

Your Resume... Acceptable or Exceptional?

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The Importance of Your Resume

The purpose of your resume is to get an interview. Your job is to develop a unique and specific version of your resume for each position for which you apply that will catch the employer's eye and make them want to interview you. Did you know that employers spend less than 10 seconds reviewing one resume? They are dealing with a large volume of resumes and are looking for specific things. They put your resume into one of two piles – Maybe and No. They review the “maybe” resumes and choose candidates to interview. Your resume is your professional advertisement and you want an employer to read it and choose to interview **you**.

Use the employment advertisement or job description to help you in writing your resume. That way you will be able to highlight the experience and skills that you have that relate to the position for which you are applying. If you have no job description to refer to or are just beginning your job search, we encourage you to learn as much about the industry and jobs in which you might be interested. The more you know, the better able you will be to relate your skills and experiences to potential employers and your overall career objectives.

General Resume Tips

Content

- Keep the resume focused and targeted to a specific job, keeping in mind what you want to convey to the employer based on the skills, knowledge and abilities of that unique position. Think about what will make you an asset to the employer.
- Prioritize experience and education sections depending upon the employer's needs. Arrange your resume according to what is relevant to the job you are seeking.
- Focus on job specific skills as well as transferable skills.
 - Job Specific Skills: Java and HTML, compiling data with SPSS, tax returns
 - Transferable Skills: Teamwork, communication, time management
- Have **several targeted versions** of your resume if you have more than one area of focus.
- You must tailor each resume you send to the individual job. Do you need to re-order sections or bullets so that the most important or relevant information is at the top of that section?
- It is not necessary to list every job you have ever had. Again – think focused and relevant. Your resume is not an "employment history," it should highlight your qualifications and accomplishments. If you are targeting a certain job and only the last three positions are relevant, only list those.
- Avoid employment gaps. Consider listing unrelated jobs with no bullets to establish the employment history or providing an explanation of any gap.
- **ALWAYS send a cover letter** with your resume, unless otherwise stated by the employer.
- Be familiar with your resume and be able to talk about any detail on it. Interviewers will ask questions based on the information on your resume.

Format

- Format your resume consistently. Pay careful attention to the use of bold, italics, underlining, style of bullets, headings, tabs, length of all dashes, and whether you use periods or not at end of phrases.
- If acronyms are used, spell them out if there is a chance an employer will not know the meaning.

- Final draft must be free of errors! Make sure to proofread your resume several times for spelling, grammar, formatting, and clear wording. One error on your resume will leave a poor first impression with an employer and could cost you an interview! A Career Counselor can help you with this.
- **Font size:** the body of your resume should be 10.5-12 point. Use a clear, easy to read font such as Cambia, Arial, or Helvetica.
- **Length:** Advice varies. We advise students to keep it to one page. For more experienced candidates who have a lot of relevant experience (or if you are applying to a senior-level position), two pages may be necessary. If you have a two-page resume, make sure your name and "page 2" are on the second page. (*Smith, page 2*)
- **Margins:** While 1" is recommended, you can go as narrow as 0.5" if necessary.
- If you are running a few lines onto a second page, try decreasing font size by .5 (Example: 12 to 11.5) or making left/right or top/bottom margins smaller (Example: 1" to 0.8").
- Get several opinions about your resume - career counselor, professors, and professionals in the field you plan to pursue. However, do not think you have to use every suggestion. Evaluate suggestions and decide which work for you.
- DO NOT abbreviate anything except states (PA, NJ, etc.).
- DO NOT fold or staple your materials. (If going to a career fair consider bringing a mini stapler)
- DO NOT list personal interests.
- Always name your resume **firstname_last name_resume** when submitting electronically.
- **Make your voicemail messages professional.**
- **Check your email daily** – some employers will contact you via email.

Writing Your Resume

There is no "rule" for the order of the sections in your resume, but as you read more resumes, you will see that there is an order that is commonly used. Since most people read from top to bottom and left to right, we suggest putting the items most related/relevant to your desired job toward the top of your resume. You will need to judge what order to put your sections in based on the skills and experience you want to highlight.

