



Resume Essentials

Phone: (425) 564-2279 | **Email:** careers@bellevuecollege.edu | **Office:** U 304 main campus

On-line or phone appointments:

<https://outlook.office365.com/book/MichaelReese@BellevueC.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed=true>

On-campus appointments:

<https://outlook.office365.com/book/CenterforCareerConnectionsOncampus@BellevueC.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed=true>

HANDSHAKE (job & internship postings): <https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/careers/resources/handshake/>

Academic Internship Program: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/internships>

LinkedIn Group: Center for Career Connections at Bellevue College (BC)

Facebook Page: [Center for Career Connections at Bellevue College](#)

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Resume Guidelines

Your resume is one of your most important job/internship search tools. It is a description of your skills and abilities related to the types of jobs to which you are applying. Your resume identifies your value to a potential employer and is often the primary way employers choose individuals to interview.

Your resume is not a list of everything you have ever done. Instead, your resume is a list of specific skills, knowledge, education, and prior experience, both paid work and volunteer/community service experience, that will help the employer see you as a potential employee or intern. It should not include lengthy descriptions and elaborate details. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to write a resume; however, most employers and career professionals agree with the following guidelines:

Tips on Writing Resume Content

- **Customization:** Tailor your resume (and *especially the cover letter*) to the specific job/internship. Emphasize the skills, knowledge, experience, and education most important to the particular position for which you are applying. Use the same keywords and concepts that appear in the job/internship announcement. Highlight your past results and accomplishments that are relevant to your target job. Use numbers, when possible, to show results. For example, “Streamlined order taking process which eliminated duplication and increased speed by about 12%.”
- **Concise:** Use clear, concise words; use bullet lists not paragraphs. Do not use pronouns (I, me, my, they, them, their, he, she). Can eliminate articles (a, an, the).
- **Perfection:** Use perfect grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Proofread it yourself and also have a friend, family member, or Specialist in the Bellevue College Center for Career Connections proofread it before sending it to an employer. If you need help with grammar, visit the Bellevue College Writing Lab: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/>
- **Verb Tense:** Use action verbs. Jobs, internships, and other activities you are currently doing should be written in the present tense. Anything that happened in the past should be written in the past tense.
- **Relevance:** Don't include irrelevant information. Don't list personal information such as date of birth, marital status or number of children. You may choose to include information about hobbies that are relevant to the type of job you seek and explain how they are relevant. Also, eliminate any outdated technical or business skills. Employers are most interested in what you did recently. If you have a long career history, focus on the last 10 to 15 years. If your early career is important to your current goal, briefly mention the experience without including details. This can be done by listing under the heading as “Additional Experience” or “Early Career”. (Do not include dates of employment if you use this strategy.)

Anatomy of a Resume

- **Name and Contact Info:** Do NOT include your home address on your resume. Employers do not need to know where you live or may think you'll be late for work because of a traffic during a long commute. If employers want to contact you to schedule an interview, they just need your phone number and/or email address. Make sure your telephone voice mail greeting is appropriate for employers to hear.
- **Email Address:** Use a work-appropriate email address (not something like catlover@yahoo.com).
- **Content Order:** Make sure that your skills and abilities related to the job you seek are at the top of your resume immediately under your name. Use a heading such as "Qualifications for ____ (Job title)" or "____ (Job title) Skills Summary." Using the job title in the heading helps the employer immediately know which position you are seeking.

If you have little or no work experience, your education can be listed first to document your newly gained skills from classes, school clubs and activities like student government. Within each section, items should be listed in reverse chronological order – in other words, the most recent events should be listed first. For example, college is listed above high school.

- **Summary of Qualifications:** Write 3-6 bulleted phrases that sum up your key skills, abilities, experience and knowledge, as it relates to the targeted position. If they read nothing else on the resume, this should give them a good idea of why you are qualified.

Include as much information as possible about specific skills including software/hardware, and job/internship related skills. Don't list too many general or "soft skills" (like *good communicator* and *detail-oriented*). Make sure you list what you can *do* with the software you know, not just the name of the software.

