

TIPS FOR A STANDOUT RESUME

HOW TO GET STARTED

- Reflect on your skills, interests, and abilities. Refer to the Core Skills worksheet online.
- Brainstorm all your experiences. Consider any jobs, internships, volunteer work, leadership positions in student organizations, involvement in athletics, significant class projects, study abroad experience and any special skills or awards.
- Describe each experience by using accomplishment statements – What did you do/achieve? What skills did you develop?
- Work with a CEO staff member to help prioritize your various activities and skills and to have a draft of your resume reviewed

ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

- A well-crafted accomplishment statement describes your impact and results, adding depth to your resume and proof of your skills.
- A good formula to use is Strong Action Verb + What (skill or task) + So What (result, how, or why)
- Use action verbs, such as initiated, developed, and implemented, instead of passive phrases to strengthen your resume. Vary the verbs, and as appropriate, use words from the position description of the job you're seeking. See the Core Skills list for ideas.
 - E.g. "Worked with fellow students" can be strengthened to "Recruited and motivated students."
- Qualify and quantify your skills. Use numbers, dollar amounts and percentages to give a factual weight to your experience.
 - E.g. "Developed 3 daily activities for a group of 15 preschool-aged children" more clearly demonstrates your skill than "Worked with children at a preschool."
- Start with your accomplishment, followed by your actions.
 - E.g. "Increased sales by 20% utilizing social media marketing strategy," instead of "updated Facebook and Twitter."
- Avoid wordiness and unnecessary adjectives.
 - E.g. "Provided training and mentoring to incoming college students" can be stronger with a concise action verb and specific number, like "Trained and mentored 15 freshman students."

A FEW MORE TIPS ON CONTENT

- Resumes should be tailored to each position to which you're applying. Make small tweaks that highlight the parallels between your qualifications and the job requirements. Integrate "key words" that are used in the job post
- A resume does not need to include *everything* you've ever done. It is more effective to have fewer, related experience explained in more detail, than to list lots of unrelated experiences. Think of your resume as a commercial, not a documentary.
- Emphasize the experience and skills that are most relevant to the job for which you are applying. Section heading titles (for example, International Experience or Writing Experience) are a strategy to highlight skills and package related experiences.
- Consider having multiple versions of your resume, particularly if you are interested in fields that may focus on different skills.
- Summaries are best suited for job seekers with many years of experience in the same field. The summary communicates what you can bring to the table in a targeted role. It should include a few sentences summarizing your qualifications for a job. If adding a summary, be sure to include concrete information on how you have added value to a company or department.
- Objectives are falling out of fashion, as they are usually redundant and don't add much valuable content to a resume (every job seeker's objective is to get the job!). We advise saving the space and the employers time and dropping this from your resume.

STYLE

- The ideal length of a resume is one-page, but it needs to be visually appealing to the human eye. Fonts should be 10-12 points in size. Margins should be between .5 and 1 inch. Consider bullets, leave space between paragraphs, and allow for adequate margins.
- Be consistent throughout your resume, including how you write your dates, and whether you put your title or organization first.
- Within each section, list experiences in reverse chronological order.
- Always make sure the resume is error-free. Check for typos and grammatical errors. Proofread, and have others proofread as well.
- A note about Applicant Tracking Systems: Save as a .docx or .pdf to ensure the ATS can read it. Avoid graphics, tables, columns, and images. Use keywords from the job description in a meaningful way on your resume. ATS are looking for those words.
- If emailing your materials, put your resume and cover letter (for more info, see the Cover Letter Handout) in one attachment.
- Save your resume with your name (i.e., John Gopher resume.) This helps employers differentiate your resume from others.
- Do not include the phrase "References Available Upon Request." Prepare a separate reference sheet with the name, title, and contact information of 3 people who can speak to your skills and abilities. For more information, see the Reference List Handout.

For other tips & questions contact the CEO at 410-337-6191 or
visit the CEO website at www.goucher.edu/CEO