



# Resume Guide for Student Positions

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## What is the Purpose of a Resume?

A resume is a marketing tool and is one of the ways to tell your story by presenting your skills, knowledge, and experience to a potential employer in order to demonstrate your fit for a specific position. The average employer spends only 15-20 seconds reviewing a resume. Ensure that yours is targeted, error-free, and easy to skim!

## How to write an outstanding resume:

The design suggestions outlined below are based on common design principles and to make your resume easy to read quickly. The design suggestions are meant to keep things simple and clean, and help the reader get the most out of the limited time to review the document. The suggestions are for a broad range of employers, so it will help you develop a general resume for multiple purposes.

# Design & Structure

- One Page Only: Employers prefer a one-page resume for applicants with less than 8 years of experience.
- Margins: Between 0.5 and 1 inch and consistent on all sides
- Font Style: We recommend ONE style for your entire resume. Use Garamond or Helvetica for a more classic look and Georgia or Calibri for a more modern style; Calibri is recommended as it is condensed, designed for readability, and is most modern.
- Font Size: Size should be 10 to 12-point font. No smaller! Keep your headers one font size larger than the content. Your name can be between 14 and 18-point.
- Bold: This is used for contrast and when used in combination with good spacing should draw the readers' eyes to key sections and content. Use only for section headings, schools/employers, degree/titles, locations/dates.
- Underline & Italics: Over using this will make the content more difficult to read in digital and printed formats. Only use a full-page line under each section header to highlight sections. We do not recommend using italics because it confuses automated resume review systems which most companies use to filter through resume submissions.
- Be Consistent: Use a consistent font size and style for each element (section headers, bullets, etc.). For emphasis, only use one treatment. If using bold, no need to underline and vice versa. Double treatments are distracting.
- Alignment: Readers primarily use the left and right margins when scanning documents. The content in the middle of the page gets lost, so we want the most important information on each margin. All the schools/employers, degree/titles should be on the left margin; locations/dates should be aligned on the right margin.
- Sample Template: You can download the Resume Templates from Handshake. See samples of the template and resume examples on pages 7-10.

# Content

- Target Your Content: Highlight experiences & transferable skills most relevant to the position.
- Incorporate Keywords from the Job Posting. Use language and keywords specific to the job function and job posting.
- Avoid Pronouns: Personal or possessive pronouns (I, my, me, we, our) are not appropriate.
- Be Clear: Show clear career and/or skill set progression.
- Honesty is the Best Policy: Don't exaggerate or embellish your experience or include false information.
- Proofread: Spellcheck does not always catch typos.
- Avoid Clutter: Too much text and not enough white space may keep the reader from starting or continuing. Any bullet point over two lines will start to look like a paragraph, so try to keep them short. Work with the spacing, font and margins to get a well-balanced document

# Resume Sections:

## Heading

- Include name, mailing address, phone number and email.
- If you have a complete and updated LinkedIn profile, include the URL after your email. Be sure to [create a customized URL under “Edit Profile.”](#)
- We do not recommend an overview or summary section at the top of resumes.
- We recommend using this same heading for your cover letters.

## Education (Body Section 1 - Required)

As a student, this is your primary qualification for positions, so it should be the first section on a standard resume. It will move below experience when professional experience is a more important qualifier than education.

- List all institutions and degrees: Include dates of completion (e.g. use only May 2020, not the dates of attendance) in reverse chronological order.
- Study Abroad: Formatted the same as your home institution; include program/school name, location, and dates. If the reader would not be familiar with an important characteristic of the school, you may provide a frame of reference; for example, add a bullet with “One of the top 5 universities in China” or “Ranked as the top engineering university in India.”
- High School: In general, high school information should be removed during sophomore year. High school accomplishments and involvement can be highlighted in the ‘Additional Information’ section.
- Transfer Schools: Since employers are most interested in the degree you are currently seeking, and since you will only use degree completion dates, transfer schools do not need to be listed. Some students may want to include them to note specialized course work.
- GPA: Optional; recommend doing so if 3.0+.
- Include relevant coursework: Showcase specific knowledge and skills relevant to the role for which you’re applying. Focus on courses above general introductory level.
- Other academic accomplishments: Scholarships, case competitions, special projects, and relevant coursework can be included here or in another section at the bottom of your resume.

