

Resume Tips and Tricks

The University of Georgia Career Center



Your resume is your personal marketing document and therefore has to reflect who **you** are as a professional! Get as many opinions as you want, but in the end make sure you are comfortable with the final outcome.

BASIC TIPS

The One Page Resume

- At the college level, you will almost always have a ONE PAGE resume! Why?
 - o Resumes must be “scannable” – you may only have a few seconds to make an impression!
 - o You should choose to highlight your most relevant experiences for each position – **brand yourself!**
- Exceptions: If you have a large amount of (relevant) experience, it may be okay for your resume to be more than one page. However, each page must be filled completely....1 ½ or ¾ pages are not acceptable!

Pre-Formatted Resumes

- CAUTION: Do not use a pre-formatted resume program! They are hard to edit, and never look as good.
- Exceptions: The new *OPTIMAL RESUME* program through the UGA Career Center is a helpful tool for beginners, and files can be downloaded into Microsoft Word for further edits.

Visual Guidelines

- Avoid too much white space. Large white spaces never look good, and adjusting margins can help you fit your content onto one page. Place your margins around .35 - .65...when in doubt use ½ inch!
- Font size: Changing your font size is another great way to adjust your resume to fit on one page. Just remember to keep it professional and do not go smaller than 10-pt font size!

Grammar and Consistency

- Dates: it does not matter if you write “Fall 04,” “9/04,” “Sept 2004,” “September 2004” or just “2004” but keep your style consistent throughout the resume. Do not say you graduated in “Fall 2007,” had your first job from “Sept 2001-May 2004” and participated in a club from “9/05-10/07.” Inconsistency looks sloppy!
- Grammar, spelling, and capitalization are big to employers - have someone check your resume for errors!
- Periods: end your sentences with periods or don't ...but stay consistent (Paragraph vs. Bullet Format).
- **NEVER** use first-person (“I”) phrases on your resume!

PDF

- Save your final draft as a PDF so it retains your intended formatting. Different computers can do funky things to your resume and you want to be able to deliver it electronically.

ORGANIZING YOUR RESUME

Since your resume is likely to be scanned by employers beginning with the top of the first page, it is important to list your most marketable information first. The following tips provide information on the typical sections found on a professional resume:

The Header

- Headers must provide all necessary contact information without taking up an overly-large amount of space.
- **YOUR NAME** should typically be the largest font size on your resume.
- Include a present and/or permanent address, email address, and phone number. Ensure your contact information is appropriate for employers - have a professional email address, watch your voicemail messages, ring-back tones, and consider who may answer this phone.

Objective/ Summary/ Professional Profile

- Objectives (or summaries) are optional, but are a great way to add focus to a resume, highlight key words and phrases, and increase the “scannability” of the document.
- Objectives are useful when applying for entry-level jobs and internships to communicate to employers how the position fits into your career goals...but it is also important to indicate how YOU will help THEM!
- Sample objective: “Skilled accounting professional with experience in problem-solving and project management seeking a Junior Financial Consultant position with ABC Business Solutions.”

Education

- As a new graduate (or someone with less than 5 years of experience), education should be one of the first sections on your resume. This helps employers understand your level of experience.
- This section may also include information such as: scholarships, awards, study abroad, research work, and relevant coursework. When listing additional items, make sure that:
 - o It is significant enough to list. Do not put “Relevant Coursework” if you are only going to list 3 courses or if all you intend to include is basic/required coursework (i.e. Intro to Marketing).
 - o You explain the significance if necessary. For example, if you put “President’s Scholarship” on your resume, how will employers know whether that is prestigious or not? Indicate the award amount or scholarship requirement (i.e. “Awarded to Top 10% of Incoming Freshmen”).

Experience

- Pick an ordering system and stick to it – Reverse Chronological Order (most recent to oldest) is preferred.
- Utilize Categories - These can be trait specific, industry specific, or general (Professional Experience/ Relevant Experience/ Leadership Experience/ Marketing Experience). Grouping your experience will allow you to put the most IMPORTANT qualifications first and enable employers to easily scan your information.
- **Use Bullets** - much easier to scan than paragraphs!
- Be as specific as possible and use appropriate language. For example: Don’t say “drove the forklift” if you can say that you “operated heavy machinery in a high-volume logistics facility.”
- Use numbers and percentages to **quantify** and **show results** for the potential employer.
- Use **ACTION VERBS!** Begin descriptions with words such as “Organized, Contributed, Managed,” etc.

Other Possible Categories

- For additional involvements/qualifications, you can outline them in a similar manner to your work experience (with bulleted descriptions), or you may choose to display them in a more concise list format.
- You can create any category necessary to help you group your qualifications and target the employer. You can also combine categories – for example: “Honors and Skills.”
- Suggestions for additional categories:

Memberships/ Associations
Extracurricular Activities
Campus and Community Involvement
Honors and Awards

Philanthropic Endeavors
Professional Associations/ Memberships
Skills, Licenses and Certifications

- **Computer Skills** are very important in today’s world of work- list anything you have in an appropriate section. To make yourself more marketable, try to include skills/programs specific to the job posting or career field you are targeting (i.e. accounting programs, social media, databases, creative programs, etc.).

References

- Avoid placing references on your resume. Instead, use the space to communicate your qualifications and have your references prepared on a separate sheet.
- You may add a tagline at the bottom of your resume that says “References Available Upon Request,” but it is not absolutely necessary if you have something more important to go in that space.
- Have 3-5 references available with name, job title, place of employment, and contact information. Try to include professional (work-related) references, not just personal connections.