



RESUME 101

**BEST PRACTICES FOR BUILDING
A CAREER-READY RESUME**

RESUME TOOLKIT

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RESUME CHECKLIST

WATCH THE RESUME 101 SERIES

Learn resume fundamentals and best practices by watching the Resume 101 short video series on the CPPD's website or YouTube channel

VIEW SAMPLES AND STARTERS

The CPPD's Resume Toolkit includes resume samples for multiple industries and career paths. If you need help formatting your resume so that it's ATS-friendly (and looks great!), download one of our pre-formatted resume starters

SCHEDULE A RESUME REVIEW

Resume writing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop. If you need additional assistance building your resume or want feedback on what you've prepared, schedule a resume review appointment with a Career Peer Advisor on Handshake!

PURPOSE OF A RESUME

WHAT IS A RESUME?

A resume is a professional document that showcases your relevant skills and qualifications for a specific position. Submitting a resume is the first step in the job application process. The goal of a resume is to convince the prospective employer to interview you.



WHY DO I NEED TO CREATE A RESUME IN COLLEGE?

Even if you aren't planning to pursue post-graduation career opportunities anytime soon, you should begin working on your resume now. Here are some reasons why:

- Submitting a resume is a requirement for almost every job, internship, or graduate program application, including LifeWorks positions.
- Creating a college resume now, even if you aren't ready to apply for a new job or internship, can help you document your experiences in sufficient detail. Writing down your responsibilities and accomplishments as you go ensures that when you're ready to apply for jobs or internships later, you'll have clear and accurate descriptions to include.
- Resumes can be great planning tools! After creating or revising your resume, find a job posting or graduate program requirement list for what you'd like to do after graduation. Compare what's on your resume now to what needs to be on your resume by the time you graduate. If there's a gap, use your time at Berry to build the skills and qualifications you need to accomplish your post-graduation goals

Think of a resume as your personal and professional advertisement: it should provide a clear, concise, and compelling message about what you have to offer!

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Once you've reviewed the Resume Toolkit and learned best practices in resume writing, reflect on your own skills and experiences. Brainstorm what jobs, internships, community service, campus activities, or class projects you've engaged in that have helped you develop transferable skills for the job you want. It's helpful to write down those skills and experiences so you don't forget. After you've reflected on your own skills and qualifications for this position, open a blank Word document or one of the CPPD's Resume Starters and start adding your information.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Your resume should emphasize the most relevant applied experiences and skills for the position you're applying for, so you will need to tailor it for each position. You should always include your contact information, education, experience, and skills on your resume, clearly labeling each section with a relevant heading.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Include your name, cell phone number, and email address. You should also list the city and state where you live, but avoid listing your full street address to maintain privacy and safety. If you have a LinkedIn account or ePortfolio, you can include links to those in this section.

EDUCATION

Include name of college, degree (spelled out) and major, and anticipated graduation date. DO NOT list your high school. If you transferred to Berry with an associate's degree from another institution, you should list that school underneath Berry College.

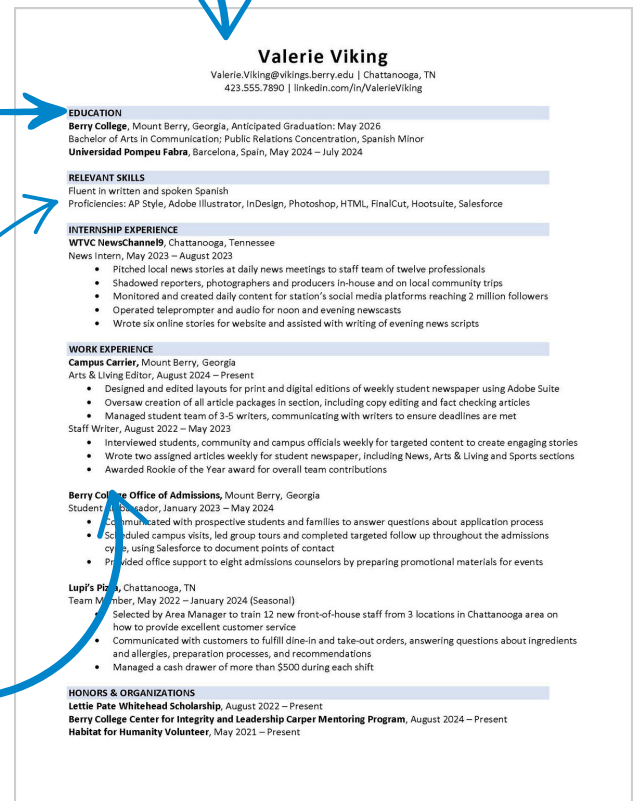
SKILLS

Include hard skills like software proficiencies, language skills, and certifications. DO NOT include soft skills (ex. teamwork, communication, problem-solving) in this section - soft skills should be emphasized in your experience section.

