

WRITING YOUR RESUME

What is a resume and why is it important?

A resume is a document that summarizes your professional qualifications. It is also usually the first impression an employer has of you to assess whether or not you are a good “fit” for a position, and how well you compare with other candidates. **The bottom line?** It is critical that your resume has the right look and content to get you noticed and considered for an interview.

Step-By-Step Resume Building Guide

IMPORTANT NOTE: While there is not necessarily one “right” way to write a resume, FGCU Career Services attempts, through this guide, to capture many of the preferences employers express about resumes.

Developing Your Content - “Make a List”

The two main elements of a resume are **content** and **design**. Configuring your content comes first. Open a Word document and make a list of your experiences and

- ❑ **Education** - Include the following:
 - Start with “Florida Gulf Coast University” and follow with the names of other four year or community colleges you have received degrees from
 - Name of the degree you are pursuing and when you expect to graduate (“May 2015”)
 - Minors and/or concentrations
 - Academic recognitions, such as Dean’s List or Honor Society
 - GPA if it is higher than a 3.0
 - Study abroad experiences
 - For those students with **no related** work experience, consider including a listing of coursework within your major or any major projects that are *highly related* to the field you are pursuing.

*Generally speaking, you **do not** include high school on our resume. **Exception:** First and second year students can include high school activities such as clubs, sports, student government, etc. Remove high school information when you start your junior year, unless it is directly related to your career goal.*

qualifications using the guide below:

- ❑ **Employment:** Include every job you have ever had. You can refine this list later. Start with your current or most recent job and list all in reverse-chronological order.
 - State the name of the employer and position title(s)
 - Location: city, state (country if abroad)
 - Dates of employment: month and year
 - DO NOT include the name and contact information for your supervisor
- ❑ **Internships or Field Experiences:** Record in the same format as your work experience.
- ❑ **Extracurricular Activities:** For example: membership in student clubs, fraternity/sorority, Student Government, etc. Make special note of leadership and executive roles.
- ❑ **Volunteer and Community Service:** Utilize Service Learning hours! List any additional community service as well.
- ❑ **Honors, Awards and Memberships in Professional Associations** (if any)

Related Skills: Only include specific ‘hard skills’ like technical (computer software, database, programs) or language skills. DO NOT list ‘soft skills’ like

Design Your Resume – “Keep It Simple”

As we stated before, an employer only scans your resume briefly. This means you need to present your credentials in an easy-to-read format. **Start with a blank Word document. DO NOT use a template.** Why?

- Template resumes don’t usually display the information the way recruiters like to read them
- It may convey to the recruiter that you are not proficient in Word, unprofessional and unsophisticated
- Templates can be difficult to modify as you gain more experience

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What about an “Objective”?

- In most cases, an objective is not needed. An objective should only be used if you hand your resume to multiple prospective employers at a job or internship fair. In these instances, be specific about what you are looking for. For example: “To obtain an internship for the summer of 20XX, utilizing my proficiency in C++ and JavaScript.”

Suggested design guidelines:

- Use a common and professional font (e.g. Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial) throughout
- Aside from your name, text size should be consistent throughout and no smaller than 11pt
- Use bullet points for lists (like when describing your role using accomplishment statements)
- Margins should be consistent (1” or ½”) and content should fill the page – MINIMIZE WHITE SPACE
- Keep your resume to one page. Exceptions include the field of education, workers with over 15 years of experience, and those with graduate degrees
- Do not list your references or include the phrase, “References available upon request”; create a separate document for references if necessary

#1 Formatting Rule: BE CONSISTENT - in your margins, font, layout, etc.

Review, Revise and Proof

No spelling or grammatical errors. ***For highly competitive positions, a mistake on your resume may preclude you from further consideration.*** Proof your resume several times and have others proof it too. Do not rely on spellcheck.

Managing Your Resume Document –“Which Format When?”

The resumes of potential candidates find their way to recruiters in many ways. Some recruiters may search online job sites like Eagle Career Link or CareerShift.com. You might submit your resume as an attached email document or upload it to a company website. You may even deliver it directly into the hands of potential employers at a career fair or networking event. In all cases, it is important to select the correct file format.

Sending a resume via email: The preferred file format is a **PDF** attachment. Cover letters should be included in the body of your email and/or attached separately. Name your files professionally and include your name, document type, and position or company name. This will help you and the employer to stay organized. For example: PatSymthResume_Stantec or PatSymthCoverLetter_SalesAssociate

Presenting a resume in person: In this case, file format is not as important as the quality of the printing and paper. Consider using a heavier paper stock and be sure the print quality is clear. Resume quality directly reflects upon your professionalism. The campus bookstore sells resume paper.

Uploading a text-based version of your resume (Also known ASCII or Scannable resume): You may need to save your resume as a “Plain Text” file. Large corporations often use a scanning process to review and track resume submissions. While this resume format is not necessarily attractive, the use of plain text and key words can help your resume be identified by databases.

Never include the following information in your resume:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Martial status
- Family Situation
- Social Security Number
- University Identification Number (UIN)
- Photos