

Resume Writing

TIP SHEET

Employers initially spend about 20 seconds reviewing your resume...

Make your 20 seconds count!

What is a Resume?

A resume is a brief highlight of your work or activity experiences, educational background, and skills as they relate to the type of job you are seeking. A resume is designed to get you an interview, so market yourself effectively to your reader!

How is a Resume Used?

A resume is most often used when applying for employment. It can also be used to apply for a co-op or internship, a summer job, graduate or professional school, or when applying for leadership positions in an organization.

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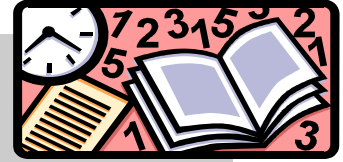
Resume Writing

- **Your resume may take hours to prepare.** Give yourself time to write and rewrite. Stop by the Career Center for feedback on your resume.
- **A one-page resume is sufficient for most students.** Your resume doesn't have to list every position you've held or every activity in which you've been involved. If you have a lot of experience, only include what is relevant to the position for which you are applying. Go to two pages only if absolutely necessary.
- **Avoid templates/wizards.** Resume templates or wizards may seem helpful, but it can be very hard to make changes or move things around when using one. It is important to customize your resume to best represent your strengths. We recommend using a blank Word document that will leave you the flexibility you need.
- **Custom design your resume for each position.** You should change your objective with each position for which you apply, and if necessary, change the content and/or the format so that it best compliments each individual position.
- **Catch your reader's eye.** Readers prefer statements that begin with bullets, **bold print**, and indentions to guide their eyes quickly to the main points. Stick to one font so that your resume doesn't look cluttered, and organize the information so that it is visually appealing and easy to follow.
- **Accentuate the positive.** Your resume is the first impression most employers will have of you, and how well you write indicates what type of employee you might be. Highlight accomplishments, not mere duties. Don't just list what you did; show how it contributed to the organization. Quantify your statements with numbers, statistics, and percentages when possible.
- **Use action verbs** (e.g. created, delegated) instead of passive verbs (e.g. took, had). For past activities, use past tense verbs (supervised, developed). For activities you're currently engaged in, use present tense verbs (supervise, develop).
- **Do not include on a resume:** religion, race, gender, high school information (unless applying for an internship and it is relevant), marital status, height/weight, birthplace, date of birth, or a photograph.

Resume Appearance

- **Use light colored resume paper (white, ivory, or beige) that will copy cleanly.**
- **Use the same paper for your resume and cover letter.**
- **Maintain reasonable margins. In general, one inch margins are preferred. Apply to cover letters also.**
- **You may use simple lines to create a border. If you are interested in graphic design, use your resume to display your design skills.**

Preferred Resume Format: CHRONOLOGICAL



Kristi Jackson	
kristi@juno.com	
School (803) 544-0000 • Home (864) 574-4970	
Current Address	Permanent Address
USC PO Box 0000 Columbia, SC 29225	9274 Whisper Lane Greenville, SC 29301
EDUCATION	
University of South Carolina (USC), Columbia, SC Bachelor of Arts in Psychology • Minor: Spanish • GPA: 3.2	May 2006
Universidad de las Americas. Puebla, Mexico • Resided with a Spanish-speaking family for four months.	Fall 2003
HONORS	Dean's List, National Dean's List, LIFE Scholarship recipient
SKILLS	Language: Fluent in Spanish and English; working knowledge of French Computer: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), SAS, SPSS
EXPERIENCE	
Citizens Against Sexual Assault. Columbia, SC Crisis Intervention and Victim Advocate	1/04 - Present
• Provide hotline advocacy services to clients. • Participate in community outreach and education programs. • Completed 30-hour victim advocate volunteer training.	
International Programs for Students. Columbia, SC Peer Assistant	8/04 - Present
• Serve as a mentor and resource for international students. • Assisted with the coordination of USC's International Fair.	
Department of Residence Life, USC. Columbia, SC Resident Advisor	8/04 - Present
• Organize social and educational programs for hall of 22 women. • Explain and enforce residence hall and university policies.	
Camp Wildwood. Kings Mountain, NC Camp Counselor	Summers 02, 03
• Supervised and disciplined girls aged 8-14 in daily recreation, educational and social events to groups with an average size of 30. • Received certification in CPR and first aid techniques.	
RESEARCH	
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC Research Assistant	8/04 - 12/04
• Collaborated with a professor in research on the interpersonal development of children of single parent families. • Presented findings at annual Carolina's Psychology Conference.	
INTERESTS	Community service, sports, and reading

This format allows you to focus on your employment history organized in reverse chronology.

Bulleted phrases are used to describe your specific job duties.

When describing your previous experiences, lead with strong action verbs and use industry-related terms.

Stick with 10—12 point font size for readability.

Employers prefer this resume format.