EXPERIENCE

This section should comprise the bulk of your resume content. You can include paid or unpaid experience, including volunteer experience. Many resumes have separate sections for different types of experience; for example, you may want to separate your internships or research experience into their own sections to better showcase what you accomplished through those opportunities.

For each experience, include position title and dates of employment/service, the name and location of organization you worked for, and 2+ bullet points summarizing what you accomplished in each role.



OPTIONAL SECTIONS

- Professional Summary
- Objective
- Extracurriculars
- Campus Involvement
- Leadership Experience
- Relevant Coursework
- Honors and Awards

WHAT TO INCLUDE

HOW TO ORGANIZE SECTIONS OF A RESUME

- 1 CONTACT INFORMATION**
This section ALWAYS goes at the top!
- 2 PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY OR OBJECTIVE**
If you choose to include this optional section, it should follow your contact information to contextualize your skills and experience.
- 3 EDUCATION**
College students and recent graduates should list this section above skills and experiences because it provides useful context for the prospective employer. Once you've gained a few years of post-graduation work experience, you can move it to the bottom.
- 4 SKILLS**
Because this section identifies hard skills and proficiencies, you can either list it above your Experience section(s) or underneath your Experience section(s).
- 5 EXPERIENCE**
If you have multiple experience sections, those sections should be clustered together (i.e. don't squeeze your Skills section between Internship Experience and Research experience).
- 6 OTHER OPTIONAL SECTIONS**
Optional sections like Campus Involvement or Honors and Awards should be listed below your Skills and Experience sections.

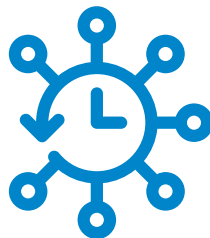
You can switch the order of these two sections!



USE REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER WITHIN EACH SECTION

Although you won't organize your section headings in this order, most hiring managers prefer that you use reverse chronological order within each section.

For example, in your experience section, you should list your most current experience first, then list the experience before that, then the one before that, etc.



Because we read from left-to-right and top-to-bottom in English, sections that appear toward the top of your resume will be perceived as more important than those at the bottom.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

NOT

**AVOID COMMON
PITFALLS BY
REMOVING THESE
FROM YOUR RESUME**

REFERENCES



You should not include a References section in your resume. While listing your references on a resume used to be a best practice, online applications have eliminated the need for this section. For most jobs, internships, and graduate programs, you will enter contact information for your references on a separate page of the application portal instead of on your resume.



PHOTOS OR DEMOGRAPHIC INFO



Don't worry - you'll have plenty of opportunities to show off your new headshot on LinkedIn! Your resume should not include your photo for two reasons: 1) ATS systems used by most major employers won't be able to read your resume if you have graphic design elements like a photo, and 2) including your photo or other demographic like your race, gender, or religion puts hiring managers at risk for discrimination lawsuits, meaning they often won't consider resumes that include this information. The one exception is if you are applying for theatre or film acting roles that specifically ask for actors that meet certain demographic criteria.



TOO MUCH CONTENT



Remember that you don't have to list everything you've ever accomplished on your resume. If your resume extends beyond one page, you should cut out some of the content. Consider removing experiences that aren't relevant to the position you want, like your high school involvement.



THE WHO METHOD

When you're creating bullet points to describe your relevant experience, use the WHO method. Remember, the WHO method isn't just for paid work experience; any relevant experience, including internships, community service, and leadership positions can be described on your resume using this approach.

HOW TO USE THE WHO METHOD

Using the WHO method allows you to highlight the skills you developed through each experience on your resume as well as what you accomplished in that role. By using this method, you can emphasize your soft skills and provide evidence to back up your qualifications. For each bullet point, identify the following information.



WHAT DID YOU DO IN THIS POSITION?

The tasks and projects you were responsible for in this role



HOW DID YOU DO THE WORK?

The skills, competencies, strategies, methods, or techniques you used (including soft skills!)



WHAT OUTCOMES DID YOU ACHIEVE?

The results or scope of your work, including quantifiable or measurable outcomes

When writing your bullet points, include industry-specific keywords and language from the job description.

