



# *Resume Essentials*

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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

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- **Customization:** Tailor your resume & *especially the cover letter* to the specific job/internship. Emphasize the skills, 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.
- **Concise:** Use clear, concise words. Eliminate articles (a, an, the) and personal pronouns (I, my).
- **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: <https://bellevuecollege.edu/asc/writing/>
- **Verb Tense:** Jobs and other activities that you are still doing should be discussed in the present tense. Anything that happened in the past should be 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 Also, eliminate any outdated technical or business skills.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”. (Do not include dates of employment if you use this strategy.)

## Anatomy of a resume

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- **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, usually under a heading such as “Qualifications” or “Skills Summary.” If you have little or no work experience, your educational experience 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.
- **Contact Info:** Do NOT include your home address on your resume. Many employers will make judgments based on where you live. If they think your commute would be too long, they might not consider hiring you. Your commute is your decision, so we recommend that you not even give them that option. If employers want to contact you to schedule an interview, they just need your phone number and/or email address.
- **Email Address:** Use a work-appropriate email address (not something like catlover@yahoo.com). Turn off your ring relay and make sure your telephone voice mail greeting is appropriate for employers to hear.
- **Summary of qualifications:** Write a 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. If you choose to put an Objective at the top of your resume, make sure it is specific and focuses on *what you can do for them*.
- **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. Especially 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, and if they’ve posted a job on the school’s web site, they’re likely looking for students or recent graduates with current skills – so give them a few names of the most relevant classes you’ve taken (not course numbers), and provide your GPA if it’s over 3.0.
- **Skills:** Include as much information as possible about specific skills and don’t list too many general or “soft skills” (like *good communicator* and *detail-oriented*). Instead, provide an example that illustrates how you apply these skills. Technology and language are important in all fields, so definitely list your computer skills and language abilities.
- **Computer Skills:** You may want a separate section for computer skills, especially if you are in a technology related field. List computer applications, programming languages, networking capabilities, troubleshooting skills, hardware experience, or other special talents. This information may be included in your Skill List/Qualification summary if you don’t choose to have a separate section for computer skills.
- **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 are such as Professional Training & Development, Related Activities, Extracurricular Activities, Community Activities, Certifications & Licenses, Professional Memberships, Publications, Additional Experiences, Additional Skills... Find a way to include anything you did that showed initiative or passion: Eagle Scouts, Math Olympics, etc.

## Points to note on format of resume

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- **Templates:** Refrain from using a resume template that you have found in Microsoft Word or on the internet. Templates often organize information poorly and are usually very difficult to modify. Instead, 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:** The first person at the company to read your resume will likely spend only about 15 seconds reading it, so it should be easy to find information about you quickly. 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! Use key words in case resumes are read by robots.
- **Font/Paper/Photos:** Use a professional-looking font such as Calibri, Times New Roman or Arial 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 and not more than two styles of font; if you use two, one would be for headings, the other for the rest of the text. If the employer has to strain to read your resume, they probably won't read it at all.
- **Your Name:** Make your name bigger than the rest of the information on your resume (16-22-point font). When an employer is going through a stack of printed resumes, your name should stand out.
- **Spacing:** Make your resume easy to read and use consistent formatting. Use 0.75- 1.0 inch margins, 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 make 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 and the word "resume". For example: "Jane\_Doe\_Resume.doc" – don't just name it "Resume.doc." Employers may receive hundreds of resumes for the same job; make sure they can find yours easily.

## Power Words

Describe your skills in functional terms using action verbs, adjectives, or adverbs to express your key accomplishments and relevant experience. **TIP:** Don't keep repeating the same words over and over.

Here are some powerful **action verbs** you can use to display your accomplishments and results with impact:

