

RESUME WRITING SUPPORT

A resume is a summary of your education, skills, experiences, and accomplishments, as they relate to the type of opportunity that you are seeking. Since a resume serves as the chief marketing tool that provides readers with their first impression of you, it should be organized and well written.

There are a number of ways that Career Services at LSU Shreveport can support you as you develop or enhance your own resume. Continue reading for recommendations and resources.

BIG PICTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Many organizations rely on **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)** during the recruiting process. Essentially, these “robots” scan a submitted application, looking for keywords that show up in the job description. In order for your resume to effectively get through the robots and onto the next phase of the process **you must** customize your document to each specific position for which you apply. In most cases, this doesn’t mean an extensive overhaul each time you send in a resume; but it does mean making choices about the words you use and the way you lay out your experiences. As you work on revising your resume, you may find that you end up with a few different versions, each tailored to the kind of role you are applying for. **We recommend that each time you find an internship/job for which you’d like to apply, closely examine the job descriptions and evaluate it for key words. Make sure you are using these key words across your resume before you send it out.**

Check out this video on the Career Services website for more info | [CAREER SPOTS VIDEO: Keyword Search Matters](#)

- **OTHER ATS CONSIDERATIONS** - Avoid formatting styles that “mess with” ATS systems. Some of the issues you need to avoid include putting information in the header or footer of the document, using text boxes or tables on your resume, inserting images, and using templates found on Microsoft Office. The robots have difficulty reading the text on the document when they are entered onto the page in these ways.
- Essentially, you are aiming for a final product that is as close to a plain text document as possible. Rather than use a template you find on Word or somewhere on the Internet, **start with a blank Word document and construct something that fits your needs.**

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WRITE OR UPDATE YOUR RESUME

There is not one right way to create a resume; instead, strive to select categories and lay out items on the page based on the audience you are targeting and based on what works best for your experience-level, your style, and your aesthetic preferences.

- **WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE? TELL THEM A STORY THAT CONNECTS YOU WITH THEIR NEEDS.** When you sit down to write your resume, think about the story you want to tell about yourself. What do you want to communicate to the prospective employer and how can you provide evidence about those skills?
- **FORMATS AND LAYOUTS VARY** - There are really only 2 required pieces to have on your resume: your name/ contact information and your education. Beyond that, the structure of your resume will be determined by what experiences you’ve had and the degree to which they relate to the job for which you are applying.

Typically, someone spends roughly 10 seconds skimming a resume before making a decision about an applicant – so you need to make a **COMPELLING** argument about you and you need to do it quickly and efficiently. Can you use category names to group items together and provide context about where you developed your skills? Consider this.

- **LENGTH?** At this point in your professional career, you probably have enough related content to fill 2 pages. Make sure that your content fills those 2 pages completely. Play with margins, font, and the size of white space if you need to in order to achieve this length. See **RESUME LAYOUT + GUIDELINES** below for help.

These resources below will help you to execute these concepts:

- **[NACE RESUME RUBRIC](#)**: Career Services professionals and employers who engage in early career recruiting are members of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), a clearinghouse for research, trends, and best practices related to hiring of the college educated. This organization provides career services professionals with resources to help us educate students/alumni about what employers are looking for during the job search process. NACE created this resume rubric and it's a useful guide about the qualities you should include on your resumes. Think of it as a very good "big picture view" of what your final product should include. Although it is written with an undergraduate audience in mind, there are still useful nuggets to glean from it for folks working toward a graduate degree.
- **[RESUME LAYOUT + GUIDELINES](#)**: This resource outlines layout and formatting guidelines to consider when developing or updating a resume.
- **[WRITING EFFECTIVE BULLETS | TARGETING YOUR RESUME \(action verbs resource\)](#)**: Use this resource to learn how to effectively talk about your skills when writing on your resume. Using this method helps students, alumni, and even experienced professionals focus on skills that will resonate with employers.
- **SAMPLE RESUMES**: There are two resume samples available to view—one designed for someone who has some work experience (**[Upperclass resume sample](#)**) and another for someone who is an **[experienced professional](#)**. Use these samples to learn how to execute what the other resources explain about resume writing. They are not meant to be templates that you replicate but instead are intended to help you see how these methods can be applied on real-world documents.