Contact Information

- Include your name in bold (should be slightly bigger than main font).
- Include address, phone number, email address (Albright email or alternative email using your name is appropriate, but not something cute or questionable)
- If you do not live within commutable distance to the job for which you are applying, be sure to include an email and phone number where you can be reached. If it comes up in an interview, explain that you are living between two places until you are employed full-time.
- DO NOT put your contact information at the bottom of your resume.
- DO NOT have an oversized heading. Your space is valuable and that wastes valuable space.
- You may not want to include your physical address on versions of your resume you intend to post on job board sites where many employers have access to your information.

Objective

Keep in mind that you want to change your objective to match each job for which you apply. Avoid vague, overly wordy objectives, and general clichés such as “opportunity for advancement”, or “a challenging opportunity”. Some effective ways to express your objective are:

- 1) Name the job title:
 - A position as a Communications Specialist
- 2) Name the skills used:
 - A position counseling, writing, and directing volunteers
- 3) Name the setting:
 - A position at Bobcat Productions
 - A position in the field of Marketing
- 4) Combine types:
 - A Communications Specialist at XYZ, Inc.
 - To utilize counseling and directing skills in the position of Event Coordinator at Arc Convention Center
 - To work as a lobbyist in Washington D.C.

Summary or Profile

Another acceptable way to start your resume is with a **Summary** or **Profile** section that provides a “snapshot” of what you have to offer. This often replaces the Objective, but sometimes they are used together. In this section, focus on skills, accomplishments, and experiences that are **relevant** to the job you are seeking or sums up the experience you have that will lead to success in the position. Whatever you put here should be relevant to each job to which you are applying. Therefore, it will change for different jobs. This section is written in either paragraph or bulleted format or a combination of the two.

Many people make the mistake of creating a vague statement listing soft skills with no proof of successful use of these skills. *Anyone* can say they have skills. Statements that are carefully worded and provide a context in which you have used those skills make a bigger impact on employers. (Example: The difference between saying "excellent public speaking skills" and "Prepared speeches and spoke at more than a dozen local campaign events.")

Examples of Effective Summary or Profile Sections

Example 1:

Information Technology Professional

Networking: Troubleshoot campus network of 500+ computers and set up new department of 12 computers for campus and departmental network

Programming: Developed databases and new internal programs using Access, C++, and JavaScript

Web Development: Created 10+ websites for campus and clients using HTML and Front Page

Example 2:

SKILLS SUMMARY

Film and Media professional with wide range of knowledge in film, broadcasting, and digital media offers experience including:

- Cinematography
- Videography
- Grip
- Production Assistance
- Film & Tape Editing
- Live on-air announcing

Education

- Use reverse chronological order. List your current or most recent University/College first. We suggest listing degrees received at another institution (including Associates) ONLY if they add to your marketability (Example: A person with a Bachelor of Science in Business *may* want to list an Associate of Arts in Human Resources).
- Include name, city and state, degree(s), date of graduation (DO NOT note expected or anticipated), major (s) and tracks or programs.
- Put GPA on your resume if it is a 3.0 or higher. Write it out of a 4.0 (3.2/4.0).
- Include your GPA in your major if it is higher than your overall GPA. If listing both your cumulative and your major specific GPA, list the highest one first.
- If you studied abroad, include the school, its location, and semester(s) abroad.
- Do NOT include any high school information (unless you are a college freshman)
- You can also bullet items like academic honors and scholarships, seminars, and certificates that are relevant to your target jobs.
- Include *relevant* seminars, coursework or certifications; it shows a commitment to life-long learning and self-development. You may include it here or create a Professional Development section.

Relevant Coursework or Academic Projects & Papers

- There are several ways you can include your academics on your resume.
 - 1) List "Relevant Coursework." List the names of courses related to the jobs you are seeking in order of most relevance to the position for which you are applying.
 - 2) Choose several projects or papers you feel are related to the jobs you are seeking, and give details about them. You can format similar to an employment experience, giving the title of the course and using bullets to describe the project. For example, a 'business simulation' is a great project to give details, or a course where you 'designed' something, or focus on your leadership in another project you completed.
 - 3) Combine the two techniques above. Detail one to two projects or classes and then list "Other Relevant Coursework: Anatomy, Physics I & II, Neurology, Neuropsychology".
- This information could also be included in a "Relevant Experience" section where you list an internship, a course project, and a volunteer experience all together.