Resume Content

HEADING

Cap the top of your resume with:

- Full name (can put nickname in parenthesis if you wish)
- Complete address (may include both permanent and present address)
- Home phone number (can list work phone number as well - designate each with an "H" and "W")
- E-mail address
- Personal website (if appropriate)

OBJECTIVE

The objective is an *optional* category that indicates the type of work you are seeking. Employers prefer objectives that are specific and concise (see examples below). If you know the exact position you are pursuing or field that you are considering, you may include an objective. Otherwise, you may omit this category.

- An internship in computer programming.
- A position in financial services.

EDUCATION

Degrees should be listed in reverse chronology. Include only those schools in which you earned a degree.

- Names and locations of schools or programs
- Graduation date
- Degrees or certificates
- Major, minor or cognate
- Grade point average (if 2.5 or above)
- Awards/Honors/Scholarships
(consider a separate section if more than 3)
- Study abroad experiences

Example:

Master of Industrial Statistics, May 2001
University of South Carolina, Columbia SC

Bachelor of Science in Engineering, May 1999
Major: Chemical Engineering *Minor:* Economics
University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

RELATED COURSEWORK

This category is optional and can also be part of the Education section. It is mainly used when you are lacking related experience but want to demonstrate specific knowledge. List the titles of courses you've taken that relate to the position for which you are applying.

Resume Content (cont'd)

EXPERIENCE

Include full-time and part-time jobs, summer positions, volunteer work, military service, internships, self-employment, research projects, and even activities if they are directly related to the position. In some cases you may wish to divide this category into two sections: one called Related Experience and one called Additional Experience. Experiences should be listed in reverse chronology.

Include:

- Your job title
- Employer name
- City/State of the employer
- Dates of employment
- Bulleted descriptions of your responsibilities

HONORS, ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

You may specifically want to list:

- Activities or leadership positions that demonstrate job related skills
- Honors or awards (Scholarships may or may not be relevant)

SKILLS

We recommend a separate section listing computer skills. Be specific, listing product names and version numbers if possible. Indicate your level of knowledge using such terms as "working knowledge of" or "proficient in."

Students seeking technology positions specifically should break this list down into subcategories such as programming languages, hardware, software, operating systems, databases, peripherals, etc.

If you speak more than one language, you should also list them here, indicating your level of oral proficiency in each.

OTHER

There is the option to add additional categories that reflect your uniqueness, such as interests or volunteer work, but consider the relevance that the category has to your objective and the position you are seeking.

References

- **Choose references** - Brainstorm a list of people who can speak highly of your past work performance, (job, classwork or research related). Ideally, your references should be those who supervised you or rated your performance, such as a previous boss or professor who knows you/your work very well. In some cases a colleague can also provide a strong reference of your work performance, particularly if you worked on a team project together. In general, you should provide a minimum of 3 references, but no more than 5.
- **Ask references** - Contact those designated and ask if they will give you a positive reference. Never provide anyone's name to a potential employer as a reference without first doing so.
- **Gather contact information** - Make sure you have the proper spelling of your reference's name, company name, official job title, and the address and phone number. For your own use, you may also get an e-mail address.
- **Prepare references** - To help your references speak intelligently about your background and strengths, you should provide them with a copy of your resume. They should also know what your goals are and the types of positions you are seeking.
- **Keep references informed** - Notify your references about *each* position for which you apply so they might anticipate a call and prepare to "sell" you based on the specifics of each position.
- **Thank references** - Notify references when you accept a position and send a thank-you letter.



KRISTI JACKSON

kristij@juno.com

Current Address:

USC P.O. Box 0000
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 544-0000

Permanent Address:

9274 Whisper Lane
Greenville, SC 29301
(864) 574-4970

REFERENCES

Mr. Thomas (Tom) Smith

Director
Citizens Against Sexual Assault (C.A.S.A.)
8981 Harden Street
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 252-8888

Mrs. Susan Brown

Director of Residence Life
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-0000
E-mail: sbrown@csd.scarolina.edu

Dr. Phillip (Phil) A. Jones

Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 777-0001
E-mail: pajones@csd.scarolina.edu

Ms. Francis Patterson

Summer Staff Coordinator
Camp Wildwood
P.O. Box 590
Kings Mountain, NC 28746
(803) 367-9862

Cover Letter Sample

Thank-you Letter Sample

KRISTI JACKSON

kristij@juno.com

Current Address:
USC P.O. Box 0000
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 544-0000

Permanent Address:
9274 Whisper Lane
Greenville, SC 29301
(864) 574-4970

October 22, 2002

Mr. John Anderson
Vice President
Verizon Wireless
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mr. Anderson:

I am writing to express my sincere interest in entry-level sales opportunity at Verizon Wireless. Currently, I am a senior at the University of South Carolina and will graduate in December of 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

As you will note in my resume, I have strong language skills. My ability to communicate fluently in Spanish would allow me to conduct business with many of your international clients. Because I studied abroad for a semester, I am also aware of the cultural differences in Spanish-speaking countries in addition to my language skills. I also have extensive experience working in a fast-paced, dynamic environment. Not only does my current position require me to work with diverse groups of people, but I am also responsible for ensuring a standard level of service, training new advocates, and developing continuing education programs.

