

Resume Peer Review Guide

How to Use this Guide

- Before utilizing this guide, we highly recommend that you update your resume using our [NYU Silver Social Work Resume Guide](#)
- Follow the outlined steps and utilize the questions, checklists, and feedback to identify areas you could improve on your resume

Choosing a Peer

We encourage you to use this guide with many different peers to get **multiple streams** of feedback. Here are some suggestions:

- A peer with a similar placement, background, or interests
- A peer with a placement or experience in a setting you would like to be in
- A peer in your Practice class
- A peer you would like to build a connection with

Tips for Giving Feedback

1. **Be specific:** Avoid words like “good” or “bad”
 - a. **Example** — Instead of: “Your format is good,” try: “Your format is easy to read, your sections are organized well, and everything is consistent.”
2. Offer **observations** instead of judgments
 - a. **Example** — Instead of: “I think your grammar needs work,” try: “I noticed your action verbs use different tenses.”
3. **Provide examples** and suggestions to back up your feedback
4. Let your partner know **what they did well**, in addition to what they could improve
5. **Ask questions** to gain clarification
 - a. **Example** — “Tell me more about...” or “What did you mean by...”
6. Help your partner answer the following questions:
 - a. What’s the big picture?
 - b. What should they do more of and less of?
 - c. What are 2-3 areas they should prioritize?

Instructions

In order to give feedback on how to best tailor your resumes, ask each other:

- What placements, jobs, settings, or populations are they interested in?
- What skills or experience might be most valued in those settings?

Swap your resumes with each other and do an initial review of each others’ resumes for **3 minutes** based on the information you have given each other.

Next, at each step, review each other’s resumes using the checklist of questions and then provide verbal feedback.

Step 1: Formatting and Headings ([example templates](#))

- ☐ Is information easy to read?
- ☐ Is information organized so it is easy to find?
- ☐ Are there bullets instead of paragraphs to describe experience?
- ☐ Are the margins, font size, and spacing appropriate?
- ☐ Are the placement of dates and locations consistent?
- ☐ Do the headings stand out in some way? (bolded, italicized, capitalized, or larger font)
- ☐ Are all key sections included?
 - ☐ Contact information
 - ☐ Education
 - ☐ Experience
- ☐ Do their headings convey the information they represent?
(**Suggested headings:** “Social Work Experience” or “Relevant Experience”; “Additional Experience”; “Skills”; “Trainings and Certifications”)

Step 2: Bullets

- ☐ Does every bullet start with a strong action verb in the correct tense?
- ☐ Are there bullets that are too long (more than two lines)?
- ☐ Are their bullets free of personal pronouns (“I,” “my,” “we”)?
- ☐ Is there enough information about their experiences?
- ☐ Could their bullets have more context, detail, quantification, and outcomes?
(**Example:** Came up with activities for volunteers → Organized community service activities for 10 full-time volunteers to support the needs of LGBTQ youth in homeless shelters)
- ☐ Could their less relevant social work experience highlight transferable skills that are applicable to social work?
- ☐ Are their bullets describing tasks they have done rather than skills they have utilized?
- ☐ Are bullets ordered so that the most relevant skills are towards the top?
- ☐ Do their bullets include social work key words and skills that are in the job description / will be valued in the setting they are aiming for?

Step 3: Editing

- ☐ Is their resume one page?
- ☐ Does their resume only include the most relevant information to the context they are aiming for?
- ☐ Does their resume have an overload of information?
- ☐ Irrelevant or unnecessary information? (**Examples:** relevant coursework, GPA, descriptions of agencies, references)

- ☐ Redundant information or already expected skills? (**Examples:** Microsoft Office, Google, English, soft skills)
- ☐ Are there any grammar or spelling errors?
- ☐ Are their degrees spelled out? (Example: Master of Social Work instead of MSW)

Provide a summary of your feedback and highlight **2-3 areas** your partner could prioritize.

Area 1:

Area 2:

Thank your partner for their support and feedback and congratulate yourselves for putting in the effort to build this crucial skill!

Swap resumes back and make updates accordingly.