



Bonner Curriculum

Writing a Resume: Development Guide

Introduction

At best, a resume is a great marketing tool for an employer who is interested only in what you can contribute to their organization. It is not a laundry list of all past experiences, but a defined and focused listing of experiences and skills that illustrate why you are a great fit for a particular position.

Yet, when you are creating a resume with limited professional and mostly volunteer experience, producing a clear, defined resume that reveals important learned skills can be difficult. This guide is a start in helping you understand your past volunteer, as well as work experience, and how to best accentuate it in your marketing tool, your resume.

Types of Resumes

- **Chronological Resume:** A chronological resume lists experiences from the most recent to the least. It is simple, quick to scan, and employers seem to like it for this reason.
- **Functional Resume:** A functional resume is a resume arranged around certain skills, not on any chronological order. This style may be more difficult to keep organized and clear. However, this style is useful if you work to make it very accessible. Functional resumes are also good if you've had frequent changes of jobs, gaps in time, consulting or other project-based experiences.
- **Curriculum Vitae Resume:** A curriculum vitae resume is a detailed, lengthy and structured listing of education, publications, projects, awards and work history. This type is most used by academics and scientists.
- **Electronic Resume:** An electronic resume is a resume that is either chronological or functional that is easily scanned and enter into a resume database that employers can easily search.

The best way to figure out what type of resume you need is through contacting your Career Service office on campus. Your office can provide you with examples.

General Information

To begin developing a resume, it is important to have some focus in relation to why you are developing a resume, including a potential job you are applying to or what type of organization you want to work for.

To help establish this focus, answer the following questions:

1. What kind of job, internship, or position am I applying for?
2. What kind of skills does this position require?
3. What special skills do I have that will help me get the position?
4. What are my strengths? Weaknesses?
5. What are my greatest accomplishments in my past work and volunteer experience?

Resume Content

The Basics

When constructing, you should try to answer three basic questions:

- **Who am I?**
Your resume should be an inclusive snapshot of who you are—what you are committed to, the issues or organizations you have been engaged in, and where your hope that your future professional path takes you. It defines you for an employer.
- **What have I done?**
Though it may seem like it, a resume should never be just a list of past and present positions, interests, and other activities. It is a personal marketing tool that showcases your significant positions, recognitions, awards, interests, and overall achievements. Each item listed in your resume should demonstrate significant skills mastered, goals met, and should show an employer that you have actively sought opportunities to increase skills, knowledge, and general competency.
- **What can I do for my potential employer?**
Perhaps the key consideration in creating a resume comes from the employer, who only wants to know what you can do for him or her. Initially, the first way that is demonstrated is through your resume (one of the last ways is an interview.) The best way to answer this question is by knowing what a position requires and building the resume around the needed set of skills.

B. Brainstorming Experience

When actually preparing to write a resume, it can be difficult to remember exactly what positions you have had during and after college and exactly what you accomplished in these positions. So, take time to brainstorm past positions (including present ones). Use the following chart and these four questions:

- **What was my position?**
- **What was my role?**
- **How did I fulfill my role?**
- **What was the result?**

My Position	Role	How did I fulfill my role	Result
Example Soup Kitchen Volunteer	Served meals to the homeless, helped guests to connect with resources	Volunteered 10 hrs/wk, worked with kitchen director to identify resources	several people got housing, jobs, food. learned to prepare meals for large numbers, practiced advocacy skills.

--	--	--	--

C. Awards and Accomplishments

Documenting awards and accomplishments on your resume illustrates for an employer that the quality of your work and dedication to other positions and projects has been so high that you have received special recognition. Awards and accomplishments may range from something like “Volunteer of the Year,” to being selected to represent your school or community at a special event.

Use the space following to brainstorm a list of your awards and accomplishments.

D. Publications and Presentations

Publications and presentations on a resume show an employer that your communication skills are above average and better. Publications may include having regular articles in your school newspaper or literary journal, to having work published in other professional publications. Presentations do not include regular class presentations, but special presentations at conferences, summits, or other gatherings that exceed your normal class work.