## Experience or Relevant Experience (Body Section 2 – Required)

- Reverse Chronological Order: Listed in reverse chronological order (the most recent position first). Include the employer name, city and state, job title, and dates of employment (month year – month year)
- Bullet points = accomplishments: Don’t simply list job responsibilities in your bullet points. Show the results or impact of your work and how it helped the organization. Refer to pp. 3-4 for help writing Accomplishment Statements (or “SAR bullets”).
- Use Action Verbs: Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb. Employers often scan the first few words of each bullet, so catch their attention with strong action verbs that reflect your relevant skills.
  - Do not use any action verb more than once under the same job.
  - Avoid phrases like “Responsible for” and “Selected to,” which are more passive.
  - Use words from the position description and see Action Verbs list on p. 5 for ideas.
- Quantify & Qualify Results: Include specifics through numbers and verbal descriptors. Refer to pp. 3-4 for help writing Accomplishment Statements.
- Demonstrate Transferable Skills: These are skills that can be utilized in a wide variety of positions and industries. Examples: event planning, research, teamwork, relationship-building, communication and leadership.
- Think Broadly: Experience doesn’t only include paid/professional work. You may also include leadership positions, volunteer work, course projects, independent endeavors, etc. in which you had significant responsibilities.

## Specialized Experience (Body Section 3 - Optional)

Most students include significant non-professional experience in the ADDITIONAL INFORMATION section, but some like to highlight specialized work or experience that is different from work experience. This section would be added between RELEVANT EXPERIENCE and ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, as in the sample resume and should include a title. We recommend meeting with a career coach to find the best option for your professional goals.

- Section Title: Use something that describes the main content. You could use one or combination of the following: LEADERSHIP – VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE – SERVICE LEARNING – RESEARCH – ACADEMIC PROJECTS - PUBLICATIONS.
- Content & Format: You can use a similar pattern as the EXPERIENCE section with organization, role and dates bold and aligned on the left and right margins; as in the example resume, you can also simplify the content to just the most relevant information in one line. Most importantly, use a consistent format for each item in this section.
- Bullet Points: Just like the EXPERIENCE section, these should show the results or impact of your work and how it helped the organization. Refer to pp. 3-4 for help writing Accomplishment Statements (or “SAR bullets”). For research or publications, it may include the findings.

## Additional Information (Last Section – Recommended)

You can use this general section as a catch all of all the other information you may want to mention, but it will stay at the bottom of the resume. If you want, you can also use ‘Skills & Activities’ as the header for this last section. However, we highly recommend using the ‘Additional Information’ as the section heading because it allows you to use a wide variety of topics. You draw the reader’s attention to key topics by bolding the subheadings and indenting the second line. To make full use of the space, you should not use bullet points or details here; instead, include relevant information separated by semicolons. Below are some of the most common subheadings:

- Technical Skills: Computer applications, programming languages and hardware/network skills (from most unique to least). MS Office apps are almost an implied skill, so it may not be necessary to list. However, if a job calls for “Advanced Excel skills” and you have that, include it on your resume.
- Languages: acceptable proficiency terms: native/bilingual; full professional proficiency/fluent; minimum professional proficiency/conversational, limited working proficiency, elementary/basic. Refer to [the US State Department website](#) for definitions.
- Honors/Awards: (if not include in education section) Scholarships, honors and awards, honor’s thesis, case competitions, special projects, and relevant coursework can be included to showcase your academic skills and experience
- Leadership: List the organizations and positions that demonstrate your ability to successfully lead activities and teams. If you held a leadership role with an organization, provide the dates and length of time served. This is a key soft skill for most employers.
- Professional Organizations: Memberships related to your field of study and your career. Adding this section helps to facilitate a connection with recruiters, alumni and admissions committees who are often members of or familiar with the same professional organizations.
  - Non-Professional Affiliations: List professional organizations and other community affiliations that support your career goals, including student organizations. These could include: Sports, Clubs, Greek Life, Performing Arts
- Student Athlete: Highlight your involvement and skills you gained, as well as illustrate the time commitment you have made toward your role on your team.
- Volunteerism/Volunteer Work: List most recent and/or relevant activities first. In general, employers like to see some type of volunteer activity on the resume even if it’s not directly related to the job you’re applying for.
- Interests: List interests that are specific, unique, and show sustained interest and activity; avoid potentially controversial topics. Examples: scuba diving; travel in Latin America; historical biographies
- Other Categories: Examples include Research, Service Learning, Key Qualifications (e.g. for intl. development positions, put at the top of the resume), Teaching, Publications.

