

Schroeder Center for Career Development Wabash College

The Resume

Promoting yourself effectively is crucial in a job search. While there are many ways to market yourself, the most popular way is through a resume. The goal of a resume is to give an organization insight into the skills and capabilities you have to offer, to determine if you would be a good fit with the organization. (The interview then allows you to elaborate and determines how you will do the job by assessing your performance and behaviors.) In short, the resume gets you the interview, and the interview gets you the job. You will obviously need a resume when applying for jobs and internships, but **you will also need one for applying to graduate or professional school**. Start preparing your resume in your freshman year and continually update it as you progress through school (and beyond).

The Wabash Format

To help you make a solid first impression (and actually get an interview) Career Services has created a format we recommend for our students and alumni. This format is based on positive feedback from recruiters and our staff's collective experience with corporations, non-profits, and higher education organizations based in the U.S. You are not required to use this format, although it is strongly recommended.

The goal of our resume format is to showcase your strongest selling points first, to grab the reader's attention, and encourage him/her to keep reading further. The sections we suggest are as follows:

- **Header:** your name and contact information (address, phone and email)
- **Profile:** a short 2-4 sentence introduction at the top to draw the reader in and create interest
- **Education:** details the formal educational experiences you have had leading to a degree or as part of a degree program
- **Experience:** details the experience you have relevant to the opportunity you are seeking
- **Professional Development:** includes details on your training, campus and community involvement, technology skills, volunteer work, language skills, etc.

We suggest a simple font, no fancy graphics, lines or italics. Since many organizations are now using computerized Resume Management Systems, it is vitally important that your resume be "scannable." When an organization receives your resume, it is usually scanned into an electronic database before it is read by anyone. These systems cannot recognize fancy fonts, graphics or other aesthetic features. Simplicity will ensure that when scanned into the system, your resume will appear and print the way you intended.

Work on your format first (easiest to do), and then focus on your content. You will find more formatting and content suggestions later in the guide. Note that for some specific opportunities, a different format may be required. For example, federal government resumes often require a specific separate format and some international organizations may request a CV (curriculum vitae) or the style may vary by country. If you find you need a different format, contact Career Services for specific guidance.

Formatting Guidance and Checklist

Header

Your header (centered on the page) contains your name and contact information so that organizations can identify and contact you. When completing this section:

- Be sure your name stands out: it should be in the largest font on your resume. If you have a different name you go by, you can include it in parentheses
- Include one phone number where you can be easily reached (home or cell) and be 100% sure the contact information is correct; ensure your voicemail message is professional and simple (no humor, vulgarity, etc)
- Use one email address that is professional; superfreak@domain.net is not acceptable. Remove the hyperlink from your email address.
- List only one mailing address. You will normally use your campus address, but if you are from Seattle, for example, and you're applying for a position on the west coast, you may want to use your home address instead. That shows the recruiter that you're from the area, which can be a plus.

Profile

Your profile is designed to catch the reader's attention and to give an overview of who you are, what you bring to the table and what you are looking for. When completing this section keep in mind:

- It should be 2-4 lines at the top of your resume, just under your header
- Do not use first person (I am...) or third person (Mr. Johnson is...)
- Your Profile content should support your resume (ex: if you indicate you are very involved you need to back that up by examples in your resume)
- Put your biggest sellers here: speak a foreign language or have related internship\work experience? Highlight that in both your Profile AND your Professional Development section

Example Profile

Successful academic, employment and volunteer track record. Highly skilled in written and verbal communication and heavily involved in on and off-campus political organizations. Motivated and organized professional seeking a position in political communications. Speak fluent Mandarin Chinese and proficient in Dreamweaver. *Important: make your Profile specific to who you are and what you have to offer. Do not copy this profile.*

Education

As a new college grad, your Education section is normally your biggest seller so it should go before your Experience section(s). When you are an alumnus, your Experience section will soon be of primary importance, so you would reverse this order. In your Education section you are selling your degree, not your school; in that vein, do not discount the power of minors, double majors, etc. Highlight such information by bolding it. Include:

- Your graduation date only. Month and year, do not bold. No need for "anticipated date" etc.
- List your degree and any minor(s) first, in bold
- Your school name/location goes **below** your major/minor and is not bolded (you're not selling Wabash, you're selling your degree/major)
- Do include relevant academic projects (group or solo), upper level coursework, study abroad trips, etc...it is your job to sell your degree/academic experiences to the employer/graduate school
- If you attended another university/community college, only include if it adds something different to your "whole package".
- Indicate that you passed comprehensive exams (when you do so) and that you graduated cum laude, etc.
- In your Projects/Research section, be detailed, but just enough just enough to get the reader interested. Results of your project are always a great touch.
- Be formal—do not write sentences (i.e., B.A. Art, not "received BA in art")
- Right-justify all dates
- Only include your GPA if it's a 3.0 or above. See Scott or Betsy with questions on this as this 'rule' differs for some organizations/schools. Do not bold your GPA.
- **For all sections:** No Wabash shorthand, jargon, professor's names, class numbers etc. are necessary. Keep in mind that the reader probably has no connection to Wabash.

