

Resume Guidebook



The Owen Center
for Academic & Career Support

Academic and Career Support Center
Heidelberg University
315 Campus Center
419.448.2301

<http://www.heidelberg.edu/studentlife/services/acsc>

Developing Your Resume:

Your resume is one of the most important job search tools you have. The purpose of your resume is to generate enough interest from employers that they want to call you for an interview. Employers are inundated with hundreds of resumes everyday - employers quickly scan resumes to select the best potential candidates. Your resume must catch the reader's attention within 30 seconds for maximum impact.

No formula for writing the perfect resume exists. You want to create a document that is a sales brochure that convinces employers that you have the exact skills and qualities they are looking for in an employee. Follow the information below to make sure your resume gets a second look.

Resume Types:

The way you put your resume together depends on how much and what you have to say in the previously discussed sections. Choose a format that highlights your accomplishments and focuses on your strengths.

Chronological

- Most common format
- Presents information in reverse time sequence (most recent first, then backward through time)
- Gives a brief explanation of each piece of information

Functional

- Focuses on skills, not experience
- Presents information in grouped sections (i.e. leadership skills, management experience, technology ability, etc.)
- Dates are downplayed; skills and accomplishments are highlighted

Targeted

- Incorporates both chronological or functional formats
- Presents skills, abilities and accomplishments in a focused format related to specific job
- Objective statement is job / company specific

Resume Components:

Your resume should contain the following sections:

- **Contact Information**
- **Education**
- **Related Experience**
- **Activities / Organizational Involvement**

Additional optional sections include:

- **Objective**
- **Completed Coursework**
- **Honors / Awards**
- **Other Experience**
- **Technology / Special Skills**
- **Community Service**

Contact Information:

Your resume MUST contain accurate contact information. Otherwise, potential employers will not be able to get in touch with you, and you may miss the job offer of your dreams.

- **Full name** (*as you want to be known professionally*)

- **Current address, area code, phone number**
- **Permanent address, area code, phone number** (*Make sure a resident of this address knows that potential employers might be trying to contact you at that location*)
- **Email address** (*an email that is professionally appropriate!*)

Education:

List schools in reverse chronological order, starting with the institution you are currently attending. If you are a first-year or a sophomore, it is okay to include your high school.

- **Name of school**
- **Degree**
- **Expected date of Degree completion**
- **Major(s)**
- **Minor(s) or Concentration(s)**
- **GPA/4.00**

Deciding whether or not to include GPA is a common dilemma. In general, if your GPA is above 3.0 include it. Not listing your GPA may lead a potential employer to wonder why. As an alternative, you can list your major GPA, especially if it is higher.

Related Experience:

Your unique collection of jobs, internships, and volunteer work will determine the format for your EXPERIENCE section. Include all your significant experience, even if it is unpaid. For example, if you are a Business Administration major with a focus in Marketing, and you have been a PR Committee Chair for an organization, that can be considered Related Experience. If you use the words “work” or “employment” in the heading title for this section, that implies having been paid for the experiences. But if you use the word “experience,” you can include unpaid and volunteer items.

If you have many experiences that you wish to list, but you want to put the ones that are most closely related to potential job openings first - instead of following strict reverse chronological order - consider using two headings for experience: RELATED EXPERIENCE and OTHER EXPERIENCE. Always choose the best heading(s) for your unique resume:

- **Related Experience**
- **Relevant Experience**
- **Experience**
- **Work Experience**
- **Employment**

Include the job title and company/organization name when listing your experiences, and be specific when illustrating the skills you utilized or developed and the results of your efforts. Follow reverse chronological order under each heading for an easy-to-follow format. Each experience should include:

- **Job title, organization name, dates, and location** (*city & state only*)
 - No need to list the street address or phone number of the organizations
 - Do not list reference names under experience - list them separately on your Reference Sheet
- **Skills and accomplishments on the job**
 - Use action words: organized, researched, completed, executed, planned, taught, designed, supervised
- **Avoid passive phrases like “Responsibilities included” and “Responsible for”**
- **Use past tense to describe everything you have completed (you can use present tense to describe your current, ongoing position)**
- **Avoid articles such as a, an, the, etc. to conserve space for more important words**
- **Do not use personal pronouns**

Activities / Organizational Involvement:

Organizational or extracurricular, involvement can include your community services, leadership roles, athletic participation (team sport and/or club level), clubs, Greek involvement, and civic engagement. Most students do not have enough of one of these types of participation to list each of them under separate headings, but taken together, they can present a well-developed picture of your activities outside of the classroom.

