

## The Resume: A Primer

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For many of you, the resume will be the first impression you make on potential employers. Because of that, your resume has to be much more than a boring list of facts about you – it has to *say something* about you. When recruiters look at resumes, they see more than what you’ve done; they see who you are. Your resume can tell them if you are a good communicator, a thoughtful person, a detail-oriented person, or a person who waits to the last minute to throw together a document for the sake of having it done. Which kind of person would you rather be?

Let’s hit the basics of a solid resume that will leave the right impression on employers from the very moment they pick it up.

### *Appearance*

- No Templates.** They’re boring, impersonal, and tell employers: “I don’t really care how this looks. This was the easiest way to get it done.”
- Be consistent.** Everything should be neat and aligned in a way that shows your attention to detail.
- Arrangement.** Are your most important sections coming first? (Education is the most important part of your life so far... for 99.9% of you.)
- Font Size/Style.** These are your goals with font: consistent, neat, professional, and easy to read.
- Bold, italics, indentations and CAPS.** “Everything in moderation.” Use these to draw attention to certain parts or to break up the monotony of plain font, but not too much!
- One Page.** There are exceptions to this, but they are the rare exception of .5% of college undergrads that can pull off a *quality 2-page* resume. Stick to one.
- Reverse Chronological Order.** This is a standard. Not doing this will make you look foolish!
- Most Important First!** Make sure you aren’t burying the highlights of your resume.

### *Content*

- Header.** The usual suspects: Name (Big and Bold), Street Address, Cell Phone Number, and your most professional email address.
- Education.** Include colleges/universities you have received or are receiving a degree from.

Appalachian State University – Boone, NC	
Degree(s) [Bachelor of Science in Business Administration]	Degree Date
Major(s)	
Minor(s)	
GPA and/or Major GPA (3.0 and above)	
- Relevant Coursework.** Stay away from the boring lists of course titles. Give vivid descriptions with industry key-terms that add value to your resume and show some skills or knowledge not shown in other places.
- Experience.** Include the organization, the location, when you worked there, your title and a bulleted explanation of what you did that includes power verbs.

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- Relevant Experience.** Use this to separate your awesome internship from the other jobs you have.
- Other Experience.** Call it whatever you want (“Other... Selected... Additional... Experience”) but use this section for the rest of your work history outside of internships or jobs directly related to what you’re applying for. (This is optional)
- Involvement.** These are the clubs and organizations you belong to. Include leadership positions and committees you serve on and what you do in those roles. Don’t forget to use power verbs and industry terms here, too.
- Volunteer Work.** Everyone loves people who give their time to a good cause. Include it if you have room!
- Skills.** Include *relevant* concrete skills like software proficiency or a foreign language. Soft skills can be *shown* in other ways (i.e. a well-written cover letter can *show* good communication).

### *Final Touches*

- Grammar/Spelling.** Spell-check and have others read it. A silly mistake can be costly.
- Phrases.** You should avoid using full sentences. Start with a power verb!
- No personal pronouns.** That means no “I”, “our”, “us”, “my”, “we”, etc.
- Acronyms.** Spell them out. Don’t make people guess!
- Verb Tenses.** Past tense for previous experiences. Present tense for anything you currently do.