Accomplished	decided	gave	modeled	reasoned	symbolized
achieved	defined	generated	monitored	received	synthesized
acquired	delivered	guided	<b>Navigated</b>	reconciled	systematized
acted	designed	<b>Handled</b>	negotiated	recommended	<b>Talked</b>
activated	detailed	headed	<b>Observed</b>	recorded	taught
adapted	detected	helped	obtained	recruited	tested
adjusted	determined	<b>Identified</b>	offered	reduced	told
administered	developed	illustrated	operated	referred	took
advanced	devised	implemented	ordered	rehabilitated	took
advised	diagnosed	improved	organized	related	instructions
analyzed	directed	increased	originated	remembered	tracked
anticipated	discovered	influenced	oversaw	rendered	trained
arbitrated	dispensed	informed	<b>Participated</b>	repaired	transcribed
arranged	displayed	initiated	perceived	reported	transformed
ascertained	disproved	innovated	performed	represented	translated
assembled	dissected	inspected	persuaded	researched	treated
assessed	distributed	inspired	piloted	resolved	traveled
attained	diverted	installed	pioneered	responded	troubleshoot
audited	dramatized	instituted	planned	restored	tutored
arranged	drew	instructed	played	retrieved	<b>Understood</b>
<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Earned</b>	integrated	predicted	reviewed	understudied
built	edited	interpreted	prepared	revised	undertook
<b>Calculated</b>	eliminated	introduced	prescribed	<b>Saved</b>	unified
charted	empathized	invented	presented	scheduled	united
classified	enforced	inventoried	printed	selected	updated
coached	established	investigated	problem-solved	separated	upgraded
collected	estimated	<b>Judged</b>	processed	served	used
communicated	evaluated	<b>Kept</b>	produced	set	utilized
compared	examined	<b>Lectured</b>	programmed	set-up	weighed
compiled	executed	learned	projected	shaped	won
completed	explained	led	promoted	shared	worked
composed	expanded	lifted	proofed	showed	wrote
computed	expedited	listened	proposed	sketched	wrought
conceptualized	experimented	logged	protected	sold	<b>Verbalized</b>
conducted	expressed	<b>Made</b>	provided	solved	
consolidated	extracted	maintained	published	sorted	
constructed	<b>Financed</b>	managed	publicized	spearheaded	
conserved	fixed	manipulated	purchased	spoke	
controlled	followed	marketed	<b>Questioned</b>	studied	
coordinated	forecasted	mediated	<b>Raised</b>	succeeded	
counseled	formulated	memorized	ranked	summarized	
created	founded	mentored	read	supervised	
<b>Dealt</b>	<b>Gathered</b>	met	realized	supplied	

## **Customize! Customize! Customize your resume!**

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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. Don't just plug your information into this template. 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

# Sarah Sample

(206) 596-5984 | [jsample@email.com](mailto:jsample@email.com) | Greater Seattle Area

## Associate Bookkeeper Summary of Qualifications

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- Four years of office administration experience, including two years supervising
- Skilled at payroll, accounts receivable, federal income tax; 80+ words per minute typing speed
- Proficient in QuickBooks; Microsoft Office (Excel, Access, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Publisher)
- Strong work ethic, quick learner, and proven attention to details
- Demonstrated interpersonal and communication skills; proven team collaboration skills

## Education

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### Accounting Transfer Degree

Spring 2022

*Bellevue College, Bellevue, WA*

- Related Coursework: Business Payroll Tax Accounting, Accounts Receivable, Small Business Computerized Accounting, Business Mathematics and Federal Income Taxes
- 3.8 GPA and member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society

### Diploma

2020

*Issaquah High School, Issaquah, WA*

- Played flute in marching band; member of chess club

## Experience

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### Lead Receptionist

2014 - Present

*Media Link, Bellevue, WA*

- Provide reception services and research assistance for a market research company
- Establish excellent rapport with clients by providing high quality, responsive customer service
- Recognized by employer and co-workers as highly reliable and well-organized
- Experienced working in a culturally diverse team
- Selected Employee-of-the-Month twice; promoted three times in four years

### Customer Service Representative, Issue Resolution Department

2011 - 2014

*Excalibur Communications, Bothell, WA*

- Solved customer problems in an effective and timely way
- Experienced working with a culturally diverse customer base
- Increased departmental profits by 10% and created training manuals for new employees

### Math Tutor

Summer 2011

*Snohomish Public Library, Snohomish, WA*

- Volunteer position assisting K-12 students with math homework and study skills
- Created a self-study guide for 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra students

## Language Skills

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- Bilingual English and Spanish

## Resources

### **EXPRL 220, Resume & Interviewing Strategies**

The Center for Career Connections offers a 2-credit class, over 2 weekends each quarter, for students who wants 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.

### **OWL (Online Writing Lab) at PURDUE**

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/723/03/>

This resume workshop at the online writing lab on the Purdue University website offers a comprehensive guide to tips on what to include and exclude in resumes.

### **2016 Resume tips**

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/2016-resume-tips-jessica-h-hernandez-executive-resume-writer>

A great article on LinkedIn on tips to get hiring manager's attention on your resume and personal branding.

**Please call the Center for Career Connections at (425) 564 2279 to make an appointment to see a career specialist who will review and give you feedback on your resume.** We are located main campus, Room A265.