- **Experience:** When writing about past jobs, don't simply provide a list of duties, and don't keep repeating the same things if you've done the same or similar tasks for each employer. Vary your word usage to make it interesting to read. Provide 3-4 bullets (not paragraphs) that briefly explain what you accomplished, how you excelled, and how others noticed your exceptional qualities. Highlight things that can be quantified, such as "Increased traffic from Google 230%, decreased ad spending 40%".
- **Education:** Provide some detail about what specifically you're learning in school. You can't assume employers know exactly what you're studying or what knowledge and skills are taught in your degree. List the name of the relevant classes you've taken (*not* course numbers) and provide your GPA if it's over 3.0.
- **Awards:** List merits, awards, commendations, honors, fellowships, scholarships or elected positions that pertain to the position for which you are applying. Include a brief explanation, such as "for academic achievement" or "community service award" if it's not obvious from the name of the award.
- **References:** Don't include references, and don't say "References Available upon Request." They know this.
- **Other Sections:** You can create any section that will give the employer the opportunity to know who you. An effective heading is "Community Involvement" where you can list your volunteer experiences. Other sections could include Professional Training & Development, Extracurricular Activities, Certifications & Licenses, Professional Memberships, Publications, Additional Experiences. Find a way to include anything you did that showed initiative or passion: Eagle Scouts, Math Olympics, etc.

Important Resume Format Information

- **Templates:** *Do not use a resume template* that you have found in Microsoft Word or on the internet. Templates organize information poorly and are very difficult to modify. Instead, use Word to write the content first and then **apply your own formatting in a way that emphasizes WHAT you've done** (as opposed to where or when).
- **Scanability:** Many companies, especially large ones, use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS software) in their hiring process. These are the top 10 most important ways to prepare a resume that is easily evaluated by ATS:
 - Use a simple format that includes keywords and phrases from the job/internship description – use both full terms and common acronyms (if you have space to include both)
 - Use standard section headings such as “Summary of Qualifications”, “Experience”, “Education”
 - Avoid graphics, images, tables, columns, text boxes, underlined text (except email or websites), headers, footers, and unusual characters from the Word “insert” function because ATS cannot read information contained in them.
 - Save and submit resumes in .docx (Word) or PDF (when allowed), do not use image files like .jpg, .png.
 - Write achievement-focused bullet points with measurable results and strong action verbs to show impact rather than listing duties.

Once the ATS has selected your resume, the first person at the company to read your resume will likely spend only about 15 seconds reading it. Use your formatting to make sure the most important information (your name/contact information as well as skills and abilities related to the job that stands out. The names of degrees and job titles should also stand out– usually, what you did is more important than where you did it!

- **Font/Paper/Photos:** Use a professional-looking font such as Calibri or Times New Roman and no smaller than 10-point type. Do not use unusual/difficult to read fonts, colored paper, or photos unless you are a graphic design student and are demonstrating your design skills. Use one or two styles of font; if you use two, one would be for headings, the other for the rest of the text.
- **Your Name:** Make your name bigger than the rest of the information on your resume (16-22-point font).
- **Spacing:** Make your resume easy to read and use consistent formatting. If you don't have much content for your resume, use .7 - 1.0 inch margins. If you have a lot of content for your resume, use slightly smaller margins, no smaller than .65. Have clear headings (that are either bolded, larger type or in all caps), and consistent spacing between sections as well as within sections. This does not mean making all spacing identical; instead make slightly larger spaces between sections and smaller spaces between items within a section. Consider using half spaces between jobs if you have a long work history. There shouldn't be any huge white spaces on the page; and it shouldn't look cramped either.
- **Number of pages:** Many employers prefer one-page resumes. If you have over 10 years' experience and/or you have a good reason to include more details, two pages may be appropriate. Federal resumes and curriculum vitae (CVs-used for academic jobs) can be longer.
- **Document Name:** When saving your resume, use your full name, the job/internship title and the word “resume”. For example: “Jane_Doe_SoftwareDev_Resume.doc” – don't just name it “Resume.doc.” Employers may receive hundreds of resumes for the same job; using a job title in the file name helps the employer know which position you are applying for.

Customize! Customize! Customize your resume!

To increase your chances of being selected for an interview, it is important to customize your resume according to the requirements of the targeted job description. Even though its time consuming, it is worth your time doing so.

Here's an example to illustrate how you can go about customizing your resume according to a job description.

You can refer to the handout on tips for writing cover letter at the Center for Career Connections.

Sample Job Advertisement

Junior Associate Bookkeeper

This is exciting opportunity to gain valuable experience in a growing career field is offered by one of the fastest growing technology companies in western Washington. In this role, you will track the company's revenue and expenses, generate invoices for clients, assist the accountant with payroll, and regularly present reports to executive leadership.

