

# Résumé Tips

## 1) Purpose

- a. Get the Interview
- b. Determines who you are, what you can do

## 2) Getting Started

- a. Create a master list
  - i. Write jobs/internships/volunteer experiences in detail
  - ii. Order in reverse chronological order
- b. Consider your personal brand:
  - i. What value can I add?
  - ii. What are my **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES**
  - iii. My selling features
- c. Top skills employers seek in future hires ([www.naceweb.org](http://www.naceweb.org))
  - i. Communication – strong written and spoken
  - ii. Motivation/Initiative
  - iii. Teamwork
  - iv. Leadership
  - v. Academic achievement
  - vi. Attitude

## 3) Guidelines

- a. Use job description as a guide
- b. Be sure reader understands your use of terms
- c. Customize your Résumé to the job
- d. Convert to PDF

## 4) Formatting/Make it “Scannable”

- a. Half-inch to 1 inch margins
- b. 1 page for undergraduate level; 2 pages OK at graduate level
- c. **NOTE – REGARDING RÉSUMÉ SCANNING:** Electronic Applicant Tracking is a new technology that can help you contact more employers for a greater number and variety of jobs. As employers seek new ways to manage the tremendous number of Résumés submitted to them, they are turning to technology. The Résumé you send an employer is first scanned into the computer as an image. The OCR (Optical Character Recognition) converts the image to a text file that is readable and searchable by a computer. It is important that you create the best Résumé for scanning purposes – that is, a "clean" Résumé that will produce the best possible image for scanning. A good scannable Résumé maximizes the computer's ability to "read" your Résumé and your ability to get "hits". Don't over use bold and limit italic. Format: Use standard typefaces such as Helvetica or Courier, sans serifs in 10-14 point sizes. Avoid italics, script, underlining, boldface and compressing space between letters. Vertical and horizontal lines may get confused with letters such as "L" or "I." Avoid using graphics, shading, and tables - the equipment that scans your Résumé is set to "text", not "graphics." Do not use parentheses or brackets around telephone numbers. Use a traditional chronological Résumé format that avoids complex layouts. Minimize the use of nonstandard abbreviations; most scanners will pick up BA, MS, PhD, etc. but may not read hard-to-recognize abbreviations (ie. L.E.A.D., R.A., etc.) unless it is industry specific. Your name should be on its own line above all other text. The computer will assume the first text it reads is your name. Do not place your name adjacent to your contact information or your name might become "Gary Morris 606 Culkin Hall."

## 5) Essentials

- a. Be honest
- b. Spell check

## 6) Your Résumé - Making it go from “Good to GREAT”

- a. Use key **ACTION** words

- b. **Stress accomplishments** rather than duties
- c. Use **SUPERLATIVES**
- d. **What do you have to offer?**
- e. What have you accomplished – are you results-driven? What have you achieved in your previous roles?
- f. Who is your audience – what do they need?
- g. What are your interests, strengths, skills? Only incorporate skills that align with your target company's needs

7) **Résumé Sections**

- a. Identification/Contact info
- b. Personal profile or career summary (rather than “Objective”)
- c. Education
- d. Awards/Honors
- e. Professional Experience
- f. Publications
- g. Activities & Organizations
- h. Skills & Applications

8) **Identification**

- a. Your name leads in the largest font(at the top and left) + Contact info (on the right)

9) **Personal Profile/Career Summary**

- a. Summary of your professional identity
- b. Knowledge-Skills-Abilities
- c. Job-specific
- d. Be sure to substantiate any “fluff” with numbers, examples, quotes from references
  - i. “Highly motivated nonprofit professional with 3 years of experience in program management, service delivery, and fundraising; a proven ability to lead groups of up to 50 volunteers, organize events with up to 500 participants, effectively raise over \$100,000 in grants yearly, and streamline processes to maximize efficiency; and a strong background in youth services programs with underserved populations seeks a position as a leader in a human services nonprofit.”
  - ii. “Master of City and Regional Planning student with experience in banking, finance, research, and grant writing interested in a position involving community/economic development or urban planning. Background includes both extensive educational and professional training in planning through a combination of coursework, internships and course grader experience.”
  - iii. “Highly motivated transportation planning professional with experience using GIS in preparing and recommending viable solutions leading to more efficient and sustainable renewable energy. Skills include making presentations, research, organization, and meeting designated goals within strict time frames.”
  - iv. “Accomplished leader, able to create highly motivated management teams focused on delivering organizational goals. Initiated and developed multiple community based training programs and established public speaker. ”

