



Resumes and Cover Letters

Resume Essentials

Before you write the resume, take time to do an informal self-assessment on paper. List your skills, abilities, unpaid and paid experiences, academic projects, and extracurricular activities. Ask yourself what you did really well, your proudest accomplishments, and the value you brought to each task. This informal list will make it easier to prepare your resume.

Visit our website for more information on writing resumes and cover letters:

<http://careerservices.colorado.edu/students/resumeTips.aspx>

Cover Letter Essentials

- Your cover letter is a brief letter to the potential employer to demonstrate how your strengths match the position and your knowledge of the company and the job.
- Vary your sentence structure to avoid starting every sentence with "I."
- The cover letter must be employer-focused, not job searcher-focused. This means you focus the letter on how you can meet *their* needs, not your own.
- Address by name and title the individual with the power to hire you, if possible.
- Modify and tailor your letter for each position - carefully read each job description before composing the letter.
- Always proofread your cover letter for grammatical and spelling errors and content information.
- Keep your cover letter concise, simple, and direct. Typically a cover letter will be 3-4 paragraphs with no more than 4-5 sentences per paragraph. Thus, 20 sentences would be the maximum.
- Make sure you use the same size font on both your resume and cover letter and that the heading you use, which includes your contact information is the same on both documents as well.

Appearance of Resume

- 8.5 X 11, white paper with black ink
- .5"-1" margins all the way around
- Keep typeface simple and easy to read
- Name (14-16 pt. font) and Text (10-12 pt. font)
- **Do not** use a template from Microsoft Word

Contact Information

Make sure to include your name, address, telephone, cell phone, e-mail address and web site address or LinkedIn profile address (optional). All contact information will go at the top of your resume.

- Avoid nicknames.
- Use an address where you can be reached. If necessary, use your parents' address, a friend's, or the address you plan to use after graduation.
- Use ONE telephone number and ONE e-mail address.
- Use the telephone number where you can be most easily reached. Record a neutral greeting on your voice mail.
- Use a professional e-mail address.
- Include your website address only if the web page reflects your professional ambitions.

Objective

An objective will list the job position or field you are currently seeking. If you are writing a general resume for a career fair, the objective will state the work you are hoping to do.

- Tailor your objective for each position you seek.
- Examples:

- “To obtain an accounting position within a financial institution requiring strong analytical and organizational skills.”
- “Seeking a summer programming internship with Microsoft.”

Summary

You have the option of including a summary instead of an objective. A summary includes 4 or 5 bullet points that highlight your skills and abilities as it relates to the position.

- More than five years experience in the non-profit sector as a volunteer.
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills.
- Ability to develop rapport easily with individuals of all ages and backgrounds.
- Three years leadership experience in student government.
- Proficient understanding of Microsoft Word, Excel and social media channels.

Education

Typically, current students and recent graduates without a lot of work experience should list their educational information first.

- List your most recent educational information. High school information is optional.
- List degree first (e.g., A.S., B.S., B.A.), then major (i.e. B.A. Anthropology), institution attended, city and state, and minor/concentration.
- Add your grade point average (GPA) if it is higher than 2.8. If your overall GPA is not above a 2.8, figure out your major GPA and list that (i.e. Major GPA: 3.1).
- Mention academic honors, certifications and/or study abroad program(s).
- Optional: Include relevant courses, academic projects, and language skills, especially if they are highly relevant to the job you’re applying for.

Relevant Coursework

If you don’t have a lot of work experience related to your major, you can include this section below education. This will highlight some of the major classes you took to show the reader what your knowledge base is. Only include courses that are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Relevant Coursework:

- Genetics
- Cell Biology
- Cellular Stress Response
- Advanced Organic Chemistry
- Scientific Writing

Class Projects

You may include team class projects, individual class projects, academic research, thesis topics and any academic experience which demonstrates your skills and knowledge related to the type of work you are seeking. Examples:

- Team Project: Participated on team with 8 engineering students to research, design and construct a satellite. Coordinated team presentation to faculty and NASA engineers.
- Class Project: Researched and designed hospital database system for tracking organ donors.
- Senior Project: Applied chemical engineering principles to research and design a membrane separation system for optimum recovery of carbon dioxide from coal burning of flue gas.
- Research Project: Conducted research on the growth factor signaling that governs cell and tissue growth. Conducted forward mutagenesis screens to uncover signaling molecules in ERK pathway that affect viability and wing phenotype.
- Class Projects
 - Wrote and presented strategic marketing plan for national bottled water distributor.
 - Created business plan and prospectus as team leader in finance class project.