GW Student Employment  
Center for Career Services  
Enrollment and the Student Experience  
800 21st Street, Suite 505, DC 20052  
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*Modified from the Center for Career Services Resource “Resume Guide”*

## Writing Bullet Points as Accomplishment Statements: Situation - Action - Result (SAR)

Bullet points under each position should tell a mini-story and are more effective when written as Accomplishment Statements in the Situation-Action-Result (SAR) format. By using the SAR model, you will ensure that a reader understands in detail what you did, why you did it, and what happened as a result of your actions. Providing specific quantifiers and qualifiers will make your work and its results even more clear. Refer to the action verb guide to create phrases with impact and emphasis.

In the examples below, the first describes job responsibilities only, NOT exactly what the verbs mean, or what skills you developed, or (perhaps most importantly) the results of your work.

Without SAR: [e.g. non-profit organization]

- Used organizational skills to do various office tasks

**With SAR:**

- Provided administrative support to Executive Director and 3 Program Directors, including report preparation, document editing, internal and external meeting coordination, correspondence, and supply management

Without SAR: [e.g. one semester Capitol Hill internship]

- Attended conferences and meetings on behalf of senior staffers

**With SAR:**

- Represented senior staffers at 10+ conferences and meetings, in order to provide key summaries and information to inform their decision-making

Without SAR: [After-school tutoring program]

- Created tracking system for instructors

**With SAR:**

- Created progress/outcome tracking system, resulting in greatly improved student, caregiver and tutor satisfaction

## Quantify Results

As often as possible, use statistics, percentages, or numbers in your bullet points to demonstrate the scope of your accomplishments. This is especially important for students pursuing careers in quantitative-based fields such as finance, economics, and data analysis. Examples:

### Event Organizing for an Association

- Played key role in organizing and executing annual 3-day meeting of 500+ members, including ensuring all room set up, synchronizing activity flow, successfully problem-solving areas of concern, and processing of all event invoices, resulting in 96% satisfaction rate in post-event evaluations

### Student Organization Leadership

- Initiated and launched a campus-wide campaign that resulted in the collection of 2000 pounds of non-perishable goods for needy families in the Rock Hill area
- Created training curriculum and led 20 workshops to teach chapter members how to properly recruit women for the chapter, enabling the chapter to collectively reach annual recruitment goals for the third straight year

## Questions to ask yourself when creating S-A-R Accomplishment Statements:

Use the following questions to reflect on your past positions & what you achieved in each one.

- Did the work you performed positively impact the organization as a whole? If so, how?
- Who, or how many people, will ultimately benefit from your work?
- Did you identify any problems or challenges?
- Did you resolve or minimize any problems?
- Did you discover and take advantage of any opportunities?
- Did you target a need for a product, service, plan, program, system, method, procedure, technique?
- Did you reduce costs, waste, time, or effort?
- Did you produce reports whose recommendations were well received by senior management, and whose suggestions were incorporated into their strategic planning?
- Did you uncover accounting errors and correct them, saving the organization money?
- Did you reduce the liability for the organization, e.g. by suggesting safety or HR policy improvement?
- Did you create any original works: reports, brochures, newsletters, guides, manuals, proposals, contracts?
- Did you develop or design a new program, plan, service, product, process, project, system method, strategy?
- Did you improve (redesign, streamline or reorganize), administer, or implement any projects, plans, programs, processes, services, products?
- Did you develop new markets, territories, clients, accounts?
- Did you increase or participate in increasing customer satisfaction?
- Did you formulate or participate in formulating any management decisions, policies, goals, organizational changes, recruitment?
- Did you make any recommendations that increased efficiency or productivity?
- Did you improve employee morale?
- Did you improve quality or standards for hiring, products, services?
- Did you make a technical contribution?
- Did you facilitate or improve communication among employees, with clients, or with the community?
- Did you improve customer satisfaction or service?
- Did you train, coach, or mentor?
- Did you complete deadlines ahead of time?
- Did you increase social media engagement? By what percentage or number of followers/likes/clicks?