I will contact you in two weeks to confirm receipt of my resume and to discuss the possibility of meeting. I am excited about the opportunities at Verizon Wireless and feel confident that my skills will allow me to make an immediate impact on your organization. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristi Jackson

Enclosure: resume

Always find out the name of the person receiving your letter rather than using "To Whom It May Concern."

Be aware of using too many sentences in a row that begin with "I." Instead, vary your sentence style.

Instead of simply repeating your resume in the second paragraph, add more specific details about your previous experience and/or activities.

Be sure to sign your letter using black ink.

KRISTI JACKSON

kristij@juno.com

Current Address:
USC P.O. Box 0000
Columbia, SC 29208
(803) 544-0000

Permanent Address:
9274 Whisper Lane
Greenville, SC 29301
(864) 574-4970

November 19, 2002

Mr. John Anderson
Vice President
Verizon Wireless
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Thank you again for the opportunity to interview for the sales position at Verizon Wireless this past Thursday. I appreciated your hospitality and enjoyed meeting you and your staff, as well as taking the tour of your office.

The interview confirmed my initial positive impressions of Verizon Wireless and I want to reiterate my strong interest in working for your organization. I feel confident that my experiences combined with my education will allow me to become a successful part of your company.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 544-0000. If I have not heard from you by the time I will check back with you to see how your candidate selection is progressing. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristi Jackson

Thank-you letters should be sent to all individuals who interviewed you.

The letters should be sent within 48 hours of the interview.

A typed letter is the most professional format. Other options include a handwritten note on personal stationery or an email thank-you, if you have previously corresponded with the interviewer(s) via email.

ACTION VERBS TO USE IN RESUMES

accepted	completed	enhanced	instructed	processed	solved
accommodated	complied	enlarged	integrated	produced	sorted
accomplished	computed	enlisted	intensified	promoted	spoke
accumulated	conceived	entertained	interacted	proofread	staffed
achieved	conceptualized	escalated	interpreted	proposed	standardized
acknowledged	conciliated	established	intervened	protected	steered
acquired	conducted	estimated	interviewed	proved	stimulated
acted	confirmed	evaluated	introduced	provided	straightened
activated	confronted	examined	investigated	publicized	strengthened
adapted	constructed	exceeded	invented	published	studied
adjusted	consulted	exchanged	judged	purchased	summarized
administered	contracted	executed	led	raised	supervised
advertised	controlled	exhibited	learned	ran	supplied
advised	conveyed	expanded	lectured	ranked	supported
affected	convinced	expedited	listened	reached	surveyed
analyzed	cooperated	experienced	logged	read	synthesized
answered	coordinated	explained	made	realized	systematized
anticipated	corresponded	explored	maintained	received	talked
applied	counseled	expressed	managed	recognized	taught
appreciated	created	extended	manipulated	recommended	tested
approached	critiqued	facilitated	marketed	reconciled	took
approved	decided	familiarized	matched	recorded	trained
arbitrated	defined	followed	maximized	recruited	transacted
arranged	decorated	followed through	mediated	rectified	translated
assembled	delegated	formulated	merchandised	redesigned	traveled
asserted	delivered	fortified	met	reduced	treated
assessed	demonstrated	found	minimized	referred	transmitted
assigned	described	founded	moderated	refereed	understood
assisted	designed	furnished	modified	related	updated
attained	detailed	gained	monitored	remodeled	upgraded
attended	detected	generated	motivated	rendered	used
attracted	determined	governed	multiplied	renewed	utilized
audited	developed	grouped	negotiated	repaired	volunteered
augmented	devised	guided	obtained	reported	won
authored	directed	handled	operated	represented	worked
authorized	discharged	hired	orchestrated	researched	wrote
boosted	displayed	honored	organized	reserved	
briefed	dispensed	identified	originated	responded	
broadened	disproved	illustrated	oversaw	resolved	
budgeted	distinguished	implemented	participated	reviewed	
built	distributed	improved	perceived	revised	
cataloged	drafted	inaugurated	performed	scanned	
categorized	drew up	increased	persisted	scheduled	
chaired	earned	indexed	persuaded	screened	
charted	edited	influenced	planned	scrutinized	
clarified	educated	informed	polled	secured	
classified	effected	initiated	predicted	selected	
collaborated	elected	innovated	prepared	served	
commanded	eliminated	inspected	presented	set in motion	
collected	encouraged	inspired	presided	settled	
communicated	endured	installed	preserved	sketched	
compared	enforced	instituted	printed	sold	



H. William Close (BA) Bldg.
6th Floor
Phone: (803) 777-7280
Email: career@sc.edu
Website: www.sc.edu/career