Experience

The main purpose of a resume is to land an interview. Most employers will initially spend about 30 seconds (or less) reading your resume. Thus, you want to ensure that you have carefully outlined how you are a match for the position. Employers are looking not only for what work you have done, but what skills and experiences you will bring to their company.

- Use present tense for present experiences; past tense for all previous experiences.

- Within each section, list experiences in reverse chronological order (start with the most recent and work backwards).
- Do not use personal pronouns (I, me, my, you, etc.).
- Always include:
 - Title of position
 - Name of organization
 - Location of work (city, state)
 - Dates of employment (include months and years)
 - Describe your work responsibilities beginning with an action verb.
 - Emphasize specific skills and achievements.

Relevant Experience

This is an important section because you can demonstrate how you are a good match for the position. This section may change based on each position. Carefully read the job description and highlight specific tasks and qualifications in the description. Look through your past experiences and accomplishments, and focus on those that are most relevant to the position. Relevant experiences can be paid or unpaid - for example: internships, volunteer work, class projects, jobs, club memberships, leadership experiences, and other activities. Use action verbs (see attached list AND the job description) to describe your experience and quantify any statement by using a number or percentage when possible.

- A basic formula to follow is: ACTION VERB + TASK + RESULT/OUTCOME
- Examples:
 - “Increased student membership by over 25 percent.”
 - “Conducted 25+ daily phone calls to potential donors.”

Additional Experience

For any experiences (paid or unpaid) that are not relevant to the job, include them in this section. If you do not have ‘relevant experience,’ you would want to title this section **Work Experience**. Follow the guidelines outlined above. Use action verbs to describe your duties and accomplishments (follow the basic formula).

Honors and Awards

If you have received numerous honors and awards, you may want to devote a separate section on your resume. You can include Dean’s List, scholarships (list the amount), and other notable honors in this section. Make sure to describe each award, since the name itself may not mean anything to the reader.

Other Categories to Consider

Collegiate Experiences
Professional Associations
Languages

Publications
Leadership
Volunteer

Computer Skills
Research
Technical Skills

References

- Do not include your reference information on your resume (i.e. ‘References available upon request’). Put your references on a separate page using the same heading as your resume (contact information).
- Ask 3-5 professors, supervisors, and professional contacts if they are willing to serve as references before you give their names to a potential employer.
- Include the following on your reference sheet:
 - Name and job title
 - Place of employment with employer address (street, city, state, zip).
 - Work phone number and e-mail address.
 - Optional: include a brief statement of how the reference knows you.
- Provide your references with a copy of your resume and the job description. If applicable, provide written permission to discuss your skills and abilities as some employers are only allowed to confirm employment.
- Stay in touch with your references and update your references on potential reference checks. Always thank your references for their time.

Resume Checkup

After you have written your resume, it’s time to have it reviewed and critiqued by a career counselor. You may also take the following steps to ensure quality:

- Ask others, including industry professionals, for their input.

- Get feedback about overall impact, not just grammatical errors. As most resumes are briefly skimmed, hand a reviewer your resume for 60 seconds and ask what information stands out and what the reviewer's overall impressions are.
- Make sure the resume uses consistent styles and formatting.
- Run a spell check on your computer before anyone sees your resume.
- Check for grammatical errors; ask a friend or colleague to review.
- Ask another friend to proofread your resume (spell check is not enough!). The more people who see your resume, the more likely misspelled words and awkward phrases will be seen and corrected.

