

## Resume Writing

There are two important points to remember when you are writing a resume. First, your resume is NOT a JOB DESCRIPTION. Every employment bullet point that you use should show your unique talents rather than the everyday skills. For example, clerical skills such as answering phones professionally and typing are skills that every young professional should have, they do not belong on a professional resume. Each bullet description should hold the weight of your Master's degree. If the bullet phrase does not pass that test, it does not belong on your resume. Readers can detect filler, and if you use extraneous information they will stop reading. Second, remember your audience-it's not you. Make sure your resume is reader friendly. Have multiple people read your resume for clarity, consistency, and cohesiveness.

A resume template is detailed below and is designed to help you lay out your resume. A list of "action verbs" to help you describe your job skills and responsibilities is also included in this handbook. The goal of the resume is to highlight your skills and marketability. You should craft your resume clarifying for the reader why you are the perfect candidate for the job. Each bullet point should convince the reader you are qualified. If this is not the case, reconsider including this point on your resume.

### *Point to Ponder:*

*Each bullet point should carry the weight of your degree, if it does not, why is it on your resume?*

Remember your resume should be easy to read. Dates should be clearly enumerated so the reader does not have to hunt for information. The basic rule behind the layout design of a resume should be that the information should be able to "breathe." "Crowding" or "choking" the information in small fonts and tight margins will not represent you or your skills well. Take the time to write concisely and use crisp language that accurately profiles your talents. Your resume as a general rule, should be 1 page. If you have significant work experience, you can go to 2 pages. Before you move on to two pages, make sure that each bullet is unique and the skills disclosed are not redundant. With regard to format, you are welcome to use your own format and writing style, but the following template is strongly recommended.

### **Resume Outline Form**

Heading      At the top of your resume, include your **Name** (upper case **bold**) local address, telephone, fax, and e-mail. Note permanent address and current address if necessary. You can place this information at center or flush in the top right hand corner.

### **PROFESSIONAL INTEREST**

For example: (PROFESSIONAL INTEREST, Upper Case, **bold**) This should be bulleted to highlight specific professional interests you have in your field.

- Preparation of annual budgets
- Training personnel on computer networks
- Creation of coalitions through grassroots organizing

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You can either have **education** or **work experience** next. It depends on the position for which you are applying. You need to assess which has more punch.

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## EDUCATION

(education should be in upper case, **bold**)

Here you list your education background in reverse chronological order. Start off with the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy (upper and lower case bold type) and Albany, New York (upper and lower case regular type) right justified. The second line will list your degree (upper and lower case italic type). Next to your degree and placed in the left-hand margin should be the date of the expected completion of your degree. The third line will include your concentration, and additional relevant course work.

This section is very important to students that may not have extensive experience. This will add to your credentials and skills.

List any other GRADUATE SCHOOLS in the same format as above.

Then list your UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL, degree, major, honors, distinctions, activities, and sports (do not include intramurals)- in the same format as above.

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## EXPERIENCE

On the first line the **Name** of the organization is in upper and lower case letters, bold to keep it consistent with Rockefeller College. On the same first line the location of the job should appear in upper and lower case, regular type, except if the location is an international location and then should be in upper and lower case **bold**.

1987-1990 Next to the name of the organization and placed in the left-hand margin should be the dates of the employment.

Under the name of the organization in upper and lower case *italic* list your *Title*.

Beneath your title you may choose to put a line or two about the organization and the department you were in if it is not well known or cannot be derived from the name of the group.

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This section should highlight your specific achievements in terms of outcomes including numbers, dollars, and percentages. Transferable skills and abilities acquired, as demonstrated by specific activities and accomplishments.

- Use bullet points to highlight specific accomplishments
- Choose specifics over generalizations
- Avoid simply listing responsibilities on a typical day
- Use strong, positive action verbs that tell what you did (see list of suggested verbs)
- Select the shortest, most concise phrases

Choose a consistent order of information, format, and spacing. If your experience starts with a brief overview, then each section must begin with an overview.

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## **SKILLS**

This section should include sections broken out in categories, for example: computer, language, presentation, fundraising, and anything you want a recruiter to know about you or your interests. Add things that will set you apart from other candidates. Do not include things that may exclude you or set a negative tone, (for example: skydiving may be seen as too reckless for some companies or militant advocacy group affiliations may jade the recruiter's opinion of you). It can be used to include such things as computer skills, travel, language (qualifiers need to be used native, fluent, proficient, spoken fluency only) sports or creative talents. Everything listed on a resume is open for discussion, so be prepared to talk about it.