Research Projects

- Research experience could be in a section on its own, under academics.
- If you are going into a research related field or if you are pursuing graduate school, including this information is important. However, it may not carry as much weight with other employers unless it has relevant accomplishment statements.

Experience

Experience is by far the **most important area on your resume**, and often the hardest to effectively describe. The keyword here is ***Experience***, not Employment. While experience may *include* the jobs you have held (full-time and part-time), it also includes other relevant experience such as internships, academic projects, organizations, activities, volunteering, community service, and personal experience.

Your goal is to put your experience in order of importance to the employer. This may mean that you have to do a little re-arranging each time you send out your resume. To effectively market your experience, you may want more than one “experience” section. Here are a few examples of sections people have used to “sell” their skills:

- Related Experience; Other Work Experience; Campus and Community Involvement or Leadership Experience
- Professional Experience; Related Academic Projects; Volunteering Experience
- Sales & Marketing Experience; Additional Business Experience

To prepare for writing about your experience, you need to give some thought to all of the different experiences you have had. Remember, think about ALL of your experience (include class projects that are related).

Writing Accomplishment Statements versus Job Descriptions

Accomplishment statements illustrate the skills you used or actions you took in your jobs and the results of your “work.” They show your value, initiative, and success. Think about any **unique contributions** or **special projects** or assignments you worked on, how you affected the position or company, and how you performed as compared to others.

Not everything you did will be an accomplishment statement because you may not know the result; however, consider whether it would be helpful to at least include the **purpose** of doing something or to whom it was reported.

- Add quantifiers such as numbers, percentages, dollar amounts, and frequency (daily, monthly, etc.)
- **Avoid** using “responsible for” and “duties included.”
- Give yourself more credit! **Avoid** the words “assisted, helped, aided”. When people say “assisted”, often they mean they did something with a team or with a supervisor. (Example: Assisted manager with accounts receivable and accounts payable. Reworded: Generated invoices for clients and processed and recorded payments received [(with manager)... this is not necessary if you did the entire process, but you were not the only one processing payments]. (second bullet) Tracked accounts payable on spreadsheet, which manager used to issue payment to vendors.)

Formula for Writing Accomplishment Statements

Action Verb + Object + Context/Purpose + Results

- **Action verb:** *managed, planned, exceeded, initiated*
- **Object:** *managed website design project, planned a promotional event, exceeded monthly quota*
- **Context:** interesting detail: **describe** (why you did it, how, under what conditions, for whom, in what atmosphere, time frame, etc.) **and quantify** (# of people, size of budget, type of population)
- **Results:** the effect of your effort (quantify again when possible). Example: improved sales, increased enrollment

Examples of Accomplishments

- Managed and reconciled (action verb) → a cash drawer (object) → of up to \$3,000 daily (context and quantifiers), → maintaining accurate end-of-day balance (results).
- Exceeded (action verb) → every (quantifier) monthly (quantifier) sales quota (object) → for shoes, (context) → improving sales (results) 15% in six months (quantifiers).

- Initiated (action verb) → effective parenting program (object) → resulting in a 20% increase in enrollment (results and quantifier).
- Recruited (action) → 10 (quantifier) volunteers (object) → for Project Santa 2005, (context) → raising \$10,000 (results and quantifiers) and buying food and gifts to benefit the families of 100 local children (more results and quantifiers – after the "and" could also be a 2nd accomplishment statement).

***** Please see Appendix B for examples of common jobs and suggestions to effectively describe them. *****

Guidelines for Experience Section:

- Use reverse chronological order (most recent/present experience first).
- Include name of company, city and state, title held and dates of employment – including month, season, or semester)
- Describe what you did by beginning with action verbs (See Action Verbs list in Appendix A).
- Use past tense for past jobs and present tense for current positions.
- Give specific accomplishments instead of listing general duties.
- Focus on relevant information. Put those accomplishments most related to your target at the top.
- Avoid lumping several accomplishments into one bullet.
- Use synonyms instead of using the same word repeatedly. Preferably, use each verb only once.
- Do not write a laundry list for your job descriptions.
- Make sure formatting is consistent from one job to another (pay attention to the dates).
- Consider whether it is helpful or necessary to include experience or information unrelated to the job you are seeking. Sometimes people choose to list unrelated jobs to establish employment history.