E-mailing Your Resume and Cover letter

When e-mailing your resume, paste the body of your cover letter into the e-mail, and attach your cover letter and resume. Clearly name both documents (i.e. LorileeJones.resume).

Scannable Resumes

Many organizations, especially high-tech companies, use scanners to match positions with candidates. These searches use keywords and phrases that describe the skills and education required for a vacant position.

1. Create your resume in a normal format; change your heading so that only your name is on the top line. Address, phone number and e-mail address must be below your name.
2. Make sure you use keywords (more information to follow).
3. Use scannable characters like Times New Roman, Palatino, Garamond, Arial, and Helvetica in 10-12 pt. font. Do not use italics, bold, or underlines. Substitute straight quotes for curly quotes.
4. Use simple formatting:
 - a. Use consistent margins between .7 and 1.0 inch and left justify all text.
 - b. Do not use any vertical or horizontal lines, borders, shaded bars, or boxes.
 - c. Do not use ampersands (&), percent signs, or foreign characters.
 - d. Change bullet points to standard keyboard symbols such as asterisks or dashes.
 - e. Use indents, columns, and centered text to add visual appeal.
5. Print your resume on plain white paper using black ink. Send it in a large envelope.

Electronic Resumes

1. In Word:
 - a. Choose "Save As" and change the type to "Plain Text."
 - b. In the subsequent dialog box, select the option to insert line breaks.
 - c. A warning message will inform you that you will lose some formatting - click "OK."
2. Open up your text document and clean it up with Notepad (PC) or SimpleText (Mac).
 - a. On a PC, "Plain Text" does not remove all the tabs, so you will have to make manual adjustments.
 - b. Move any items that you may have had centered or tabbed to the left margin. All text should be flush left and there should be NO tabs in your text.
 - c. Reformat your heading; your contact information (e-mail, address, etc.) should all appear on separate lines. You may make the headings all CAPS.
 - d. Make sure all sections are on separate lines with a blank line before and after. Extra space between the lines ensures a computer program can easily identify each section of your resume.
 - e. Consider CAPS for items that you may have previously had bolded or italicized.
 - f. Make sure the bullets are still identifiable and have not run together.
 - g. Make sure the most important information is in the top third of the document. Hiring managers report that they often print the screen shot, not the complete resume.
3. Make sure you have keywords (more information to follow).
4. Delete any references to "page two," "Continued," or your header on page 2.
5. Send your text resume in an e-mail to yourself and to a friend who uses a different e-mail service to make sure you have completely cleaned it up and it looks professional.

Keyword Strategies

- Keywords are generally nouns or phrases that an employer will use when searching resumes. To help your resume stand out, use as many keywords as honestly possible.
- O*Net (<http://online.onetcenter.org/>) and the job description can help determine the keywords. Review this information and make a list of the qualifications, technical expertise, industry jargon, product knowledge, and personality traits that employers seek.

- Present your qualifications as if the reader is simply comparing the words on the resume to a list of desired qualifications, as that is what happens when the computer scans for keywords. Avoid using keyword lists.
- It's counterproductive to use the same keyword multiple times as this can be interpreted by computerized systems as keyword spamming.

Cover Letter Outline

Date

Company Contact Information

Dear Ms./Mr. _____: (do **NOT use Mrs.** even if you know she is married!)

First Paragraph:

Explain the reason for the letter and/or identify the job position you are seeking. Show enthusiasm!

Mention how you learned of the job position. Demonstrate knowledge and/or interest in the company.

Second Paragraph:

Include information about your major or relevant emphasis, year in school, and relevant coursework.

Address your ability to contribute to the employer's needs. Give examples of your relevant qualifications, accomplishments, and skills. In addition to paid employment, these examples may come from volunteer jobs, class projects, and relevant extracurricular activities.

Third Paragraph:

The final paragraph of your cover letter expresses your confidence that you are a perfect fit for the job. It also tells the reader how best you can be reached. Mention that you will call them to follow up to be sure they received your resume and cover letter. In the closing paragraph, remember to express your thanks.

