

How to Write a Successful Resume

Resume Overview

Your job search is an advertising campaign. You are the product! Your resume, cover letter, references and interview all need to deliver the same message.

Think of your resume as a part of your marketing plan. It's the fact sheet. Your cover letter is a well-conceived advertisement. Your references are customer testimonials and your interview is the customer's first interaction with the product (you).

Remember:

Employers want to know 2 things:

- What's in it for me?
- Why should I hire you?

Tips for Formatting Your Resume

1 page only!

Unless you are a seasoned professional, you only get one page to make an impression. Do not use a resume wizard! Just open a new MS Word document and get started. Use a common font like Calibri or Cambria. You can mix them using one for the header and section titles. No smaller than 10pt font.

Header

This is your letterhead. Make sure it matches on all the parts of your application: resume, cover letter and references.

You can justify your information to the right or left or center it. It is your choice.

White Space

Make good use of formatting to cover the page. Too much white space is bad.

PROOFREAD!

There is no excuse for mistakes.

The Center for Experiential Learning

Careerservices@collegeofidaho.edu

Hendren Hall 459-5508

Your Name (Header)

Your Street Address, Your Town, Your State, Your Zip
(m) 555.555.5555 • your.email@votes.collegeofidaho.edu

Accomplishments

- Get the important info at the top! Recruiters spend 10-30 seconds on the 1st look
- Use this section to direct readers to important information on your resume
- Highlight relevant skills (software, languages, etc.), certifications or accomplishments

Education

The College of Idaho, Caldwell, ID

Degree (write it out)

GPA:

May 201X

Major:

Minors:

- List honors, scholarships, honor societies, Dates
- Include coursework, study abroad, presentations, Dates

Internship

Your Title,

Dates of Employment

Employer Name, City, State

- To highlight your internship you can put it in a special section

Experience

Your Title

Dates of Employment

Employer Name, City, State

- Use phrases beginning with action words to describe your experience
- Measure your accomplishments using specific results
- Focus on the tasks or skills that are most relevant to the job you are applying for

Your Title

Dates of Employment

Employer Name, City, State

- At a loss for what to write, ask yourself why an employer should hire you
- Use specific examples to illustrate your work ethic or other qualities

Athletics

The College of Idaho Your Sport

Seasons 201X—201X

- List your team accomplishments (record, championships, etc.)
- Give your personal accomplishments using statistics
- List team activities you participated such as community service

Activities (sometimes called Leadership)

Group/Organization Name

Dates of participation

Your Title

Dates you held the position

- Describe the group's and/or your accomplishments or measurable results



What Goes on a Resume?

Header (Your Name and Contact Information)

All of your documents should have the same header, include:

Name: Use your full name or the name that you go by if your full name is not what you are typically called.

Address: Pick your home or school address. Usually you don't need both.

Phone: Pick the number that you want an employer to call. Record an appropriate message. Employers will judge you by your message and ring tone!

Email: Use your College of Idaho email or another appropriate email. This is not the time for creativity.

Objective

Leave it off! It will be evident in your cover letter

Accomplishments/Overview/Profile

This a section where you can highlight skills or accomplishments that relate to the job you are applying for. They must be measurable results.

Education

School Name: The College of Idaho

School Location: Caldwell, ID

Degree: What degree will you earn?

Major/Minor: List them.

Graduation Date: Just Month and Year. Some fields put Anticipated Graduation Date (ask the faculty in your field) An employer once told me that using Anticipated or Expected made it appear that your weren't sure you were going to make it.

GPA: You have to list your GPA. Employers will check. Go to the WebAdvisor and figure out what yours is.

Academic Achievements: List all academic awards you have earned, such as: Dean's List, Departmental Awards, Who's Who ... , any award that is related to your academic success.

Coursework: List all courses in which you have learned specific skills or information that are related to the position you are applying for. List the titles of the courses and identify what you learned that you would tell an employer about.

Study Away: List where you went, what program you went with, and when you were there.

Other Degrees: List the School Name, School Location, and Degree Earned. List it below The College of Idaho, so the most current information is first.

Research (may be included with Education or as a separate section) Have you begun or completed a research project? List the name of the project, the researchers involved and the type of research you are conducted.

Presentations/Publications (may be included with Education or as a separate section)

Have you presented at a conference?

List the title of your presentation, the conference info and dates.

Have you published for your research, writing, or other project?

List the publication info, title of the article and date.

Experience (Internships/Jobs/Volunteer Work/Community Service)

Experience should represent any work that you have done (paid or unpaid). Employers are interested measurable results. Try to list as many details about what you did as possible. Numbers will help tell a more complete story about the work that you did.

For each experience, list these things:

Name of the Employer/Volunteer Organization

Location (city and state)

Dates (month and year) of your work.

Using bulleted phrases, explain the work/accomplishments that you would want to tell an employer about. You do not have to list everything that you have done. Concentrate on the things that are applicable to the job that you are applying for.

Athletics

Commitment to a sport can tell an employer a lot about you. The fact that you participated is only one part of what is important.

Think about what you contributed to the team/sport. How would the team have been different if you weren't there? How would you have been different if you didn't participate?

Try to think about the skills you learned that you can use at work.

Team: List the Team that you play for and the dates you were on the team.

Team Accomplishments: List any accomplishments that you contributed to such as: team record, post-season appearances, team GPA award.

Personal Accomplishments: List any accomplishments that you made to the team or awards you received. Check your statistics.

Activities

What are you doing when you are not in class, working, volunteering, practicing, or competing? Activities represent an important part of how you choose to spend your time.

Employers want to know why you are part of an organization and what you learned, contributed, or accomplished by being part of that organization.

For each organization:

List the group name (on and off campus)

Your role in the group (title, if you had one)

Dates that you participated.

Use a bulleted list to show accomplishments.