

Resume Writing Guidelines

MACALESTER
COLLEGE



Career Development Center

Kagin Commons, First Floor
Monday-Friday 8 AM-4:30 PM
(651) 696-6384

www.macalester.edu/cdc

cdc@macalester.edu

RESUME OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A RESUME?

A **resume** is a ONE PAGE summary, highlighting your skills, education, and experience. Written for employers, its purpose is to convince the reader that you have the qualifications necessary to fulfill the needs of the posted opening. A **curriculum vitae**, or CV, provides a more detailed description of academic achievements and experiences. A CV is often submitted when applying for graduate school admission or graduate assistantships. While a resume often describes job experiences and skills in a short, concise format, a CV is slightly longer (2-4 pages) and emphasizes academic achievements, publications, research, awards, and teaching experience.

WHEN IS A RESUME NEEDED?

There are several steps in the job search process. Note that writing an effective resume is easier when the first three steps in this process are completed. Many students begin at step four, thus making their task more difficult.

1. **WHAT ARE MY SKILLS/INTERESTS/VALUES/EXPERIENCES?** Self assessment helps you take an objective look at your qualifications.
2. **WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?** Your academic career is underway. Next, identify job, field, industry and graduate school possibilities within your major field.
3. **BEGIN COMPANY RESEARCH.** Identify relevant companies and organizations with job openings.
4. **WRITE YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER.** Produce correspondence that will encourage employers to pursue an interview.
5. **DEVELOP AND HONE YOUR INTERVIEWING SKILLS.** Practice talking about your skills and experiences in person. Ideally your excellent written materials will be followed by a great in-person meeting.
6. **FOLLOW-UP!!** Send thank you letters immediately following your interview. Stay in touch with company personnel in upcoming weeks.

WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?

- Look at *samples*. Pay attention to what you find appealing and impressive and how others describe their skills and experience.
- Complete a *skills assessment*. Your resume should clearly reflect your top skills. See page 3 (action verbs) to find descriptive words to describe your skills.
- Compile your *work history*. List the names of employers, title of jobs, locations (city and state), dates worked and a brief overview of your duties. You will refer to this often when writing your resume.
- Read the *job description* of the position for which you are applying. Try to reflect that language in your resume and highlight aspects of past jobs that are most applicable to the posted opening.
- *Sit down and write!* Don't edit or wordsmith until you complete your first copy. Remember, it is a rough draft and your initial attempt does not need to be a literary masterpiece.
- *Visit the Career Development Center!* Our staff will give feedback and make suggestions for revisions. Make an appointment or visit during our walk-in hours.

RESUME COMPONENTS

Identification

Include name, email, telephone number, and current address. Add a permanent address (parents) if you expect to move within the next six months or if you are job searching in that area.

Education

Include name and location of university, degree and expected graduation date, major, minor, and GPA (if over 3.0). Also include study abroad experiences, but leave off high school information unless you are a first or second year student or are job searching in your hometown. Including relevant coursework is also an option, but limit to 3-6 courses that are related to the job you are applying for.

Experience

If you have had several jobs, consider categorizing the most relevant jobs under a separate heading (Related Experience). Use action verb phrases and bullet format to highlight job responsibilities and skills. Do not hesitate to include “student jobs” (retail, food service, etc) to demonstrate work ethic and teamwork. It is also appropriate to include work that you were not paid for, but still gained valuable experience.

Activities & Leadership

This section will reflect extracurricular activities such as student organizations, athletics, and campus events. List any leadership or elected positions.

Skills

Include technical/computer skills, fluency or proficiency in another language, lab or special equipment expertise, or certifications (CPR) and licensures that are relevant to the position you are applying for.

Additional Headings to Consider:

Objective

This is a brief statement which summarizes your career goals and informs the reader of the position you are applying for and the skills you have to offer.

Honors

List honors, academic awards, and scholarships that you have received.

Community/Volunteer Service

Involvement with community organizations or events should be highlighted.