Action Verbs

Communication

Addressed
Advertised
Arbitrated
Arranged
Articulated
Authored
Clarified
Collaborated
Communicated
Composed
Condensed
Conferred
Consulted
Contacted
Conveyed
Convinced
Corresponded
Debated
Defined
Developed
Directed
Discussed
Drafted
Edited
Elicited
Enlisted
Explained
Expressed
Formulated
Furnished
Incorporated
Influenced
Interacted
Interpreted
Interviewed
Involved
Joined
Judged
Lectured
Listened
Marketed
Mediated
Moderated
Negotiated
Observed
Outlined
Participated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Proposed
Publicized
Reconciled
Recruited

Referred
Reinforced
Reported
Resolved
Responded
Solicited
Specified
Spoke
Suggested
Summarized
Synthesized
Translated
Wrote

Creative

Acted
Adapted
Combined
Composed
Conceptualized
Condensed
Created
Customized
Designed
Developed
Devised
Directed
Displayed
Entertained
Established
Fashioned
Formulated
Founded
Illustrated
Initiated
Instituted
Integrated
Introduced
Invented
Modeled
Modified
Originated
Performed
Photographed
Planned
Revised
Revitalized
Shaped
Solved
Data/Financial
Administered
Adjusted
Allocated
Analyzed
Appraised

Assessed
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Conserved
Controlled
Corrected
Decreased
Determined
Developed
Estimated
Forecasted
Managed
Marketed
Measured
Netted
Planned
Prepared
Programmed
Projected
Qualified
Reconciled
Reduced
Researched
Retrieved

Helping

Adapted
Advocated
Aided
Answered
Arranged
Assessed
Assisted
Clarified
Coached
Collaborated
Contributed
Cooperated
Counseled
Demonstrated
Diagnosed
Educated
Encouraged
Ensured
Expedited
Facilitated
Familiarized
Furthered
Guided
Helped
Insured
Intervened

Motivated
Prevented
Provided
Referred
Rehabilitated
Represented
Resolved
Simplified
Supplied
Supported
Volunteered

Management

Accomplished
Administered
Advanced
Analyzed
Appointed
Approved
Assigned
Attained
Authorized
Chaired
Considered
Consolidated
Contracted
Controlled
Converted
Coordinated
Decided
Delegated
Developed
Directed
Eliminated
Emphasized
Enforced
Enhanced
Established
Executed
Generated
Handled
Headed
Hired
Hosted
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Initiated
Inspected
Instituted
Led
Managed
Merged
Motivated
Navigated

Organized
Originated
Overhauled
Oversaw
Planned
Presided
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Reorganized
Replaced
Restored
Reviewed
Scheduled
Secured
Selected
Streamlined
Strengthened
Supervised
Terminated

Organizational

Approved
Arranged
Catalogued
Categorized
Charted
Classified
Coded
Collected
Compiled
Corrected
Corresponded
Distributed
Executed
Filed
Generated
Incorporated
Inspected
Logged
Maintained
Monitored
Obtained
Operated
Ordered
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Provided
Purchased
Recorded
Registered
Reserved
Responded
Reviewed
Routed
Scheduled

Screened
Submitted
Supplied
Standardized
Systematized
Updated
Validated
Verified

Research

Analyzed
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Conducted
Critiqued
Detected
Determined
Diagnosed
Evaluated
Examined
Experimented
Explored
Extracted
Formulated
Gathered
Identified
Inspected
Interpreted
Interviewed
Invented
Investigated
Located
Measured
Organized
Researched
Reviewed
Searched
Solved
Summarized
Surveyed
Systematized
Tested

Teaching

Adapted
Advised
Clarified
Coached
Communicated
Conducted
Coordinated
Critiqued
Developed
Enabled
Encouraged
Evaluated

Explained
Facilitated
Focused
Guided
Individualized
Informed
Instilled
Instructed
Motivated
Persuaded
Simulated
Stimulated
Taught
Tested
Trained
Transmitted
Tutored

Technical

Adapted
Applied
Assembled
Built
Calculated
Computed
Conserved
Constructed
Converted
Debugged
Designed
Determined
Developed
Engineered
Fabricated
Fortified
Installed
Maintained
Operated
Overhauled
Printed
Programmed
Rectified
Regulated
Remodeled
Repaired
Replaced
Restored
Solved
Specialized
Standardized
Studied
Upgraded
Utilized

Name

Street, City, State, Zip

Phone Email

OBJECTIVE: To gain full-time employment in Channel Marketing in the high tech sector.