Requirements:

- Minimum 1 year of experience in a job with relate-able skill-sets (retail cashier experience NOT applicable)
- Experience working in an Administrative Assistant or Bookkeeping role is very desirable
- College degree in Business, Math, Accounting, or other related field
- Intermediate skills with PCs and Microsoft Office (especially Excel)
- Experience with QuickBooks and/or Paylocity is very desirable (not required)
- Strong work ethic, ability to adapt, quick learner, multi-tasker, attention to detail
- Experience working in a culturally diverse environment is desirable
- Very strong Math skills

First Name Last Name

(206) 596-5984 - jsample@email.com - LinkedIn profile link - Bellevue, WA

BOOKKEEPING SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 2+ years office administration experience including accounts receivable and preparing federal income taxes; type 80+ word per minute
- Proficient with QuickBooks, Microsoft Office (Excel, Access, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Publisher, Teams)
- Demonstrated interpersonal, communication and team skills, proven customer service skills

EDUCATION

Accounting, Associate in Applied Science Transfer Degree

Expected 2024

Bellevue College, Bellevue, WA

- Coursework: Business Payroll Tax Accounting, Accounts Receivable, Federal Income Taxes, Small Business Computerized Accounting, 10-key, Business Spreadsheet Analysis & Design, Practical Accounting 1 & 2, Principles of Accounting 1 & 2, Business Mathematics
- **3.8 GPA**; member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society
- Accounting Assistant Certificate of Achievement 2021; Bookkeeping Certificate of Accomplishment 2022

CERTIFICATIONS (this section is optional)

- **Microsoft Office Specialist: Microsoft Word Expert** (Office 19)

EXPERIENCE

Receptionist/Office Staff Supervisor

Media Link (market research company), Bellevue, WA

Jun 2020 - Present

- Provide reception services and research assistance such as preparation of surveys and data entry
- Assisted in the installation of new call system resulting in 50% reduction in lost/dropped calls
- Supervised team of three while fostering a collaborative work environment
- Recognized by employer and co-workers as highly reliable and well-organized
- Selected Employee-of-the-Month twice; began as office assistant, promoted three times in four years

Customer Service Representative

Issue Resolution Department, Excalibur Communications, Bothell, WA

Sep 2019 - Feb 2020

- Identified/resolved customer problems utilizing critical thinking skills and customer feedback
- Created new employee customer service training manual resulting in 10% increase in business retention
- Prepared monthly budget reports using QuickBooks and Excel
- Collaborated with a diverse team of 10-15 members

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (this section is optional)

Math Tutor

Snohomish Public Library, Snohomish, WA

Jul - Aug 2019

- Assisted K-12 students with math homework, study skills, and test preparation
- Created a self-study guide for 8th grade Algebra students resulting in improved math performance on exams by 30% of tutored student

LANAGUAGE SKILLS

Bilingual English and Spanish

Resources

The Center for Career Connections offers **two academic courses** where you can learn and practice job/internship search skills.

EXPRL 220, Resume & Interviewing Strategies

This is a 2-credit, late-start class, held on four consecutive Saturdays, for students who want to learn how to create a winning resume and to represent your best talents during interviews. Guest speakers from the industry will share with you what they look for in a resume. The class will include practice interviews with employers. This class is offered every other quarter.

EXPRL 240, Social Media for Job Search and Personal Branding

This is a 2-credit, late-start class, held on four consecutive Saturdays, for students who want to create strengths-based social media profiles, and learn practical strategies for connecting with employers, recruiters and mentors. Students engage in hands-on activities to discover and articulate their strengths and use this knowledge to develop a personal brand. This class is offered every other quarter.

For additional information, short videos, and web resources for resume writing, visit the Center for Career Connections website: <https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/careers/resources/resume-cover-letter/>

Meet with a Career Specialist

You may make an appointment with a Career Specialist in the Center for Career Connections who will review and give you feedback on your resume.

To make an appointment go to the Center for Career Connections website: <https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/careers/> Scroll down until you see two ovals...a green "schedule an On-Campus Appointment" and a blue "Schedule an Online Appointment". Click on one of these buttons which takes you to a Booking page. Click on "Resume" and then click on a black date on the calendar (if the date is gray, there are no appointments available that day). Then choose the time of day on the right side of the screen. You will receive an email confirming your appointment.

If you make a "on campus" appointment, we are located main campus, Room U304.