<b>ACTION VERBS by category</b>							
ANALYZED	Consulted	Experimented	Promoted	Shared	Motivated	Cared	Organized
Abstracted	Cooperated	Facilitated	Provided	Spoke	Negotiated	Catered	Oversaw
Anticipated	Enlisted	Fashioned	Reduced	Stimulated	Persuaded	Delivered	Planned
Assessed	Ensured	Financed	Restored	Strengthened	Promoted	Dispensed	Prepared
Ascertained	Facilitated	Fixed	Saved	Substituted	Reconciled	Entertained	Presided
Audited	Fostered	Formulated	Stimulated	Supported	Resolved	Facilitated	Prioritized
Briefed	Handled	Founded	Strengthened	Sustained	Solved	Furnished	Promoted
Calculated	Helped	Generated	Upgraded	Taught	ORGANIZED	Helped	Regulated
Clarified	Located	Improved	COUNSELED/	Trained	Accumulated	Led	Reinforced
Compared	Participated	Increased	INSTRUCTED/	Tutored	Arranged	Listened	Resolved
Computed	Preserved	Influenced	LEARNED	Validated	Assembled	Maintained	Retained
Concluded	Protected	Initiated	Adapted	OPERATED/	Balanced	Motivated	Reviewed
Conceptualized	Referred	Innovated	Advised	MAINTAINED	Budgeted	Performed	Scheduled
Correlated	Represented	Instituted	Advocated	Activated	Built	Prepared	Selected
Critiqued	Served	Integrated	Aided	Adjusted	Cataloged	Procured	Set
Debated	Strengthened	Introduced	Applied	Adapted	Clarified	Provided	Solved
Defined	Summarized	Invented	Assessed	Changed	Classified	Raised	Strengthened
Detected	Supported	Launched	Briefed	Clarified	Collated	Recommended	Supervised
Determined	Sustained	Marketed	Cared	Corrected	Collected	Represented	Taught
Diagnosed	COMMUNICATED	Modeled	Clarified	Continued	Completed	Responded	Trained
Discriminated	Addressed	Modified	Coached	Edited	Compiled	Satisfied	Updated
Dissected	Advertised	Navigated	Comforted	Eliminated	Composed	Served	COLLABORATED
Estimated	Answered	Originated	Communicated	Executed	Coordinated	Stimulated	Coproduced
Evaluated	Briefed	Perceived	Conducted	Expedited	Copied	Supplied	Cooperated
Examined	Corresponded	Performed	Consulted	Facilitated	Correlated	Supervised	Engaged
Figured	Debated	Pioneered	Coordinated	Fixed	Detailed	LED/MANAGED	Organized
Graded	Explained	Planned	Demonstrated	Implemented	Developed	Allocated	Partnered
Identified	Expressed	Prioritized	Educated	Installed	Displayed	Approved	Met
Indexed	Facilitated	Produced	Emphasized	Modified	Edited	Arranged	Participated
Inspected	Interpreted	Promoted	Enabled	Navigated	Facilitated	Assigned	Shared
Integrated	Interviewed	Proposed	Encouraged	Ordered	Filed	Authorized	Strategized
Interpreted	Lectured	Recommended	Enlightened	Oversaw	Gathered	Chaired	Synchronized
Interviewed	Listened	Restored	Established	Performed	Graphed	Clarified	Worked
Inventoried	Marketed	Refined	Exercised	Prepared	Identified	Coached	RESEARCHED

