. Anyone who would not give you a strong, positive, excellent recommendation

When should you provide references to an employer?

When requested, give a potential employer a Reference Page in addition to your resume. A reference page is a list of reference names, job titles, mailing addresses, phone numbers, E-mail addresses, and if not obvious, in what role that person knows or knew you (for example, supervisor). Include your name and the word "References" on the top of the page. List the references in alphabetical order, including their complete contact information. An example reference page is included in this handout (see page 9).

How do you get references?

1. In person, ask the individuals if they would be willing to be a good reference for you in your job search. If you cannot meet with the person, you can phone or email. Always ask first before listing someone as a reference.
2. Give your references a copy of your resume, and let them know the type of jobs or graduate schools you are applying to and looking for in your career search.
3. Verify each reference's job title, address, phone number, and e-mail to include on your reference list.
4. Send each reference a thank you note for agreeing to serve as a reference for you.

Go Forth and Get That Job...

Your resume is one part of your job search process. Do you need more information on cover letters, job search techniques, interviewing, informational interviewing, graduate school or anything else related to your career search? Stop by the Career Center -- we are here to help connect you to your career goals!

Free Resume Critiques!

The Career Center staff will critique your resume for free. All you need to do is either:

- Contact the Career Center at 330-972-7747 to make an appointment to meet with a career advisor to critique your resume, and also discuss your job or cooperative education and internship search.

OR

- Drop by the Career Center, Simmons Hall 301, during our walk-in hours for a brief (10 minute) resume critique. Walk-in hours vary by academic term, so please check the website for our current walk-in hours (http://www.uakron.edu/career).

"To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life."
~Robert Louis Stevenson

What Words Best Convey Your Skills, Abilities, and Accomplishments?

Use positive action verbs to explain the skills you possess in your resume and cover letter.

For example:

ADVERB

Actively
Completely
Consistently
Creatively
Distinctly
Eagerly
Economically
Effectively
Efficiently
Enthusiastically
Entirely
Extremely
Gradually
Independently
Overwhelmingly
Partially
Permanently
Professionally
Properly
Quarterly
Quickly
Rapidly
Regularly
Responsively
Selectively
Significantly
Skillfully
Solidly
Sufficiently
Systematically
Uniformly
Vigorously
Wisely

VERB

Accomplished
Accumulated
Achieved
Acted
Analyzed
Assured
Attained
Combined
Completed
Composed
Conducted
Continued
Convinced
Created
Designed
Developed
Discovered
Displayed
Earned
Encouraged
Enhanced
Established
Excelled
Expanded
Fulfilled
Hired
Implemented
Improved
Increased
Innovated
Insured
Invented
Managed
Mastered
Motivated
Negotiated
Offered
Organized
Overcame
Participated
Performed
Planned
Practiced
Prepared
Proved
Reduced
Secured
Sold
Strengthened
Succeeded
Supervised
Trained

MORE ACTION WORDS

Adapt
Administer
Advertise
Advise
Affect
Anticipate
Apply
Approach
Approve
Arrange
Assemble
Assess
Assign
Assist
Author
Build
Calculate
Catalog
Chair
Clarify
Collaborate
Compare
Conceive
Conceptualize
Consult
Contact
Contract
Control
Cooperate
Coordinate
Counsel
Decide
Define
Delegate
Demonstrate
Detail
Devise
Direct
Distribute
Draft
Edit
Educate
Enlarge
Enlist
Estimate
Evaluate
Examine
Execute
Expedite
Facilitate
Familiarize
Forecast
Formulate
Fund-raise
Generate
Govern
Guide
Handle
Identify
Index
Influence
Inform
Initiate
Inspect
Install
Institute
Instruct
Integrate
Interpret
Interview
Investigate
Lead
Maintain
Market
Mediate
Merchandise
Moderate
Modify
Monitor
Obtain
Operate
Order
Originate
Persuade
Present
Preside
Problem-solve
Process
Produce
Promote
Propose
Provide
Publicize
Publish
Qualify
Recommend
Reconcile
Record
Recruit
Rectify
Re-design
Renew
Report
Represent
Reorganize
Research
Resolve
Responsible
Review
Revise
Scan
Schedule
Screen
Serve
Speak
Staff
Standardize
Summarize
Support
Survey
Synthesize
Teach
Team-build
Transmit
Update
Utilize
Write

Chronological Format

Zippy Mascot

111 Spirit Lane
Akron, Ohio 44325
(330) 972- 1111, zmascot@uakron.edu

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a secondary education, language arts teaching position in an urban setting assisting students in learning and applying the effective language skills they will use throughout their lifetimes.

EDUCATION

The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio
Bachelor of Science, Secondary Education, anticipated May 2012
Concentration: Language Arts; Minor: Spanish
Licensure: Secondary Education, Language Arts and Spanish
Praxis: 187; GPA: 3.45/4.00 (overall)

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Student Teacher, AP English, Harris High School, Akron, Ohio March 2012 – May 2012
• Created an integrated unit on Shakespeare's impact on modern English.
• Published a parent/caretaker newspaper and participated in parent-teacher conferences.
• Implemented a variety of instructional strategies to include cooperative and active learning.
• Coordinated an after school academic tutoring program with student volunteers.