Consider keeping a detailed version of your resume that lists *all* of your accomplishments and responsibilities (and not just those that focus on your target job). This is particularly helpful so that you can refer back to this resume later in your career to recall other accomplishments or experience that may be relevant to positions you are seeking at that time.

Campus and Community Experience

- List activities in order of relevance. Highlight leadership/responsibilities.
- You may choose to use different section titles such as Campus and Community Involvement or Volunteer Experience or Leadership Experience or Professional Memberships. You can include college, community and professional organizations.
- You may choose to set this section up similar to the 'work experience' section if you want to bullet specific accomplishments, leadership experience, or describe the relevance of the activity.
- Descriptions are not necessary. Only describe the ones you would like to highlight based on your objective.
- List collegiate sports. Details may be necessary, especially if you were team captain or served another leadership role.
- Think about the transferrable skills you can demonstrate through involvement in athletics, clubs/organizations, Greek life including collaboration, communication skills, teamwork, dedication, time management and so much more!

Skills

- Always have a Skills section.
- You should include **computer skills, language skills, laboratory skills** (when relevant).
- If you only have 'computer skills', you may choose to use that as your section title, and you can break computer skills into Software, Hardware, Operating Systems, and Computer Languages.
- If you have language skills, specify your skill level as basic spoken Spanish; conversational Spanish; fluent in reading, writing and speaking Spanish. We suggest avoiding "proficient" as interpretation of that word can vary widely.

References

- Put references on a separate piece of resume paper with the same heading as your resume.
- Include: Name, title, company, company address, phone, email.
- Consider including a line describing how you know them and for how long (for example: She was my supervisor at ABC company for three years; He was my professor for three of my major courses).
- Have your references ready before you start sending resumes. Some companies ask for them up front or during the screening interview. **Only provide them when asked** or take your reference document with you to the interview (if not already provided).
- Do not put *References available upon request* on your resume. It is assumed you will provide them when asked.
- If employers ask for three references, consider listing four to five (preferably employers, co-workers or faculty). If one of your references is unreachable, this gives the employers alternatives to contact.
- **Ask permission from your references** before giving their contact information to employers.
- Supply each reference with an updated copy of your resume so they can speak intelligently about you.
- Consider sending them a job description after you have given the employer their name as a reference.
- Give them a 'head's up' call or email if you expect that an employer is going to call them.
- If you know that they have been called, make sure you send a thank you note.
- If it has been several months since you began your job search and you are still looking, touch base with references to make sure they are still agreeable to being your reference.

ONLINE AND SCAN-ABLE RESUMES

Some companies ask you to submit your resume online. There are several types of online submissions of which you should be aware.

- Email attachment
- Word document upload to website
- Scan-able (website database); text file

Note: If the employer does not specify that they are *only* accepting resumes online, consider applying online and also sending or dropping off a hard copy on good resume paper. In your letter that you mail or drop off indicate that you also applied to the online system.

EMAIL ATTACHMENT & WORD DOCUMENT UPLOAD

- 1) Save your resume as **firstname-lastname.doc**. Chances are the employer will be saving your resume to a folder with other applicants' resumes. How hard would it be to find your resume in a folder with several documents titled 'resume.doc'?
- 2) ALWAYS send a cover letter (unless the employer states specifically not to).
- 3) **For email:** Format like a formal business letter, but start with the Greeting line (Dear Mr. Smith:).
 - **For document upload:** Write a regular formal business letter (including addresses). Do not leave space to sign it at the end. You can change the font for your name to a script if you like. By including a cover letter, you make it clear why you are attaching your resume and to which job you are applying. It also informs an employer that you are able to write professionally in email – which is a BIG concern of employers today.
- 4) Use a professional or nondescript email address for correspondence. Put the job title and/or a reference number in the subject line. At the end of your email cover letter, it is a good idea to include in your last paragraph, "Attached is my resume for your review," so they do not miss your attachment.
- 5) ALWAYS check the upload or attachment. Sometimes formatting changes slightly!