Just as in every other section of your resume, follow reverse chronological order when listing your activities. Follow the same format you use under your EXPERIENCE section for visual consistency, and list the following information for each activity:

- **Organization name, dates of participation, and location (city & state)**
 - For organizations at school, you do not need to list city and state; you can just add "Heidelberg College"
 - No need to list the street address or phone number of the organizations
- **Skills and accomplishments during involvement**
 - Use action words: organized, researched, completed, executed, planned, taught, designed, supervised
 - Avoid passive phrases like "Responsibilities included" and "Responsible for"
 - List leadership roles like President and Committee Chair
- **Use past tense to describe everything you have completed (you can use present tense to describe your current, ongoing position)**
- **Avoid articles such as a, an, the, etc. to conserve space for more important words**
- **Do not use personal pronouns**
- **If you have many organizations to list, or want to conserve space, just list the name of the organization and years involved**

If all of your extra-curricular experiences fit into one general theme area, you may choose another title for this section. Examples include:

- **Leadership Experience**
- **Volunteer Activities**
- **Athletic Involvement**
- **Campus Activities**
- **Professional Organizations**

Objective:

An objective statement provides you the opportunity to identify exactly what you want, and how that fits a potential employer's needs. Focus on what you can contribute to the position – employers are interested in what you can do for them, not what their organization can do for you in terms of training and further education.

- **An objective statement does not necessarily need to be a complete sentence, but it should not contain grammar or spelling errors**
- **Objectives should not be more than four lines or 60 words long**
- **To be effective, take a targeted marketing approach, and individualize your objective statement to each particular organization**

Your objective should include at least two of the three following items:

1. **Position Desired** (*Editor, Social Worker, Computer Analyst, Middle School Teacher, Chemical Laboratory Assistant*)
2. **Organization or Field** (*hospital, manufacturing industry, social service agency, nonprofit*)
3. **Unique Knowledge, Experience or Skills** (*event planning, leadership, web design, database management, interpersonal communication*)

Use the following template as a guideline to get started:

To obtain a position as a _____ in the _____ industry, utilizing my proven abilities in _____, _____, and _____.

Some resumes omit the Objective. If you choose not to include an OBJECTIVE, be sure that your Cover Letter is focused, and clearly identifies your job search intent to potential employers.

Completed Coursework:

For individuals with less related experience, this section can be helpful in highlighting the academic knowledge you bring to a potential job. It can be its own section, or a sub-section of EDUCATION. List each related course (leave out introductory and basic classes) using the official title only – no course or section numbers. You may want to consider listing them in order of importance.

Honors / Awards:

This section should not be a repeat of any other section. Additionally, if you only have one or two items to list, put them in another section instead of creating a new section. For example, if your achievement is being on the Dean's List, you can put that under the EDUCATION instead. You can also include scholarships under HONORS if applicable, or under EDUCATION, whichever looks and reads better.

Other Experience:

This section could include jobs that do not relate to your chosen major or field, or experiences that were completed some time ago. It may also include research, presentations, papers, publications, or in-depth class assignments that you want to highlight on your resume.

Technology / Special Skills:

If you are familiar with the Microsoft Office Suite only, then your computer knowledge most likely does not warrant its own section. However, if you are experienced with different types of software, from statistical analyses packages to web development software, then you may want to devote a section to these skills. Individuals with extensive research experience in the sciences may also benefit from a section featuring research techniques and equipment. If you can speak different languages, you are encouraged to list those as well.

Community Service:

You can format this section just like the EXPERIENCE section, describing each item in detail. Or, you can simply list each activity with years of service. A simple list is often best if you have many experiences to note.

Resume Format:

First impressions are *very* important. Use a reliable word processing program to type your resume. **Never turn in a resume with misspelled words – it is the fastest route to the wastebasket.** Print your resume on high quality white or ivory paper. Use the following formatting strategies to help your resume look more visually appealing:

- **White Space**
 - Balance white space with the text
 - Margins are best kept to 1 inch
- **CAPITALIZATION**
 - Use capitalization to draw attention to special items
 - Lower case letters indicate supporting details
- **Underline and Boldface**
 - Consistent use emphasizes the most important points in your document
- **Indentation and Bullets**
 - Indents tell the reader that details follow
 - Bullets help the reader follow along
 - Use tabs instead of the space bar to align material
- **Brief, Action-oriented Statements**

For most college students, the resume should not be longer than **one page**. Two pages are appropriate in some cases, like for Education majors and other industries that allow for more creativity and flexibility. When in doubt, always err on the conservative, and keep your document to one page. If you do use two pages, include your name and page number at the top or bottom of consecutive pages.