Use the space following to brainstorm a list of presentations and publications.

E. Additional Skills and Interests

The additional skills section of your resume helps to show an employer aspects of your professional and personal development that may not be evident in other parts of the resume. This section includes any special skills (i.e. languages, proficiency with computer programs, etc), extracurricular activities, community involvement (like regular volunteering or boards), interests, and hobbies.

Use the space following to brainstorm a list of your additional skills.

II. Synthesizing Experience

A. Objective Statement

An objective statement is a concise one-sentence statement at the beginning of the resume that tells an employer exactly what position you want and why you are applying. *Essentially, it is the goal of the document.* Yet, objective statements can be considered optional or even unimportant. However, it has a dual function for your purpose: it will help you focus your resume around a specific position and it will help let an employer know what type or position, experience, or organization you seek.

Example: To apply for a community organizing position, the resume's objective statement might be:

To obtain a community organizing position that will enable further work in community outreach and empowerment

With a position or job in mind, use the following space to brainstorm potential objective statements:

B. Experience and Language

Taking work and volunteer experiences and framing them appropriately within a document like a resume takes some attention and practice. The following sub-points will provide a working model to convert your experiences into resume language. First consider the characteristics of resume writing style.

When describing work experience:

- Use brief, direct language and avoid unnecessary words
- Use short paragraphs, ranging 1- 5 sentences
- Begin each sentence with powerful action verbs
- Make it is free from grammatical, punctuation, spelling, and typographical errors

To begin creating a description of work or volunteer description, refer to a brainstormed experience from the chart in part B section 3.

1. First, write out everything that you brainstormed as your role, how you fulfilled your role, and results as exemplified below:

Example:

- Served meals to the homeless, helped guests to connect with resources.
- Volunteered 10 hrs/wk, worked with kitchen director to identify resources.
- Several people got housing, jobs, food.
- Learned to prepare meals for large numbers, practiced advocacy skills.

Your list:

2. Second, identify each active verb in your list and create a new list of verbs from your description:

Example:

- Served meals to the homeless, helped guests to connect with resources
- Volunteered 10 hrs/wk, worked with kitchen director to identify resources.
- Several people got housing, jobs, food. learned to prepare meals for large numbers, practiced advocacy skills.

Verbs

Served
Helped
Volunteered
Worked
Learned
Prepare
Practiced

Your List:

3. Third, in your description, identify and create another list of individuals or groups that you interacted with as part of fulfilling your role:

Example:

- Served meals to the homeless, helped guests to connect with resources
- Volunteered 10 hrs/wk, worked with kitchen director to identify
- Resources. several people got housing, jobs, food.
- Learned to prepare meals for large numbers, practiced advocacy skills.

Individuals/groups

Homeless
Guests
Kitchen director
people

Your list:

4. Fourth, identify the results or outcomes of your role:

Example:

- Served meals to the homeless, helped guests to connect with resources
- Volunteered 10 hrs/wk, worked with kitchen director to identify
- Resources.
- Several people got housing, jobs, food. Learned to prepare meals for large numbers, practiced advocacy skills.

Results

Several people got housing, jobs, food.
Learned to prepare meals for large numbers
Practiced advocacy skills

Your list:

5. Fifth, assemble your list into 3 columns specifying: *verbs, individuals/groups, results*. The goal now is to use the columns as a starting point to begin drafting the sentences that will compose your work experiences for this particular position. Keep in mind the characteristics of a resume writing style described at the beginning of this section.

Moreover, use the columns to create short sentences that have three parts:
a strong action verb, who or what was involved, and the result.

See example on next page.