SCAN-ABLE & TEXT DOCUMENTS

To save manpower in searching through stacks of resumes, many companies use resume-scanning software to “read” resumes for them. Both paper and electronic resume submissions (and sometimes cover letters) are “scanned” into a database. The software searches for keywords and phrases entered into the software by the employer. Often, these ‘keywords’ are exact wording from the job description.

Human resources can tell you if the employer scans resumes. If they use scanning software, review the specific requirements of the database/software. There is usually an overview on their website.

Sometimes, a company uses software requiring you to upload a "text" version of your resume. A text file does not accept any formatting.

General Rules for Writing Scan-able (text) Resumes

- Left align your text.
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman or Calibri, preferably 11-12 point font.
- Do not use bold, italics, underlines, shadows or unusual fonts. Use CAPS to highlight headings.
- Do not use bullets, parentheses, brackets, tabs, graphics, boxes, lines, shading, highlighting or column formats. Use asterisk for bullets and blank lines between sections.
- Make sure no characters are touching each other (if you have dashes or slashes in your dates, make sure you add spaces on either side of the dates: March 2011 – January 2012)
- Put your contact information on separate lines at the top of the page.
- Length is not important in a text file. If you can see the page breaks include your name and page number.
- Use words and jargon from the industry. If you use acronyms, also spell them out.

Sample Keywords

Supervisor, manager, CPA, IRS, Spanish, will travel, promotion, sales, competitive analysis, trainer, results-oriented, BS, Bachelor of Science, chemistry, will relocate, C++, design, project management, testing, software design, consulting, Word, counseling, mechanical engineer, UNIX, strategic planning, hotel administration, video production.

Top Employer Resume Pet Peeves

- 1) Spelling errors, typos and poor grammar
- 2) Failing to explain relevant accomplishments
- 3) Missing contact info or only your name at the top of the resume and your contact information at the bottom
- 4) Missing or inaccurate dates
- 5) Missing or unprofessional email address
- 6) Using paragraphs instead of bullets
- 7) Burying important information in the resume
- 8) Poor formatting or use of templates or tables
- 9) Personal information not relevant to the job
- 10) Broad or vague objectives or meaningless introductions
- 11) Poor font choice and inconsistent font size or style
- 12) Pictures or graphics
- 13) NOT including an easy-to-follow summary of skills and accomplishments
- 14) Resumes written in first or third person
- 15) Laundry list of every detail of every job, making resume unnecessarily long