References:

Your Reference Page is a separate document from your resume. Use the same name/contact information heading as at the top of your resume for a consistent, professional appearance. Again, for consistency, use the same margins and font as with your resume. If it is not directly apparent as to why you have listed a particular reference, add an identifying phrase after their title in parentheses. For example:

Shonda Wilkinson
Assistant Director of HR (former supervisor)

Alvin Cooper
Athletic Trainer (former High School Basketball Coach)

The appropriate number for references is three to five. If you have more, you can choose which references you list for each particular job for which you apply.

Hints for Selecting References:

Choose people as references with whom you have had a GOOD experience. If you did not get along well with a previous supervisor, do not list her/him as a reference! Choose people who think highly of you and who can talk about your professional conduct and abilities in different positions you have held. References can be teachers, supervisors, coaches, advisors, even coworkers.

Contact potential references before you include them on a reference sheet. Ask to make sure they are willing (as well as able) to provide you with a good reference. Before listing a phone number or email address, talk to your references to see how they prefer to be contacted (i.e. their personal extension at work, their private email account, their business email account, etc.). If you are a teaching candidate, it is often beneficial to ask for your cooperating teacher's home phone number so that they can be contacted over the summer.

Provide your references with a copy of your cover letter and resume to jog their memory about you and your qualifications. The more prepared your reference contacts are, the better able they will be to speak about you. Update your references whenever you forward their name for a different position opening. And ALWAYS THANK YOUR REFERENCES!

(SAMPLE RESUME)

Sam Student

Campus Address

P.O. Box 0000
44 Greenfield St.
Tiffin, Ohio 44883
jmessin@heidelberg.edu

Permanent Address

2222 Rd 222
Suburban, Ohio 42222
(937) 222-2222
jmessenger@gmail.com

Education

Heidelberg College, Tiffin, OH
Bachelor of Arts, History

May 13, 2007
Overall GPA: 3.75/4.0

Work Experience

Collections Intern
Ohio Historical Society

Summer 2006
Columbus, OH

- Researched label information and acquired relevant archival display materials for “Ohio Agriculture in Miniature” exhibit
- Updated and created new entries for automated cataloguing system
- Developed a “how-to” brochure for visitors conducting genealogical research

Waitress
Dairy Queen of Indian Lake,

June 2002-Aug 2005
Russell’s Point, OH

- Maintained an efficient workspace that exceeded all safety and cleanliness standards
- Developed the ability to work in a fast-paced environment
- Provided excellent frontline customer service

Customer Service Assistant
Lowe’s Home Improvement

May 2005 – Present
Bellefontaine, OH

- Developed positive relationships with repeat customers
- Assisted customers in choosing the correct tools and supplies for various projects
- Completed cash transactions and returns
- Implemented new database for tracking employee interactions with customers to enhance the shopping experience

Athletic Involvement

Member, Track & Field Team, Heidelberg College, Tiffin, OH 2003-2007

- Indoor All-Ohio Qualifier, Indoor OAC Qualifier 2004-2007
- Outdoor All-Ohio Qualifier, Outdoor OAC Qualifier 2004-2006

Academic Recognition

- Dean’s List Three Semesters
- Phi Alpha Theta (History Honorary)
- Student Athlete Award
- Completed Coursework: The Ohio Heritage, Development of American Society, Native American History, Twentieth Century U.S. International Relations, Civil War and Reconstruction, Women in America

(SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE)

JoAnn L. Messinger

Campus Address

P.O. Box 0000
44 Greenfield St.
Tiffin, Ohio 44883
jmessin@heidelberg.edu

Permanent Address

2222 Rd 222
Suburban, Ohio 42222
(937) 222-2222
jmessinger@gmail.com

First Reference's Name

Title
Company/Organization/Institution
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email address

Second Reference's Name

Title
Company/Organization/Institution
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email address

Third Reference's Name

Title
Company/Organization/Institution
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email address

Fourth Reference's Name

Title
Company/Organization/Institution
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone number
Email Address