Example:

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Individuals/groups</u>	<u>Results</u>
Served	Homeless	Several people got
Helped	Guests	housing, jobs, food.
Volunteered	Kitchen director	Learned to prepare
Worked	people	meals for large
Learned		numbers
Prepare		Practiced advocacy
Practiced		skills

Sentences:

Worked with **homeless guests** **to find housing, jobs, etc.**
action verb *who/what involved* *results*

Helped **kitchen director** **prepare meals for guests**
action verb *who/what involved* *results*

Practiced advocacy skills **in locating resources for guests**
action verb *who/what involved* *results*

Using the model above, draft 2-5 sample sentences.

- Sixth, review each of your sentences. Remember, it is important that each sentence begins with the appropriate verb that accurately describes the experience as directly and actively as possible.

Questions to consider when revising sentences:

- Does my action verb accurately describe my experience?
- Is the sentence clear and direct?

See example on next page.

Example:

Worked with homeless guests to find housing, jobs, and food.

Questions:

- Does “worked” in the first sentence strong enough to describe my role in helping homeless guests find housing, jobs, and food? If not, what word does?
- Also, is it clear and direct? Could there be any questions concerning what I did?

Using the model above, revise your sentences (*consult Appendix A for action verb listings.*)

C. Labeling the Experience

Now that you have accomplished the task of developing your job description, its time to put the finishing it, which includes:

- The organization you worked with
- The title of your position
- Where the organization is located (city, state)
- Length of time you held the position (earliest month/year to latest or present.)

Example

Urban Outreach, Inc, Atlanta, Georgia

Volunteer, September 2001- Present

- Advised homeless guests in finding housing, jobs, and resources. Assisted kitchen director in preparing meals for guests. Practiced advocacy skills in locating resources for guests.

Now, draft your final description for you role:

II. Conclusion

Now, you have all the info (and models) you will need to begin draft your resume. Schedule an appointment with your career services office to choose the right resume style for your and to continue revising your experience.

SAMPLE ACTION WORDS

Clerical or Detail Work:

Approved	Generated	Purchased
Arranged	Implemented	Recorded
Catalogued	Inspected	Retrieved
Classified	Monitored	Screened
Collected	Operated	Specified
Compiled	Organized	Systematized
Dispatched	Prepared	Tabulated
Executed	Processed	Validated

Communication Skills:

Addressed	Enlisted	Persuaded
Arbitrated	Formulated	Presented
Arranged	Influenced	Promoted
Authored	Interpreted	Publicized
Corresponded	Lectured	Recruited
Directed	Moderated	Translated
Drafted	Motivated	Wrote
Edited	Negotiated	

Creative Skills:

Acted	Fashioned	Originated
Concentrated	Founded	Performed
Created	Illustrated	Planned
Designed	Instituted	Revitalized
Developed	Integrated	Shaped
Directed	Introduced	
Established	Invented	

Financial Skills:

Administered	Balanced	Managed
Allocated	Calculated	Marketed
Analyzed	Computed	Planned
Appraised	Developed	Projected
Audited	Forecast	Researched

Helping Skills:

Assessed	Demonstrated	Familiarized
Assisted	Diagnosed	Guided
Clarified	Educated	Referred
Coached	Expedited	Rehabilitated
Counseled	Facilitated	Represented

Management Skills:

Administered
Analyzed
Assigned
Attained
Chaired
Contracted
Consolidated
Coordinated
Delegated

Developed
Directed
Enhanced
Evaluated
Executed
Improved
Increased
Organized
Oversaw

Planned
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Reviewed
Scheduled
Strengthened
Supervised

Research Skills:

Clarified
Collected
Critiqued
Determined
Diagnosed
Evaluated

Examined
Extracted
Inspected
Interpreted
Interviewed
Investigated

Organized
Reviewed
Summarized
Surveyed
Systematized

Teaching Skills:

Adapted
Advised
Clarified
Coached
Communicated
Coordinated
Developed

Enabled
Encouraged
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Guided
Informed

Initiated
Instructed
Persuaded
Stimulated

Technical Skills:

Assembled
Built
Calculated
Computed
Designed
Devised

Engineered
Fabricated
Maintained
Operated
Overhauled
Programmed

Remodeled
Repaired
Solved
Trained
Upgraded