

RESUME WRITING SUPPORT

A resume is a summary of your education, skills, experiences, and accomplishments, as they relate to the type of opportunity you are seeking. Since a resume serves as the chief marketing tool that provides readers with their first impression of you, it should be strategically organized and well written.  
  
There are several ways that Career Services at LSU Shreveport can support you as you develop or enhance your own resume. Continue reading for recommendations and resources. To get help, email [career@lsus.edu](mailto:career@lsus.edu) to get started.

**BIG PICTURE CONSIDERATIONS**

* Many organizations rely on **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)** during the recruiting process. These tools evaluate application materials, scanning them for keywords. If your materials use key words or phrases from the job description or that are relevant to the job function and industry at large, you are more likely to make it onto a short list of candidates who move along to the next phrase of the hiring process. Help the ATS (and the human reader!) recognize that you have the mindset, mentality, and experience for the specific role that you desire. For more information about this topic, review [**CAREER SPOTS VIDEO: Keyword Search Matters**](https://www.careerspots.com/newplayer/default.aspx?key=6QJPjDO4bIzEHkjyONa6DA2&)
* **OTHER ATS CONSIDERATIONS.** ATS systems are sensitive to formatting, so avoid choices and styles that “mess with” these tools. Some of the choices you need to avoid include organizing your information using columns, text boxes or tables, including items in the header or footer of the document, or inserting images. The systems have difficulty reading text when they are entered onto the page with these methods or styles. You should also avoid using templates found on the Internet, Microsoft Office, or Google docs because they sometimes use these formatting styles in ways that aren’t obvious or easy to adjust. Aim for a final product that is as close to a plain text document as you can manage. **To set yourself up for success, start with a blank Word document and construct something that fits your unique needs.**
* **WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE? TELL THEM A STORY THAT CONNECTS YOU WITH THEIR NEEDS.** Think about the story you want to tell about yourself. How can you provide evidence to the employer that you offer what they are looking for in an ideal candidate?
* **FORMATS AND LAYOUTS VARY.** There are only two items you ***must*** have on your resume: your name/ contact information and your educational credentials. Beyond that, the structure of your resume will be determined by the experiences you’ve had and the degree to which they relate to the job you are targeting.

Typically, someone spends roughly 10 seconds skimming a resume before deciding about an applicant---so you need to make a compelling argument and you need to do it quickly. To make your document easy to scan, consider grouping like items together using category names. Then, in your bullets, provide context about where and how you developed your skills.

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**SELF-SERVE RESOURCES**

Use these self-serve resources to update or begin writing your resume:

* [**RESUME RUBRIC**:](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HefHvc17Jsa8UOjJXq3SqCDXynKZqDJi/view?usp=sharing) Use this resume rubric to learn about the general qualities of an effectively executed resume. 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 useful nuggets to glean from the tool even for graduate students and experienced professionals.
* [**RESUME LAYOUT + GUIDELINES**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cjPSDDVfejfxDPTqB7uUsplTY8rGJTQr/view?usp=sharing): Consider these layout and formatting guidelines when developing or updating a resume.
* [**WRITING EFFECTIVE BULLETS**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZbL_4q26Lr-puK2mvTW74KOPWhKneGCH/view?usp=sharing) **|** [**ACTION VERBS LIST**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LHUG7wqt0eSrcCC27NUWiyBGoT-IxZBH/view?usp=sharing): Use these resources to help you talk about your skills on your resume. The method outlined on the “Writing Effective Bullets” page will help you focus on skills you possess that will resonate with employers. Use this method to write bullets on your resume instead of writing paragraphs or large blocks of text. The second document is a categorized list of action verbs. This is referenced in the “Writing Effective Bullets” tutorial.
* **SAMPLE RESUMES**: There are two resume samples available to view---one designed for someone who has some work experience (**[Upperclass resume sample](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hxNjDbceZ1jwR-EKncfNnLRuMnjcdgwF/view?usp=sharing)**) and another that is relevant to an [**experienced professional**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_oOEw9rVB4A2ttFFo1ooMVuzu7r7BIJI/view?usp=sharing). 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.
* [**COVER LETTER OUTLINE**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RTduEneWNEqpfI4wMacHRvvM0Nkz1Uku/view?usp=sharing) **|** [**COVER LETTER SAMPLE**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PFzS_tUJ5JciqHCclCmnd0n8ZhPnti65/view?usp=sharing): Review the outline of a cover letter to understand the ideal components to include in a cover letter, then, notice how those components can look in a real-world example by reviewing the sample.

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