EXAMPLES OF THE WHO METHOD

Before WHO: Developed content strategy

After WHO: Collaborated with the editorial team to develop a content strategy for 41-page lifestyle magazine published each semester

Before WHO: Responsible for delivering presentations about mental health

After WHO: Researched, designed, and presented unique 1-hour educational workshop each month focusing on mental health and wellness, reaching a total of 250+ students in year

Before WHO: Participated in Berry College Emerging Leaders

After WHO: Engaged in selective leadership development program with cohort of 60 peers by completing monthly trainings and discussions on topics like empathy, communication, and ethics

THE WHO METHOD

POWERFUL VERBS FOR YOUR BULLET POINTS

When you communicated with others

Addressed, Advertised, Articulated, Authored, Clarified, Communicated, Conferred, Consulted, Convinced, Counseled, Critiqued, Defined, Discussed, Explained, Expressed, Influenced, Instructed, Interpreted, Interviewed, Lectured, Marketed, Mediated, Moderated, Motivated, Negotiated, Performed, Persuaded, Presented, Promoted, Publicized, Recruited, Reported, Responded, Spoke, Summarized, Synthesized, Taught, Trained, Translated, Wrote

When you created something

Acted, Adapted, Authored, Built, Chartered, Combined, Composed, Conceptualized, Created, Customized, Designed, Developed, Devised, Directed, Established, Formed, Formulated, Founded, Illustrated, Initiated, Instituted, Integrated, Introduced, Invented, Launched, Modeled, Modified, Originated, Performed, Photographed, Planned, Published, Revised, Shaped

When you helped someone with a project or a task

Adapted, Advocated, Aided, Answered, Arranged, Assisted, Clarified, Collaborated, Contributed, Cooperated, Counseled, Encouraged, Expedited, Facilitated, Fielded, Guided, Helped, Insured, Intervened, Motivated, Partnered, Provided, Referred, Reinforced, Represented, Supported

When you worked with data, numbers, or money

Adjusted, Allocated, Analyzed, Appraised, Assessed, Audited, Balanced, Budgeted, Calculated, Compiled, Computed, Corrected, Determined, Estimated, Evaluated, Forecasted, Interpreted, Inspected, Investigated, Measured, Organized, Planned, Prepared, Processed, Programmed, Projected, Reconciled, Reduced, Researched, Retrieved, Solved, Summarized, Surveyed, Tested

When you managed or led people or projects

Administered, Advised, Approved, Arranged, Assigned, Authorized, Chaired, Coached, Controlled, Coordinated, Decided, Delegated, Designated, Directed, Educated, Eliminated, Empowered, Enforced, Executed, Headed, Hosted, Initiated, Instructed, Led, Managed, Mentored, Monitored, Motivated, Operated, Orchestrated, Organized, Oversaw, Supervised, Trained

When you achieved a goal

Achieved, Advanced, Attained, Boosted, Completed, Demonstrated, Finalized, Finished, Earned, Enhanced, Exceeded, Improved, Outperformed, Overcame, Pioneered, Reached, Resolved, Revitalized, Showcased, Succeeded, Surpassed, Targeted, Transformed, Won

FORMATTING

WHY FORMATTING MATTERS

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS (ATS)

ATS refers to technology that companies use to filter job candidates' online application materials and eliminate unqualified candidates. ATS scans the resume you submitted, looking for keywords and required qualifications identified in the job description. ATS will then rank candidates based on how well each resume matches these requirements. As of 2023, 97% of Fortune 500 companies use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to filter and rank job candidates.

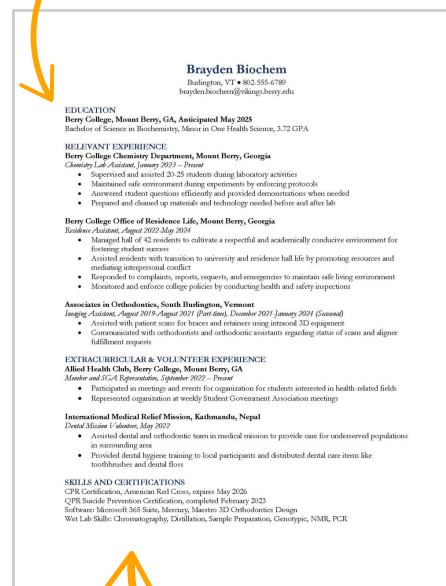
Incorporating design elements like images, icons, and columns makes it harder for ATS to scan your resume for keywords and required qualifications, which means that your resume may be ranked at the bottom of the candidate pool even if you're actually qualified. The only time it is appropriate to submit a graphic design style resume is if you are applying for a graphic design position.

MAKE AN IMPRESSION IN UNDER 7 SECONDS

Once your resume makes it to a human for review, you don't have long to demonstrate that you're qualified. Hiring managers look at a resume for around 7 seconds before deciding to eliminate a candidate or keep them for further consideration. Resumes that are hard to read or look unprofessional are more likely to be eliminated.

To maximize your chances of making a strong impression at a glance, limit your resume to no more than 1 page. You still want your resume to be readable, so don't try to cram everything onto a page by significantly decreasing the font size and margins. This means that you will likely have to condense or cut out some of your skills and experience, and that's okay. Focus on including the most relevant information for the position you're applying to. Once you've graduated from college and gotten a few years of full-time experience, it's appropriate for your resume to extend onto 2 pages.