Publications & Presentations

List any published materials that you have written or co-authored or relevant presentations you have conducted.

Professional Organizations

Include membership information and list any offices you have held within the organization.

ACTION VERBS FOR DESCRIPTIVE BULLETS

Academic, Educational and Research	structure utilize	guide handle	design determine
Artistic and Creative	write	hire	develop
arrange	Management and Leadership	implement	devise
assemble	accomplish	improve	diagram
author	activate	inaugurate	direct
build	adapt	increase	discover
chart	address	initiate	distribute
co-author	administer	innovate	document
conceive	advise	instruct	draft
conceptualize	affect	interview	earn
construct	allocate	institute	edit
contract	amend	launch	engineer
convert	amplify	lead	enhance
create	analyze	manage	estimate
cultivate	appoint	monitor	evaluate
design	approve	motivate	examine
develop	arbitrate	negotiate	explain
devise	arrange	organize	explore
diagram	assemble	originate	extract
draft	assess	overhaul	formalize
engineer	attain	pioneer	formulate
enhance	attract	plan	find
enlarge	authorize	preside	frame
form	award	program	gather
formulate	broaden	prompt	generate
generate	budget	propose	identify
improve	build	recommend	inform
improvise	change	recruit	instruct
innovate	conclude	shape	interpret
inspire	conduct	strategize	introduce
install	control	supervise	invent
invent	convince	train	investigate
originate	coordinate	achieve	originate
overhaul	counsel	acquire	perceive
perceive	create	address	present
perform	delegate	analyze	produce
pinpoint	demonstrate	assess	prove
pioneer	determine	assist	publish
plan	develop	author	report
produce	devise	avail	research
publish	direct	calculate	review
purchase	employ	chart	revise
redesign	encourage	co-author	solve
reduce	enforce	collaborate	study
refine	enhance	collect	survey
reorganize	enlarge	compile	teach
replace	establish	compute	test
restore	examine	conceive	translate
restructure	execute	conceptualize	tutor
revamp	expedite	conclude	write
revise	explain	condense	accomplish
revitalize	facilitate	contribute	actuate
revitalize	form	correct	adapt
shape	generate	create	anticipate
stage	govern	define	appraise
streamline		demonstrate	assemble

attain
attract
authorize
budget
build
centralize
chart
combine
conceive
conceptualize
condense
conduct
consolidate
construct
contract
coordinate
create
decentralize
design
determine
develop
devise
direct
discover
engineer
enhance
enlarge
establish
expedite
extend
fortify
generate
implement
improve
inaugurate
incorporate
increase
incur
inform
initiate
innovate
install
interpret
introduce
institute
invent
launch
localize

market
modify
negotiate
operate
organize
originate
overhaul
pioneer
plan
prepare
present
procure
produce
program
promote
publicize
regulate
reorganize
replace
resolve
restore
restructure
revamp
revise
revitalize
salvage
save
sell
streamline
structure
supply
systematize
Technical
accelerate
adapt
analyze
audit
augment
automate
balance
calculate
centralize
chart
collect
compile
compute
consolidate
control

decrease
define
design
determine
develop
devise
diagram
engineer
estimate
evaluate
examine
forecast
formulate
generate
interface
minimize
plan
prepare
replace
process
program
promote
redesign
reorganize
research
simplify
solve
survey
trace
translate
write
affect
amplify
anticipate
assist
assume
attain
augment
automate
avail
broaden
challenge
change
clarify
collaborate
conceive
conceptualize
conclude
conduct

contribute
coordinate
create
determine
develop
devise
discover
earn
encourage
enhance
enrich
explain
facilitate
fulfill
gain
identify
implement
improve
incur
instill
investigate
locate
maintain
nurture
obtain
operate
perceive
pinpoint
prepare
prompt
relate
represent
resolve
review
schedule
serve
stimulate
suggest
support
utilize