Appendix A

Communication/ People Skills	Solidified	Developed	Organizational Skills	Changed	Streamlined	Extracted
Addressed	Suggested	Effectuated	Approved	Completed	Strengthened	Formulated
Advertised	Summarized	Employed	Arranged	Considered	Succeeded	Fostered
Alerted	Synthesized	Enabled	Catalogued	Consolidated	Supervised	Gathered
Arbitrated	Transcribed	Encouraged	Categorized	Contracted	Surpassed	Hypothesized
Arranged	Translated	Evaluated	Centralized	Controlled	Sustained	Identified
Articulated	Unified	Explained	Changed	Converted	Targeted	Inspected
Authored	Wrote	Facilitated	Charted	Coordinated	Terminated	Interviewed
Awarded	Helping Skills	Focused	Classified	Cultivated	Tightened	Invented
Boosted	Activated	Followed up	Coded	Dealt with	Tripled	Investigated
Briefed	Adapted	Fostered	Collected	Decided	Undertook	Learned
Broadened	Advocated	Grouped	Compiled	Delegated	Data/Financial Skills	Located
Clarified	Aided	Guided	Corrected	Developed	Administered	Manipulated
Collaborated	Answered	Identified	Corresponded	Devised	Adjusted	Measured
Communicated	Arranged	Individualized	Dispersed	Directed	Allocated	Organized
Composed	Assessed	Informed	Disseminated	Disseminated	Analyzed	Predicted
Condensed	Assisted	Instilled	Distributed	Diverted	Appraised	Procured
Conferred	Attended	Instructed	Documented	Documented	Assessed	Reevaluated
Consulted	Checked	Inventoried	Executed	Earned	Audited	Researched
Contacted	Clarified	Motivated	Filed	Effectuated	Augmented	Reviewed
Conveyed	Coached	Mentored	Formed	Eliminated	Balanced	Searched
Convinced	Collaborated	Persuaded	Found	Emphasized	Boosted	Solved
Corresponded	Contributed	Reevaluated	Generated	Employed	Budgeted	Summarized
Dealt with	Cooperated	Simulated	Implemented	Enforced	Calculated	Surveyed
Debated	Counseled	Stimulated	Incorporated	Enhanced	Checked	Systematized
Defined	Cultivated	Taught	Inspected	Established	Computed	Targeted
Delivered	Demonstrated	Tested	Inventoried	Executed	Conserved	Tested
Described	Diagnosed	Trained	Logged	Extended	Corrected	Transcribed
Developed	Educated	Transmitted	Maintained	Finalized	Determined	Technical Skills
Directed	Encouraged	Tracked	Matched	Founded	Developed	Adapted
Discussed	Ensured	Tutored	Maximized	Fulfilled	Doubled	Applied
Diverted	Expedited	Creative Skills	Merchandised	Gained	Earned	Assembled
Drafted	Facilitated	Acted	Monitored	Generated	Estimated	Boosted
Edited	Familiarized	Adapted	Obtained	Handled	Fixed	Built
Elicited	Fostered	Began	Operated	Headed	Forecasted	Calculated
Enlisted	Furthered	Combined	Ordered	Hired	Found	Computed
Explained	Guided	Composed	Organized	Hosted	Grossed	Conserved
Expressed	Helped	Conceptualized	Prepared	Implemented	Identified	Constructed
Followed up	Insured	Condensed	Processed	Improved	Invested	Converted
Formed	Intervened	Created	Provided	Incorporated	Lowered	Debugged
Formulated	Matched	Customized	Purchased	Increased	Managed	Designed
Fulfilled	Mentored	Designed	Recorded	Initiated	Manipulated	Determined
Furnished	Minimized	Developed	Refined	Inspected	Marketed	Developed
Improvised	Motivated	Devised	Registered	Instituted	Measured	Engineered
Incorporated	Pinpointed	Directed	Reserved	Issued	Netted	Fabricated
Influenced	Prevented	Displayed	Responded	Launched	Planned	Fortified
Interacted	Provided	Drew	Reviewed	Led	Prepared	Identified
Interpreted	Ran	Effectuated	Routed	Lowered	Programmed	Installed
Interviewed	Referred	Entertained	Scheduled	Managed	Projected	Launched
Involved	Rehabilitated	Established	Screened	Mastered	Qualified	Mastered
Joined	Represented	Fashioned	Separated	Merged	Raised	Maintained
Judged	Resolved	Finalized	Submitted	Motivated	Reconciled	Modernized
Lectured	Settled	Formulated	Supplied	Navigated	Reduced	Operated
Listened	Simplified	Founded	Standardized	Orchestrated	Reevaluated	Overhauled
Lobbied	Sold	Illustrated	Structured	Organized	Researched	Pinpointed
Marketed	Sponsored	Improvvised	Systematized	Organized	Retrieved	Pioneered
Mediated	Staffed	Initiated	Tracked	Originated	Reversed	Placed
Moderated	Supported	Innovated	Transformed	Overhauled	Saved	Printed
Negotiated	Supplied	Instituted	Updated	Oversaw	Tabulated	Programmed
Observed	Supported	Integrated	Validated	Piloted	Tightened	Rectified
Outlined	Unified	Introduced	Verified	Planned	Traded	Redesigned
Participated	United	Invented	Management/ Leadership Skills	Presided	Tripled	Regulated
Partnered	Volunteered	Modeled	Accelerated	Prioritized	Produced	Remodeled
Persuaded	Teaching Skills	Modified	Accomplished	Produced	Ran	Repaired
Presented	Adapted	Originated	Achieved	Received	Research Skills	Replaced
Promoted	Advised	Performed	Acquired	Recognized	Activated	Rerouted
Proposed	Attended	Photographed	Administered	Recommended	Analyzed	Restored
Publicized	Awarded	Planned	Alerted	Reorganized	Ascertained	Revamped
Reasoned	Broadened	Published	Analyzed	Replaced	Clarified	Solved
Reconciled	Changed	Redesigned	Appointed	Restored	Collected	Specialized
Recruited	Checked	Rendered	Approved	Reviewed	Compared	Standardized
Referred	Clarified	Revised	Assigned	Saved	Conducted	Studied
Reinforced	Coached	Revitalized	Attained	Scheduled	Critiqued	Succeeded
Reported	Communicated	Refined	Augmented	Secured	Detected	Tailored
Resolved	Conducted	Shaped	Authorized	Selected	Determined	Upgraded
Responded	Coordinated	Sketched	Became	Served	Diagnosed	Used
Solicited	Critiqued	Solved	Briefed	Sold	Evaluated	Utilized
Specified	Delivered	Tailored	Chaired	Staffed	Examined	
Spoke	Described	Transformed		Started	Experimented	
					Explored	