Your resume should look professional and be easy to read



Limit your resume to 1 page

FORMATTING

FORMATTING TIPS

Start with a blank Word document or Google doc. Avoid using templates, including those found on Canva and Microsoft Word. Templates often contain columns or other design elements that are hard for ATS systems to read. When saving your resume, you should include your name in the title and save the document as both a Word document and PDF.

SAM SENATE

sam.senate@vikings.berry.edu · 706.236.2292 · Rome, GA · linkedin.com/in/SamSenate

EDUCATION

Berry College, Mount Berry, Georgia, Anticipated Graduation: May 2025
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Minor in Economics

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Berry College Office of the General Council, Mount Berry, Georgia

Legal Intern and Enterprise Risk-Management Specialist, August 2023 – Present

- Monitor legal systems within Student Enterprise Team and offer legal advice at weekly meetings based on training by General Council, anticipating avoidance of unnecessary liability.
- Assist in civil litigation proceedings involving Berry College, promoting equity and justice for every student.
- Observe General Council in meetings with administrators and representatives of Berry College, gaining an understanding of council meeting format, language, and expectations.

Berry College Student Government Association, Mount Berry, Georgia

Executive Treasurer, August 2023 – Present

- Developed and implemented a budgeting strategy for an annual \$375,000 campus club budget, meeting with student organization officers to ensure compliance with strategy.
- Dispatched bi-weekly budget reports to Dean of Students, maintaining accountability within offices.
- Held an Excel workshop for over 40 club treasurers to establish proper methodology for treasurer position.

Executive Secretary, August 2022 – May 2023

- Documented college organization standings for more than 80 campus clubs with executive team.
- Planned campus-wide events for over 500 attendees and developed workshops for organization secretaries, encouraging club involvement and long-term growth.
- Compiled archival and database student records information using extensive Microsoft Excel functions.

Georgia Secretary of State, Atlanta, Georgia

Elections Intern, May 2022 – August 2022

- Provided support for elections projects in different departments including Accounting, Boxing Commission, and Corporations, growing to understand a broad range of governmental and legal proceedings.
- Analyzed previous state election data to provide a framework for 2022 state election promotion.
- Maintained organization within office using online filing system GovPilot.

SKILLS AND PROFICIENCIES

- Language proficiencies: Fluent in Spanish
- Data collection and analysis: Qualtrics Stata
- Productivity: Microsoft 365, Google Workspace

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

- Mock Trial Team, August 2021 – Present
- Berry College Politics and Law Society, March 2022 – Present
- Berry College Volunteer Services, August 2021 – October 2022

GUIDE YOUR READER DOWN THE PAGE

Guide readers through your resume content by emphasizing section headers and inserting a line break between sections. You can emphasize section headers by bolding, underlining, increasing font size, using all caps, or using a different color or font style.

CHOOSE A READABLE FONT STYLE AND SIZE

Avoid heavily-stylized or gimmicky fonts (ex. Comic Sans, Bradley Hand ITC, Chalkduster, Papyrus) – they look unprofessional. You should also avoid fonts that are hard to read, including script fonts or fonts that are extremely narrow or light.

REPRESENT YOURSELF THROUGH SUBTLE CHOICES

Hiring managers will form perceptions of your personality based on how your resume looks. Just like other design elements, typography influences how we perceive a message. Resumes aren't APA-style research papers, so don't settle for Times New Roman unless you feel like this font choice best represents who you are! Other fonts like Arial, Cambria, Calibri, Garamond, Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino, Tahoma, and Verdana look great and are ATS-friendly.

BE CAUTIOUS WITH COLOR

When applying for a position in a more traditional or conservative industry, like finance or manufacturing, you should not incorporate color into your resume. All text on your resume should be black. For other industries, like education or entertainment, you can incorporate minimal color in your name and section headers.

RESUME CHECKLIST

BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR RESUME, REVIEW THIS CHECKLIST!

RESUME BASICS

- My resume is tailored to the position I'm applying for
- My resume accurately represents my accomplishments, skills, and responsibilities
- My resume does not exceed 1 page

RESUME CONTENT

- My resume lists accurate contact information, including my phone number and a professional email address
- My resume includes standard section headings like Education, Skills, and Experience (unless otherwise specified by the job description)
- My experience bullet points use the WHO Method to summarize what I did, how I did it, and what outcomes I achieved
- My experiences are listed in reverse chronological order (unless otherwise specified by the job description)

RESUME FORMATTING

- I did not use a template or graphic design software to create this resume
- The resume file is a .doc, .docx, or .pdf, and the file name includes my name
- My resume uses a font style and size that is easily-readable
- The section headings are clearly identifiable and stand out from the other text
- My resume uses no more than two text colors
- My resume does not use ATS-incompatible graphic design elements like images, icons, or columns