Student Teacher, Language Arts, Robinson High School, Akron, Ohio January 2012 – March 2012
• Utilized motivational teaching strategies to empower at-risk students.
• Designed a thematic unit on Roman Gods and Goddesses.
• Conducted a service learning project on conversation with the elderly.
• Incorporated educational technology into developmentally appropriate lessons.

Field Experience Student, Manchester High School, Manchester, Ohio August 2011 – December 2011
• Created an interactive bulletin board on themes of self-esteem in literature.
• Assisted teacher with whole language activities and reading remediation.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Orientation Leader, New Student Orientation, The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio Summers 2009-2011
• Assisted a diverse population of students with scheduling and registration.
• Conducted presentations on academic and social adjustment to hundreds of students and parents.
• Addressed parental concerns related to learning environment, campus safety and financial issues.

LANGUAGES

Fluent in English and Spanish

COMPUTER SKILLS

MAC and PC operating systems, Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint), Dreamweaver

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Golden Key National Honor Society, Secretary; Paul E. Martin Scholar; Mortar Board; Omicron Delta Kappa, Vice President; Akron Council of Education Students; Homecoming Committee; Habitat for Humanity.

REFERENCES

Please see attached page

Reference Page

References for Zippy Mascot

Dr. Andrea Andreavich
Professor, College of Education
Zook Hall 301
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-4208
330-972-2452
Andreavich@uakron.edu

Mr. Hilbert Hufnagel
Principal
Robinson High School
Akron, OH 44320
330-555-2393
Hh@rhs.edu

Mrs. Rowena Thornton
Department Chair, Language Arts
Beyer High School
Akron, OH 44324
330-555-4444
Rowena.thornton@gmail.com

Combined/Functional Format

IMA WRITER

2020 South Benton St. North Canton, OH 44720 (330)777-8888 E-mail: iwriter@aol.com

Career Focus

Seeking a Writer/Editorial position with a magazine, PR firm, book publisher, or newspaper. Willing to relocate.

Education

Bachelor of Arts, **English**, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 12/12

- Graduated *cum laude*; Member, Creative Writing Club; Member, University Yearbook
- Provided 100% financing for all educational expenses

Summary of Qualifications

Writing/Editing/Proofreading Skills

- Experienced in writing feature articles, short stories, and editorial pieces
- Created, designed, and wrote copy for brochures, flyers, and display ads
- Designed interactive web page site that provided pertinent information to clients

Public Relations/Marketing and Oral Communication Skills

- Skilled in motivating and interacting with the public
- Established contacts with producers and editors; made follow-up calls
- Designed interactive web page site that provided pertinent information to clients

Computer Skills

- Word-processing/Desktop Publishing: WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Publisher, Adobe, Java.
- Operating Systems: MAC and PC

Professional Attributes

- Team-spirited, yet able to work independently
- Communicate effective with colleagues, clients, and community
- Capable and flexible self-starter with an aptitude for learning new tasks quickly
- Strong work ethic and know-how to undertake most challenging situations

Employment

Business and Industry On-line News, San Francisco, CA 1/10-Present
Assistant Editor: Edit, rewrite, and proofread all articles for leading business periodical

WZIP Radio, Akron, OH 12/09-12/11
Writer, Newsroom: Wrote newscasts as intern for The University of Akron's FM radio station

The Buchtelite, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 8/08-12/11
Editorial Staff: Developed contacts with PR firms, authored several front page articles, and covered a variety of assignments

References Available Upon Request

Scannable Resume Format

Anne ReTurne
909 Hireme Lane
Akron, Ohio 44326
330-555-3636
At1@uakron.edu

OBJECTIVE
Finance or accounting internship

EDUCATION
The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio
- Bachelor of Science in Accountancy, anticipated May 2012
Major: Accounting
GPA: 3.79/4.00 (overall); 4.00/4.00 (major)
150 hours will be earned upon graduation

- Associate of Arts, May 2001
Major: Business Management Technology
Accounting Option

RELEVANT COURSE PROJECTS
"Cost-benefit analysis of Sarbanes-Oxley compliance in a world market economy."

RELATED EXPERIENCE
Tax Intern, 415Group, Canton, Ohio — January 2011 – present
- Prepare individual, corporate, trust, and payroll returns, W2s, 1099s
- Utilize Ultra Tax and GoSystems software
- Assist with compliance documentation

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Fairlawn, Ohio — March 2005 – present
Budget Committee Member — March 2010 - present
- Created database to track forty budget categories more efficiently
- Implemented check and balance procedures for church expenditures
- Provide monthly reports to the congregation in newsletter
Treasurer, Parent-Teacher Association — June 2005 – present
- Established budget and expenditure procedures
- Gave oral presentations on budgets at bi-monthly meetings
- Assisted in organizing annual "Care Carnival for Kids"

Accounting Association, The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio — 2010-present
- Treasurer (2011-present)
- Created "Akron Accountant Network" mentorship program (2010)

COMPUTER SKILLS
- Quick books, Peachtree, Ultra Tax, GoSystems, Microsoft Office Suite, 10 key

REFERENCE LIST
- Provided upon request