Title	Common Description	More Effective Description
Cashier	Operate cash register	Perform cash and credit transactions of up to \$1000
		Balance cash drawer of up to \$1000 [at end of shift / daily] with consistently high level of accuracy
		Ensure that discounts are applied properly to customer transactions
		Selected out of 15 employees to train all new cashiers
		Processed customer returns accurately and returned merchandise to stock
Floor Associate	Stock merchandise	Designed eye catching floor displays for marketing merchandise
		Improved sales of promotional items by 15% through ["creative selling" / changing the item's location and display]
		Received several written customer commendations for assisting with merchandise selection
		Provided excellent customer service by assisting customers in locating items by escorting them to the display, contributing to increasing sales
		Learned details of most items in stock, improving the accuracy of answering customer requests, including what merchandise the store carries and the differences between products
		Participated in creative sales initiative by pairing customer selected merchandise with other compatible items
Customer Service	Provide excellent customer service	Resolved customer complaints and answered questions in person and over the phone
		Improved items scanned per minute by 30% in one month
		Responded to emergency situations quickly such as injury or lost child and following store procedures
	Key holder	Replace supervisor in her absence, managing staff of up to 15 in a fast-paced environment
		Process in-store credit applications accurately and timely, to ensure maximum customer satisfaction
	Take orders	Process all customer requests including taking order, contacting customer, arranging delivery and accepting telephone payments
Answered phone (or questions)	Resolved customer complaints and answered questions accurately	
Assistant Manager	Assist managers	Trained three new employees
		Reconciled safe of up to \$10,000 and balanced three cash drawers at end of shift
		Received Employee of the Month award three times in a year
	Managed and supervised staff	Supervised and assigned tasks to staff of 3-5
	Scheduled shifts for staff of eight	Developed weekly staff schedule for ten employees, working around multiple time conflicts
Started new employee programs	Created and implemented two employee relations programs, resulting in 33% reduction in turnover	
Server	Served food to guests	Provided excellent customer service by anticipating customers' needs
		Exceeded guests' expectations, evidenced by personal guest requests and positive comments
		Managed orders for 2-8 guests at eight tables simultaneously
Office Assistant	Data entry	Entered statistics into database 5 hours per day with consistently high accuracy
	Typing, filing, answering phones	Maximized time management while simultaneously answering multi-line telephone, filing, and developing documents for the Director
	Answered phones	Handled high volume of incoming calls daily on multi-line telephone
	Wrote procedures manual	Authored 88-page procedures manual for museum zoological research department