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Investigated	Prepared	Revamped	Explained	Piloted	Indexed	Conducted	Analyzed
Judged	Presented	Set	Facilitated	Preserved	Inspected	Consulted	Compiled
Maintained	Printed	Shaped	Familiarized	Prioritized	Inventoried	Contracted	Developed
Mapped	Programmed	Simplified	Fostered	Produced	Kept	Controlled	Documente d
Monitored	Publicized	Solved	Guided	Programmed	Located	Coordinated	Gathered
Observed	Quoted	Styled	Helped	Promoted	Maintained	Decided	Identified
Perceived	Recorded	Streamline d	Implemented	Protected	Mapped	Delegated	Implemente d
Predicted	Reported	Substituted	Improved	Ran	Met	Directed	Interviewed
Projected	Responded	Visualized	Influenced	Reduced	Obtained	Dispatched	Planned
Qualified	Rewrote	IMPROVE D/	Informed	Regulated	Organized	Distributed	Presented
Ranked	Spoke	INCREASE D	Inspired	Replaced	Planned	Educated	Reported
Read	Taught	Achieved	Interpreted	Saved	Prepared	Encouraged	Synthesized
Reasoned	Wrote	Accomplish ed	Investigated	Screened	Prioritized	Enforced	Utilized
Related	CREATED/	Acquired	Lectured	Serviced	Processed	Evaluated	
Researched	DEVELOPED	Advanced	Led	Set	Programme d	Executed	
Reviewed	Acted	Assured	Listened	Sustained	Ranked	Exercised	
Screened	Activated	Attained	Maintained	Transported	Recorded	Expedited	
Scanned	Adapted	Completed	Manipulated	Upheld	Reorganize d	Explained	
Solved	Assembled	Conserved	Mastered	Utilized	Reproduce d	Facilitated	
Studied	Authored	Continued	Monitored	NEGOTIATE D	Retrieved	Fostered	
Summarized	Built	Eliminated	Modified	Advised	Revamped	Governed	
Surveyed	Clarified	Encourage d	Motivated	Advocated	Reviewed	Guided	
Symbolized	Composed	Enlarged	Observed	Arbitrated	Revised	Handled	
Synthesized	Conceived	Expanded	Perceived	Bargained	Scheduled	Headed	
Tabulated	Constructed	Facilitated	Persuaded	Closed	Set	Hired	
Verified	Corrected	Fostered	Prescribed	Concluded	Simplified	Implemented	
Visualized	Designed	Guaranteed	Programmed	Consolidated	Solved	Instructed	
ASSISTED	Devised	Inspired	Promoted	Dealt	Streamlined	Maintained	
Advised	Discovered	Maximized	Read	Expedited	Structured	Met	
Brought	Drafted	Minimized	Reduced	Facilitated	Synthesize d	Mentored	
Chartered	Eliminated	Motivated	Reflected	Handled	Systemized	Monitored	
Collaborated	Established	Obtained	Reinforced	Lobbied	Tabulated	Motivated	
Contributed	Expanded	Overcame	Related	Mediated	SERVED/ AIDED	Navigated	
Consolidate d	Expedited	Perfected	Restored	Merged	Attended	Ordered	



# Sample Resume

**JACK CUSTIS**

**3200 Mount Vernon Hwy | Mount Vernon, VA 22121 | [jp\\_custis@gwu.edu](mailto:jp_custis@gwu.edu) | 703-780-2000**  
**[www.linkedin.com/in/JP\\_Custis](http://www.linkedin.com/in/JP_Custis)**

## EDUCATION

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The George Washington University Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs Washington, DC  
May 2022

Cherry Tree High School Mount Vernon, VA  
High School Diploma | GPA: 3.78 | National Honor Society May 2018

## EXPERIENCE

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Krispy Kreme Team Member Allentown, PA  
November 2016 - May 2018

- Greeted and served up to 50 customers per hour during peak times to provide a positive store experience to patrons
- Answered questions from patrons regarding catering, product manufacturing details and doughnut/coffee pairings to promote sales of all company products
- Facilitated new team member trainings, focusing on effective customer service, phone etiquette, usage of inventory management software, and preparation of products

## LEADERSHIP

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Key Club of Cherry Tree High School Secretary Mount Vernon, VA  
May 2017 - May 2018

- Created agendas and recorded weekly Executive Board and Planning Team meeting minutes to track club activities and planned events
- Collaborated with President and Vice President to plan monthly volunteer events at a local food bank to encourage Cherry Tree students to engage with and give back to local community

Model United Nations Conference Philadelphia, PA  
High School Representative September - May  
2016, 2017, 2018

- Represented Cherry Tree High School at the Model United Nations Conference for three consecutive years on a team of four
- Drafted legislation and policy initiatives to address pressing concerns on global stage, specifically related to international development and public health issues in Ethiopia

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Technical Skills: Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, Prezi  
Language Skills: Spanish (Fluent)

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