## Resume Template

**JOSEPH M. SULLIVAN**  
**246 South Main Avenue**  
**Albany, New York 12208**  
**(518) 444-5555**  
**sullivan@aol.com**

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### PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

- Analyze state bonding letting procedures
- Work cooperatively with advocates, state officials, and private sector businesses on capital improvement projects
- Project financial viability of inner city communities throughout the state

### EDUCATION

May 2000

**Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy**, Albany, NY  
*Master of Public Administration*

Concentration: Public Finance

Relevant Courses: Public Finance, State and Local Tax Studies, Fiscal Impact

May 1998

**Purdue University**, West Lafayette, IN  
*Bachelor of Arts*

Concentration: Accounting

Phi Beta Kappa

### EXPERIENCE

May- Aug. 1998

**Office of Governor of the State of New York**, Albany, NY

Office of the Scheduler

*Legislative Intern*

- Planned public appearances for the Governor in upstate region
- Briefed the Governor for daily meetings with constituent groups
- Prepared briefings for senior scheduler on public events
- Secured all transportation and accommodations for Governor and accompanying senior staff

### SKILLS &

#### AFFILIATIONS:

Computer: databases, spreadsheets, word processing

Language: fluent in Italian

Event Planning: organized four events for over 2, 000 attendees

Writing: \$1.3 million in successful grant writing

Volunteer: Fundraising Volunteer for the American Cancer Society

Professional Organizations: American Society of Public Administration

## **Information to exclude**

The law prohibits recruiters or employers to ask specific questions. Avoid listing irrelevant information such as birth date, marital status, height, weight, sexual orientation, social security number, or political affiliation. Organizations are not allowed to ask any personal information that is not essential to the job function.

## **Resume specifications and suggestions**

If your resume is longer than 1 page you should be sure to “weed out” any irrelevant or redundant information. (Your audience is an employer and not you; be cognizant of what is of interest to them and not what is of interest to you).

Below is a list of action verbs you should use to describe your responsibilities in your resume. Use action verbs and avoid broad, flat language. For example, if under skills you list “communication” skills, you need to clarify this skill using action verbs. Below is an example of how to expand the skill of communication.

**Communication-** there are numerous skills captured under this large umbrella, Think about what you really mean. Are you referring to:

**Negotiated/negotiator-** disciplined, able to broker an agreement between opposing parties

**Mediated/mediator-** skilled at promoting reconciliation between parties, able listen to all positions

**Informed/briefed-** keen eye for pertinent information and ability to prioritize

**Analyzed/analyst-** displays that you are a critical reader, able to review collections of information and disseminate findings concisely

**Researched/researcher-** conveys that you can synthesize information in a cogent form

**Wrote/writer-** states you have the ability to articulate in written form coherent thought and ideas, but there are other skills that a good writer has such as:

**Edited/editor-** able to revise others work without challenging the integrity of the original thoughts

## **Action Verbs**

Administered	Advised	Analyzed	Assembled	Assisted
Attained	Balanced	Built	Calculated	Captured
Chaired	Changed	Collaborated	Compiled	Completed
Conducted	Constructed	Controlled	Coordinated	Corrected
Created	Defined	delegated	Demonstrated	Designed
Developed	Directed	Distributed	Drafted	Edited
Educated	Enabled	Established	Evaluated	Examined
Executed	Expanded	Explained	Facilitated	Focused
Founded	Generated	Guarded	Handled	Helped
Hired	Identified	Implemented	Improved	Increased
Influenced	Informed	Initiated	Inspired	Interviewed
Invented	Investigated	Launched	Lobbied	Maintained
Managed	Marketed	Maximized	Modified	Monitored
Motivated	Negotiated	Obtained	Organized	Originated
Persuaded	Prepared	Presented	Preserved	Procured
Proposed	Publicized	Recommended	Recorded	Recruited
Reduced	Restored	Restructured	Revised	Saved
Served	Scheduled	Sold	Solved	Strengthened
Stimulated	Supervised	Taught	Trained	Translated
Updated	Utilized	Verified	Wrote	

Be sure that you clearly and accurately describe not only what you do but also how the tasks are completed. Use details that involved exact budget amounts, specific numbers of people managed, how many volunteers retained, etc.