Camp Counselor	Watch campers overnight	Ensure a safe outdoor camping environment by taking regular head counts of campers
	Do various activities each day	Involve campers in hands-on activities such as music, arts and crafts, and swimming
Baby Sitter	Watch neighborhood children after school or on weekends	Follow directions from parents to maintain an established after-school routine which prevents confusion and behavioral upsets
		Enforce family rules such as healthy eating and finishing homework
		Collaborate with children and answer questions to help them finish their homework in a fun manner
Lifeguard	Watch swimmers to prevent drowning or injuries	Team with three other lifeguards to ensure all areas of the pool are being watched
		Remind patrons of the pool rules and give warnings to prevent injuries and drowning
		Successfully saved 2 lives by acting quickly when a patron was in danger
Dining Hall or Catering	Serve food	Respond to student and staff needs by answering questions about ingredients
		Provide appropriately sized servings which results in less wasted food
	Set up tables	Efficiently use layout plans and requests to prepare for special events
Tutor	Provide homework help	Present workshops for other tutors on different learning styles
		Maintain a flexible schedule to meet the needs of assigned students, resulting in less canceled appointments
		Meet with four students once a week throughout the semester to review class notes and answer questions
		Tailor way of teaching to meet the needs of the student for increased understanding
Event Planner	Planned an event for 140 guests	Planned and budgeted an event for 140 guests, coordinating with the vendors such as the caterer, DJ and photographer
Lab Assistant	Teach students how to use equipment	Lead students through lab activities to apply lessons from lecture in a hands-on manner
		Encourage students to practice safety within the lab by preventing participation until they use equipment properly
		Clean slides and other equipment and put materials back in their place immediately to prevent confusion for other students
Admission Ambassador	Give tours	Lead prospective students and their families around campus while providing insight of the facilities and resources
		Communicate effectively by answering questions and sharing personal anecdotes to relieve college-related concerns
		Collaborate with other members of the Admission staff to plan and implement Open Houses for prospective students

Appendix C

Resume Critique Guide

- Use this sheet to critique your resume. Try to look at it from the employer's point of view. What are they looking for? Is it professional looking? If you were the employer, would you interview someone based on this resume?
- As you go along, mark the resume where there are errors or when something is unclear.
- When you are finished, are there any "no's"? Resumes need to be free of errors! Even ONE mistake is unacceptable.
- Have someone else critique your resume to catch any mistakes you may miss.

Contact Information	YES	NO
Are name, address, phone, and an email included? Is it a professional/non-descript email?		
Education		
Is the institution, city, state, major, and GPA (over 3.0) included? Is GPA written as 3.4/4.0?		
Related Courses		
Are 6-8 classes listed that are related to the jobs being sought? (If taking now, write "current")		
OR Do you describe course projects, using bullets that can point out relevant experience otherwise missing from your resume? (Format like "experience." Course name, college, term. Include title of project if you are talking about one project. If you are talking about several projects, skip title and go to bullets.)		
Work Experience		
Is the work experience in reverse chronological order?		
Are the company, city, state, your job title, and dates employed (month and year) included?		
Are verbs used to describe your accomplishments and duties performed? Do you use a variety of verbs?		
Are the action phrases consistent with past (previous jobs) or present tense (current jobs)?		
Are your descriptions worded clearly and easy to understand?		
Are your accomplishments and problem solving skills (the results or effects of your actions) included?		
Do you have a clear sense of accomplishments within each position?		
Skills		
Are computer skills listed? Are Microsoft Office components listed separately?		
Are language skills included, if applicable? If so, is the candidate's skill level clear (basic; conversational; fluent in writing and/or speaking and/or reading)?		
Honors and Awards		
Is the name of the honor/award and organization spelled out (not abbreviated)?		
Are the dates included for the awards?		
Activities		
Are the activities on campus or in the community? If an office was held, is it included?		
Are personal interests excluded?		
Are all volunteer activities listed (for first year students) or related volunteer activities for other candidates?		
Additional Headings		
Can any categories be combined?		
Is there a need to create a new section (to highlight relevant information and move it toward the top)?		
Overall Format & Layout		
Is the information well-balanced across the page (not too much white on one side than the other)?		
Is the formatting (bold, bullets, size of dashes, spacing, etc) consistent?		
Are the typeface and font consistent? Is the size 10-12 point (preferably Times New Roman or Calibri)?		
Are there any spelling or grammar errors? Is the resume free of abbreviations (with exception of states)?		
If graphics or large fonts are used, does it look professional? Is it risky for the types of jobs being sought?		
Relevance & Effectiveness		
Has extraneous information been removed?		
Does the material included serve a purpose (such as show related experience, leadership, work history, etc)?		
Is it easy to get a good idea of the applicant's qualifications?		
Is the resume limited to one page? (two pages for seasoned professionals or career changers)		