EDUCATION: UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO at BOULDER Boulder, CO
B.S. Business Administration May 200X
Area of Emphasis: **Marketing**
GPA 3.487, Dean's List

RELATED WORK

EXPERIENCE: **SUN MICROSYSTEMS** Boulder, CO
Channel Marketing Intern June 200X - Present

- Manage and create marketing communications to valued reseller partners and distributors
- Manage content for multiple internal and external websites
- Assist in implementation of internet portal solution for channel partners
- Track and report on R.O.I. for marcomm initiatives
- Analyze and report on event feedback for business reviews

COLDWATER CREEK Boulder, CO
Lead Sales Associate October 200X - December 200X

- Monitored sales quotas for specific merchandise as a lead sales associate
- Created and maintained product displays and sales floor area
- Promoted the Coldwater Creek brand and expanded sales through product knowledge

LAKWOOD GOLF COURSE Lakewood, CO
Guest Relations Specialist April 2000 - August 200X

- Achieved monthly commission goals as a top seller for three consecutive months
- Organized various golf tournaments and scheduled professional golf lessons for summer seasons
- Specialized in customer service, receptionist duties, and operating P.O.S. system

LEADERSHIP: **PROFILES IN BUSINESS & SOCIETY**
Peer Teaching Assistant (PTA) January 200X - December 200X

- Co-wrote a chapter for the University published textbook *Profiles in Business & Society*
- Selected among 100 applicants to lead and teach a required undergraduate business course

CU American Marketing Association (CUAMA) September 200X - August 200X

- Participated in weekly meetings and speaking engagements conducted by marketing executives

Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) August 200X- May 200X

- Served as 200X Class President: facilitated meetings and increased membership by 20%
- Participant in the 200X National Competition in Anaheim, CA

ADDITIONAL WORK

EXPERIENCE: **BRADY FAMILY** Erie, CO
Nanny September 200X - May 200X

- Provided care for two children

SKILLS: Computer: Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, HTML
Language: Beginning Spanish

NAME

Address
City, State Zip

Email Address
Phone Number

SUMMARY:

- More than two years management experience.
- Excellent ability to manage multiple projects and tasks simultaneously.
- Held various leadership roles on campus, including President of Sigma Lambda Gamma.
- Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
University of Colorado at Boulder
Minor: **Business Administration**

May 20XX
Boulder, CO
GPA 3.4

EXPERIENCE:

Assistant Manager
Pop's Deli

Sept. 20XX-Present
Boulder, CO

- Supervise a serving staff of 10 employees and coordinate schedules.
- Order \$1000 in weekly supplies; inspect inventory and maintain supply levels.
- Train new employees and advise on company policies and procedures.
- Increased sales by over 10% for three consecutive years.

Supervisor
Gator Pools

May 20XX- Aug. 20XX
Gainesville, FL

- Organized and operated the concession stand; sold up to \$400 in products daily.
- Assisted with daily supervision of locally popular pool facility, serving 300+ customers daily.
- Provided excellent customer service and problem-solving for customer inquiries.

LEADERSHIP:

President
Sigma Lambda Gamma (member since 20XX)
University of Colorado at Boulder

Aug. 20XX- May 20XX
Boulder, CO

- Organized and supervised 12 committees.
- Allocated annual budget exceeding \$25,000.
- Developed and implemented the Young Women's Leadership Program, empowering Latina women and promoting cultural awareness.
- Interacted and collaborated with university, city, and state officials.