Include GPA if over 3.0

SAMPLE: SOCIAL SCIENCES/EDUCATION

John Dough

1606 Grand Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105 • (651) 696-6777 • jdough@hotmail.com

Education

Macalester College, Saint Paul, MN
Bachelor of Arts, GPA 3.5/4.0

Expected Graduation: May 2009

- Major: Sociology
- Minor: Educational Studies

Include study abroad, but leave off high school information unless you are a first or second year student

Semester Abroad, Santiago, Chile

Coursework taught entirely in Spanish, participated in home stay

Spring 2007

Work Experience

Lakeside Elementary School, Saint Paul, MN

September 2007-Present

Classroom Assistant

- Support teachers and staff with record keeping and filing
- Help foster development of students by incorporating experiential education into the curriculum
- Provide academic and personal support for students in and out of the classroom on an individual basis

Macalester Residential Life, Saint Paul, MN

Fall 2007

Office Assistant

- Organized documents and correspondence, greeted students, and answered and directed phone calls
- Planned and attended several residence hall events

Planned Parenthood, Minneapolis, MN

Fall 2007

Volunteer Services Intern

- Created system for archiving and tracking out-dated materials and records
- Researched recruitment outlets, determined requirements and costs, developed recommendations for targeted recruitment efforts

• Include name of organization, dates, location
• Highlight relevant skills

Journeys Summer Program, Madison, CT

Summer 2006

Teacher and Residential Assistant

- Supervised and lived with 14 students for six weeks at the summer learning program
- Developed curriculum for "Coastal Journeys," a mini-course on coastal biology
- Taught "Beginning Photography" class to seventh and eighth grade students

Activities

- Civic Engagement Center, *Leader in Service*
- Macalester College Admissions Office, *Volunteer Tour Guide*
- Ultimate Frisbee Team, *Captain*
- Sociology Club, *Vice-President*

Include computer, language, & technical skills

Skills

Language: Fluent in Spanish, conversational in German

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Dreamweaver, Paint Shop Pro, SPSS

SAMPLE: FIRST YEAR STUDENT

JANICE J. DÖ

jdo@hotmail.com
1600 Grand Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105
(651) 555-5555

OBJECTIVE : (insert)

EDUCATION:

Macalester College, Saint Paul, MN

Expected Major: Psychology

Expected Minor: International Studies

Relevant Coursework: Research Methods, Statistics, Developmental Psychology

Bachelor of Arts Degree Expected May 2010

Include relevant coursework to demonstrate knowledge and interests related to the position

West High School, Saint Cloud, MN

GPA: 3.9

Honor Roll 2005-2007

Graduated June 2007

EXPERIENCE

Macalester College Career Development Center, Saint Paul, MN

Career Assistant

September 2007 - Present

- Assist students with career research and exploration activities
- Provide students with information related to major and career choices
- Design and create promotional materials to advertise services of the office

Amy's Deli, Saint Cloud, MN

Cashier/ Server

Operated cash register, answered phone, greeted customers

Served food and beverages to customers in a fast-paced environment

May - August 2007

Camp Northwood, Monticello, MN

Counselor

Assisted staff at Arts & Crafts station with teaching, clean-up and inventory

Organized and led activities for children ages 7-14

May - July 2006

LEADERSHIP

Student Government, West High School, Saint Cloud, MN

Class President

September 2006 - May 2007

- Directed and organized weekly student government meetings, planned student events

EXTRACURRICULAR AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Asian Student Alliance, Knight Moves Chess Club, Intramural Volleyball, Mock Trial

SKILLS

Language: Spanish Fluency

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel & PowerPoint

SAMPLE: SCIENCE/MATH

Juan R. Physicist

1600 Grand Avenue St. Paul, MN 55105 • (612) 888-8888 • prphys@macalester.edu

EDUCATION

Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

Majors: Physics and Mathematics, Minor: Statistics

Bachelor of Arts degree expected May 2008

GPA: 3.35/4.0

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

Research Assistant, Physics Department

May 2007 – Present

- Deposit hydrogenated amorphous silicon-germanium using dc sputtering for use in thin film solar cells
- Examine the photoconductivity properties of various samples of hydrogenated amorphous silicon-germanium using LabView compatible data acquisition devices
- Analyze the hydrogen content of hydrogenated amorphous silicon-germanium using Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy

Teaching Assistant, Mathematics Department

September 2006 – December 2006

- Provided individualized assistance to students in Multivariable Calculus
- Assessed and graded assignments for students, held weekly office hours

SKILLS

Laboratory

- Experience with electro-mechanical systems through Laboratory Instrumentation lab work, proficient in IR Spectroscopy, and vacuum evaporation

Computer

- Proficient in Windows-based systems, Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, and WordPerfect, working knowledge of Mathematica and LabView

Languages

- Fluent in French, Conversational in Spanish

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

Volleyball Manager, Men's Volleyball Team

August 2005 – October 2007

- Collected, compiled, and analyzed team statistics

Switchboard Operator

June 2006 – August 2006

- Directed phone calls and responded to questions related to the college

Guest Host, Alumni House

July 2005 – December 2005

- Reserved rooms for prospective guests and coordinated formal reception events

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

- *Chairperson and African Studies Liaison*, AFRIKA! Student Organization
- *Leader in Service*, Macalester College Community Service
- *Volunteer*, Open Arms of Minnesota
- *Student Member*, American Physical Society
- *Macalester College Representative*, Outreach Opportunity League Conference, Vanderbilt University

SAMPLE RESUME: ECONOMICS

Elsa Economics

1600 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105
(651) 444-4444, ellecon@macalester.edu

EDUCATION

Macalester College, St. Paul, MN Bachelor of Arts expected 5/2009
Majors: Economics and International Studies, *Minor:* Spanish GPA 3.6/4.0
Honors: Recipient of the Kofi Annan International Scholarship awarded to students with exceptional academic and personal records, Omicron Delta Epsilon (National Economics Honor Society)
Relevant Coursework: Data Analysis and Statistics, Microeconomic Analysis, Macroeconomics, Econometrics, Comparative Economic Systems, International Marketing

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Morgan Stanley, Minneapolis, MN 9/2008 -Present
Financial Analyst Intern

- Prepared reports and presentations for individual and institutional retirement plan clients
- Compared performance of different money managers using capture ratios
- Employed marketing strategies to assemble client base

Macalester Financial Aid Office, St. Paul, MN 08/2007-08/2008
Office Assistant

- Edit sport videos with Windows Movie Maker and assemble into annual presentations
- Develop recommendations and design strategic game plans for Coaching Staff
- Manage data entry of prospective student athletes and assist in the recruiting process

LEADERSHIP

Macalester College Institute for Global Citizenship Student Council (IGCSC) 1/2007 - Present
Athletic Department Representative

- Develop and initiate projects that facilitate dialogue on global citizenship in the Macalester Community
- Attend weekly meetings to generate initiatives for idea exchange in the community and to endorse cultural vigilance

Macalester College Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) 1/2007 -Present
Member

- Attend weekly speaker presentations and conduct activities that build and enhance leadership capabilities

SKILLS

Languages: Fluent in Spanish and intermediate in German
Computers: MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Windows Movie Maker, Adobe Photoshop, Stata, R, basic programming skills in JavaScript and Pascal

ACTIVITIES

- International Student Organization, Women in Economics, Macalester Volleyball

Outline for Cover Letters

Your Street Address

City, State, Zip

E-mail

Date

Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer

Title of Employer

Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer:

Tell why you are writing and indicate how you became aware of the position. Name the position, field, or general area about which you are asking. If a current employee or contact suggested that you follow up with this opening (or that you contact this person), include his or her name. **(2-3 sentences)**

