

Résumés for Entry-Level Professionals

► Sell yourself to prospective employers using compelling facts

3/2016

Landing your first job or internship requires equipping yourself with a succinct and effective résumé that details your qualifications and suggests your professional potential. Call out details or unique aspects of your background that are relevant to a particular position in a cover letter.

Use the following outline as a guide. Begin with a brief **Personal Summary** that summarizes in 3-5 lines your skills, professional interests and career aspirations. Then list your two most important qualifications as a beginning communications professional: **Education** and **Skills**. Employers understand that recent college graduates have only limited professional experience. (Later in your career, your résumé will concentrate on a chronological listing of the full-time positions you have held and your accomplishments—education and skills become secondary.)

Next, recap your **Relevant Experience** by listing all relevant activities in that count as “experience” -- include internships, paid part-time positions, Student Media work and significant volunteer involvements (including class projects) for a client organization. For each activity, use *strong action verbs* to describe your 1-4 most important accomplishments. However possible, *quantify* the scope of your activities (e.g. produced five videos shown online) and stress *results* obtained (e.g. viewed by 250,000 people). Round out your résumé by listing **Other Experience** (paid employment while in college) and **Leadership/Volunteer Involvements**.

Tips for effective résumés: *Also visit the CSU Career Center: <https://career.colostate.edu>*

- The purpose of the résumé is to communicate how you can add value to the organization.
 - Résumés for beginners should be 1-1.5 pages long. Always include a date.
 - Most résumés are scanned or photocopied by employers. So, use a standard, easy-to-read typeface (e.g. Arial or Times Roman) in at 11 or 12 point type. Avoid second colors, boxes, shadings, fancy dingbats, and unnecessary rules. Follow a simple one- or two-column format.
 - Be succinct. Use bulleted lists. Write in short phrases instead of complete sentences. All elements should follow a consistent, parallel structure. Write about accomplishments using past tense – and do so consistently.
 - Obtain a simple, professional e-mail address that *contains your name* and you will keep in future year. Example: *janessmith@gmail.com*. Always include your full permanent mailing address and cell number, if applicable, so that you can be contacted easily.
 - Create a separate page with the complete contact data for 3-5 people from whom you have obtained permission to serve as references. “References available upon request” is assumed.
 - Avoid controversial topics, such as religious or political affiliations—unless you have a reason to do so. Do not include personal hobbies or interests – particularly if mundane or risky. Omit social security numbers, dates of birth and other personally identifying information.
 - Include the URLs to your personal website/electronic portfolio (optional) and to your LinkedIn Page (highly recommended). Demonstrate your acumen in using social media and other online tools by providing examples of your work appearing online. [Also delete questionable content from your personal social media accounts—employers typically conduct online searches about candidates.
 - Proofread your résumé carefully. Your résumé should be perfect in terms of formatting, grammar, spelling, and accuracy. Make a good impression!
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First and Last Name
Permanent Mailing Address
City, State, Zip
Cell (000) 000-0000 | Phone (000) 000-0000
E-mail address
Website/e-portfolio: [Insert full URL--optional]
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/[Add your username/URL--recommended]

Personal Summary (Optional)

[Include a 4-5 line personal profile that recaps your qualifications and interests and mentions your most important experience. Suggest how the kind of entry-level position you are seeking relates to your career goal. Focus on how what you can contribute—not what you want from an employer.]

Education

B.A., Colorado State University, Fort Collins Degree expected (awarded) Month, Year
Journalism and Media Communication, [Specify or add comments about focus of study, including digital promotion and/or social media]
[Add any distinctions or honors, e.g. graduation with honors. Dean's List, etc. Do not list GPA—identify other ways to communicate your strength as a student. .
List any minors, certificate programs or option areas completed – also extraordinary experiences, such as Education Abroad or Semester at Sea (list locale, semester and year)]

Professional Experience

Job Title or Volunteer Position Month, Year-Month, Year
Name of Organization, City and State – *[Add a short phrase to describe client if not widely known]*

- Describe most important activity using action verbs in a phrase. Focus on results obtained, scope of activity and importance to client. Include special recognition received, if significant.
- Describe next most important activity, possibly in same or slightly less detail.
[Repeat pattern to include internships, paid part-time positions and volunteer activities such as class projects for client organizations. List in reverse chronological order]

Other Experience

Job Title, Name of Organization, City and State Month, Year-Month, Year
[Use a single-line entry to list all other paid jobs held, in reverse chronological order. No need to describe duties for familiar positions such as “pizza delivery driver.” Indicate extraordinary experience that suggests you held positions of responsibility or authority or gained relevant communication expertise. Example: “• Trained 25 employees in four stores on uses of new order processing system.” This section should be shorter than “Professional Experience,” if possible.]

Skills (Optional—but potentially important for a tech-oriented or supervisory position)

- Key skill – describe depth of knowledge and identify software used, if applicable.
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[Use bulleted keywords to identify 1-3 areas of expertise. Examples: Writing/Editing, Web site design, graphics, photography/digital imaging, video production, digital promotion, publicity/media relations. For each category then explain the extent to which you have “Extensive experience in....” or are merely “Conversant with ...” key production techniques or software. Omit basic word processing, e-mail and Internet searching—these skills are assumed.]

Relevant Coursework: Name of Course, Name of Course (Optional)

[List 6-8 courses completed to suggest the depth and breadth of your related knowledge. Include courses outside communications (e.g. marketing or management, which might be good “talking points” in an interview). This list can be omitted if you have plenty of other skills to talk about.]

[Foreign language: State if you speak fluently or read any foreign language. Otherwise, omit line.]

Leadership/Membership/Volunteer Involvements

- Position, Organization, Dates
[Use bullets to list 1-6 significant positions held in student organizations and/or campus or off-campus activities. Include a mention of notable accomplishments. List memberships only that relate to the profession. Include any relevant professionally related activities not included above.]
00/0000 [Date]