Committee Member
Women's Leadership Conference Planning Committee
University of Colorado at Boulder

Aug. 20XX- May 20XX
Boulder, CO

- Participated in bi-monthly organizational meetings; planned events for 500+ registrants.
- Co-coordinated conference speakers and created speaker Certificates of Appreciation.
- Processed registrations for over 450 attendees.

AFFILIATIONS: American Marketing Association (AMA), Denver, CO
Psi Chi, Psychology Honor Society, CU, Boulder, CO

Aug. 20XX- Present
Jan. 20XX- Present

COMPUTER SKILLS: HTML; Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher

Name

Address Line 1
Address Line 2

Phone
Email

OBJECTIVE	Seeking a full-time or part-time summer internship in the field of Mechanical Engineering. Willing to relocate. Available June 1 st , 20xx.	
EDUCATION	University of Colorado at Boulder Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering <i>Student Athlete: Ran Division I Track and Field for CU Varsity Team</i> GPA: 3.0	December 20XX
	University of Hawaii at Manoa Coursework in Mechanical Engineering	20XX-20XX
TECHNICAL SKILLS	<u>Computer:</u> SolidWorks, MATLAB, LabVIEW, Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint <u>Machine:</u> Metalworking Mill, Metalworking Lathe, Three-Axis Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machine <u>Language:</u> Spanish (conversational), English (native)	
ENGINEERING PROJECTS	Rotational Putter Pendulum <i>PING Golf Company</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Received "Peoples Choice Award" at Engineering School Design Expo and "1st Place" in Mechanical Engineering School out of 40 teamsDesigned and built, with a team of four students, a putter-swinging pendulum utilized to test the repeatability of the company's golf clubsApplied full 3-D computer-aided-design of product, machining and metalworking with aluminum and steel Inverted Pendulum <ul style="list-style-type: none">Built an inverted pendulum on a printer track controlled by LabVIEW feedback loop to maintain an upright position and adjust itself from falling Baseball Launching Catapult <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed and built a working catapult to launch a baseball over 50 yards, including spring rate and kinematics calculations for projected distances	
VOLUNTEER	Earthwatch Institute Worldwide group-volunteer expeditions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Researched region specific animals in exotic countries, including Australia, Thailand, Costa Rica, Greece and Africa to learn animal behavior and promote sustainable animal conservationStudied animals such as sea turtles, bottlenose dolphins, asian elephants, and capuchin and howler monkeys	8/20XX
WORK EXPERIENCE	Stocker/Cashier , Superior Liquor Market, Superior, CO Server , Bubba Gump Shrimp Co, Honolulu, HI Golf Caddy , Lake Valley Golf Club, Boulder, CO Fire Mitigation Member , US Forest Service, Boulder, CO	6/20XX - Present 8/20XX - 6/20XX Summer 20XX Summer 20XX
INTERESTS	Traveling, Soccer, Volleyball, Football, Snowboarding, Surfing, Music	

NAME

Address • City, State • Zip • Phone Number • Email

October 1st, 20XX

Ms. Shelia Watson
Vice President for Investment Banking Division
Goldman Sachs
One New York Plaza
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Watson:

Often described as an intuitive and organized student, I am enthusiastic about the marketing representative position I found posted on your internal website. I will graduate this May from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Business. I believe that my abilities to understand the customer's needs and produce successful results aligns with Goldman Sachs' mission to provide the finest quality customer service.

In the position description, analytical and problem solving skills were highlighted. During my two years as a customer service representative for Foley's, customers frequently commented on my ability to quickly assess their needs and to deliver outstanding support. One customer commented that she tried other department stores but never found the same attention I offered. Because of my sharp analytical and problem-solving skills, I was able to meet my customer's needs.

I'm confident that my background and skills match what you are looking for. I will be in New York City from November 15th until November 21st and available to interview during that time. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions at *phone number* or *email*. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

CAREER SERVICES • UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

Center for Community, N352 UCB 133 2249 Willard Loop Drive Boulder, CO 80309-0133

Phone 303-492-6541 FAX 303-492-5723 <http://careerservices.colorado.edu>

Additional guides available at: <http://careerservices.colorado.edu/students/MajorCareerInfo.aspx>