Expand on the information in your resume. Highlight experience or specialized training that relate directly. List examples of skills you developed some other way that would be useful in the position. State any information requested in the advertisement or job description. Mention one or two qualifications you think would be of greatest importance to the employer, addressing your remarks to his/her point of view. **(4-5 sentences, or up to 2 paragraphs)**

Close by making a specific request for an interview, including how best to reach you. Make sure that your closing statement is positive and makes a request for specific action from the reader. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. **(2-3 sentences)**

Sincerely,

(4 spaces)

(Your handwritten, legible signature)

Type your name

Enclosure(s)

In an email, please note any attachments in the final paragraph

Sample Cover Letter

1600 Grand Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
smiller@macalester.edu
January 14, 2007

Ms. Alexis Ryan
Human Resources Specialist
State Farm Insurance Companies
8900 State Farm Way
Minneapolis, MN 55478

Dear Ms. Ryan:

(intro paragraph, 1 paragraph max)

This letter of application is in regard to the Claims Analyst position with State Farm Insurance Companies. I was referred to the position posted on the Macalester Career Development Center E-recruiting site. In May 2009, I will receive my Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Economics from Macalester College.

(How you are a match with your experience and education, 2 paragraphs max)

Recently, I completed an internship at Wells Fargo that required independent thinking and problem solving techniques. This position developed my skills in analyzing, identifying and presenting solutions to problems that were associated with the financial statements. Additionally, I participated in meetings with a company accountant to resolve overspending and reduce a division's deficit. My volunteer experience has also allowed me to interact with youth in the community and gave me a sense that I was working as part of a team. Through my work and volunteer experience, I have strengthened my accounting, leadership and organizational skills. State Farm Insurance Companies would benefit from my previous experience and strong work ethic.

(Closing paragraph, 1 short paragraph max)

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you and contributing to your organization. Please feel free to contact me at 651.696.6000 or aokuloke@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Ada Okuloke

Guidelines for Thank-You Letters

After an interview, write a brief follow-up letter. **Less than one percent of people interviewed take the time to send such a note, so you can be certain it will be noticed.** Use the letter to reemphasize your potential value to the company/institution. Don't forget to reiterate that you are still interested in the position and the organization.

Date

Your Street Address

City, State, Zip

E-mail

Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer

Title of Employer

Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr., Ms., or Dr. Employer:

Remind the interviewer of the position for which you were interviewed, as well as the date and place of the interview. Express your appreciation.

Confirm your interest in the opening and in the organization. Highlight your qualifications and slant them towards the various points that the interviewer considered important for the job. If you have done any follow-up since the interview that demonstrates your interest in the position, such as talks with alumni, faculty or other people, or research in the library, etc., be sure to mention it.

Include any information not previously presented to supplement your resume, application letter, and interview. You may have completed a term paper or a research project, or received some kind of recognition. If travel, relocation or a similar subject was stressed during the interview, be sure to confirm your willingness to comply with these conditions.

If appropriate, close with a suggestion for further action, such as a desire to have additional interviews at a mutually agreeable place and time.

Sincerely,

(4 spaces)

(Your handwritten, legible signature)

Type your name

Web Resources for Resume Development

www.macalester.edu/cdc

www.collegegrad.com/resumes

<http://www.cce.columbia.edu/sites/cce/files/Resumes.pdf>

www.iamnext.com/career

www.jobweb.com/Resumes

www.rileyguide.com/letters.html

www.resume.monster.com

The Vault: This online career library has comprehensive career development information and is accessible from the CDC homepage.

WAIT!! BEFORE YOU SEND YOUR RESUME, REVIEW THIS CHECKLIST.

- Does your resume make an immediate favorable impression and is the lay-out easy to read?
- Did you print your resume on high quality paper in a conventional color?
- Are your strongest qualifications or credentials highlighted?
- Did you use spell check AND reliable discerning human eyes (besides your own!) to review your resume?
- Has the CDC provided feedback and suggestions?

And finally, **congratulations** on writing your resume and best wishes!!

Compliments of
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