10) **Education**

- a. Spell out degree title; and institution: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.); your institution: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, location – New Brunswick, NJ
- b. GPA (3.0 or better)
- c. Related coursework
- d. Awards/Scholarship recognition
- e. Study Abroad

11) **Professional Experience**

- a. Company Name on left; Location and dates on right; list in reverse chronological order
  - i. Job Title

ii. Duties, Results (bullet points)

b. Include internships, jobs, volunteer work

c. When describing experience:

i. Think of the employer's needs

ii. Use key **ACTION** words

iii. **Stress accomplishments** rather than duties

iv. Use **SUPERLATIVES – “best, first-time, solely created...”**

v. Skills-Achievements-Learned-Results

vi. Market your successes and value to your target audience/department and not just describing tasks that you performed on a daily basis. **It is NOT laundry list of past responsibilities;** it is promoting your transferable skills.

vii. **S-A-R – Situation, Action, Result**

viii. Write accomplishment statements focusing on achievements, rather than just describing the situation. Prove what:

1. **Challenges you overcame**

2. **Goals you surpassed**

3. **Problems you solved**

ix. Prove that you added value: Show results, quantify when possible, and demonstrate that you are contribution focused.

x. Start bullets with action verbs not passive phrases like “responsible for,” “worked with,” “assisted,” etc. Passive phrases are unclear and do not market successes.

xi. Prioritize bullets based on their relevance to targeted company/position (most important at top).

xii. Strategize: What are the five to seven key skills you are marketing that are relevant to your audience? Determine if each bullet is clearly selling one of these skills. **Remember the reader is thinking “What’s in it for me? Are you selling what I need and value?”**

xiii. If you are struggling with bullets, try writing at least three accomplishments for each of the skills (e.g. on a separate piece of paper, not looking at the Résumé).

xiv. Ex. Problem Solver (skill)

1. Identified tracking problems (Situation)

2. Monitored\_\_\_\_, Researched\_\_\_\_, Analyzed\_\_\_\_, Recommended\_\_\_\_, Presented\_\_\_\_ (Actions)

3. Reduced tracking operations by\_\_\_\_ (Result)

xv. List what you did in a given position, but provide additional details as to:

1. Why the task was important

2. Your impact within the organization

3. How you performed your duties

4. What skills you used or developed

xvi. Other Examples:

1. “Created a vibrant and supportive living atmosphere by organizing social activities and educational activities.” With this experience, the writer demonstrates *how* the goal of creating a vibrant and supportive living atmosphere was accomplished.

2. “Generated over \$50,000 in sales and completed 23 projects as manager of small house painting business.” Quantify your experience. Demonstrate focus on results and achievement, and helps an employer assess the potential impact the candidate would have within the company.

3. “Managed 8+ tables per night in a fast-paced environment, encouraging repeat business and quick table turns.” Describes *what* was done, but also *why* the task was

important. It demonstrates a focus on the bigger picture, and an emphasis on setting and achieving goals.

4. "Raised a total of \$24,500 for the various schools within the University of Michigan by targeting solicitation to individual alumni interests." Example of how to quantify your experience, and demonstrate the impact you made on the organization. Describes *how* you completed the task.
5. "Developed leadership skills by organizing activities such as campaigning in the dormitories, passing out fliers to students, and bringing political personalities to events on campus." Leadership skills are brought to the forefront, and the examples listed help make the writer's case.

#### **12) Activities & Organizations**

- a. Include volunteer work
- b. Industry Associations – APA, RAPPS
- c. Sports; Music; Arts
- d. Community Service

#### **13) Skills & Applications**

- a. Specialized skills, training or licenses
- b. Indicate the level of skill
  - i. Listing the skill = proficient; use "Basic GIS" if less familiar
  - ii. Fluent, Familiar with, Intermediate

#### **14) REFERENCES – not on RÉSUMÉ**

- a. Provide this listing on separate document

Sources – [www.naceweb.org](http://www.naceweb.org); [http://www.quintcareers.com/career\\_resources.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/career_resources.html);  
<http://www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes> )

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