Internships/Experience Section(s)

This is the “meat” of your resume. This is where you get the chance to convince the employer you have relevant experience for the position. Same for graduate/professional school – schools like to see relevant experience in an applicant. When completing this section **there is no need to include everything you’ve done - only include results-oriented information that will interest the reader in your candidacy.**

- Think accomplishments, not duties. Quantify whenever possible and give specific, example-oriented detail. Generalizations are boring and will get you nowhere
- Sell like mad - don’t overstate your experience but make sure to detail how important it is
- Use Power Verbs to sell your accomplishments, and do not repeat them. A list of power verbs is at the end of this section
- List your most recent position first, then work backward
- There is no rule that you have to go back a certain amount of years or jobs - include info that helps your candidacy regardless of when it occurred
- If you have more than one job at an employer/have been promoted, make sure that is clearly stated
- Dates need only years (not months) unless it was seasonal or the job lasted less than one year
- Whether you were paid or not is irrelevant - if you can sell an experience, put it in this section. Example: If you’re applying for a position in finance, and you were the treasurer for your fraternity, that is experience! Detail that under your Experience section
- Bullet entries and do not use periods - use dashes/colons/semi-colons to connect thoughts
- Use correct tense - current positions are detailed in present tense, past positions in past tense
- Make each word count and tighten up each entry as much as possible. Avoid orphans (lines with just one or two words)
- Internships should always be detailed under a separate Internship Experience heading

Professional Development

The professional development section is designed to showcase all of the additional work and effort you have undertaken to develop professionally. When completing this section:

- Sell: include any campus or community involvement related to your goal and detail accomplishments – it is pointless to simply list something you were involved in. You must describe your involvement and/or the organization.
- Wabash-specific groups like the Sphinx Club, Sons of Wabash, Dork Club, etc. must be explained to the reader. It is up to YOU to make it clear what the group is, and what you accomplished/learned (which is most important, by far).
- Use # and \$. If you managed a budget, how much \$? If you led a group with 15 guys, say so.
- Use formal titles of computer packages and be sure to spell correctly
- **Highlight all leadership roles you have undertaken – all employers/grad schools like to see leadership**
- Do not include controversial information. If you volunteered at your church, do not name the religion, instead say ‘local church’. If you were in the Big Game Hunting Club or College Democrats/Republicans, we would suggest not including that unless you know the employer would see that as an asset. You don’t know the reader’s biases. Along that line, be careful when you include your involvement title. Your fraternity or club may have a ‘strange’ title for Treasurer, but that doesn’t mean you need to include that exact title – just say “Treasurer”.
- For volunteer experience, detail exactly what you did – don’t just list random groups you volunteered for. Note that “100 hours community service” sounds like a prison sentence....

Once you have your resume in a format you are comfortable with, use the checklist below to ensure that you haven’t made any missteps in the process. Once your content is completed, you should go back and use the checklist one final time.

Formatting Checklist

Overall:

- As a new grad, your resume should be one page, except for grad school resumes – they can be 2 pages. Do not use a resume template from a computer program.

Style:

- Do not go any smaller than a 10 point font, make all margins .7 or larger
- Do not mix fonts in the resume or font sizes in your content, or use fancy fonts or graphics
- Do not overdo the use of capitals, bolding or other stylistic tools
- Do not use all caps, except for headings - it's too hard to read

Computer Scannability:

- To ensure your resume can be read by a scanner, your font type should be rather basic (Arial, Verdana, AGaramond). Never use italics, graphics or underlining.

Tense:

- Use correct tense throughout your resume—never use first (“I”) or third person (believes....).

Justification:

- Do not use the tool that allows you to end-to-end justify your text (this is where paragraphs are even on either side) instead, manually right justify dates and left justify bullets and titles, or set tabs

Consistency/Parallelism:

- Make sure your spacing and formatting are consistent; if you indent the job title in one section, make sure you indent all job titles - if you capitalize one header, make sure you capitalize all headers, etc.

Grammar and Spelling:

- A resume must be completely free of all grammar and spelling errors
- Review each word and *always* have someone else look your resume over for errors
- Use apostrophes correctly and only to show possession
- Read it out loud - this is the best way to catch errors

Capitalization:

- Only capitalize formal titles and names

Jargon/Technical Terms:

- Watch jargon. Make sure you spell out abbreviations and then put the acronym in parentheses the first time you use it – for example: Alpha Phi Omega (APO)
- Jargon is only acceptable if you are completely sure the reader will know what the word means

State:

- Use the correct postal abbreviation and no periods (i.e., IN, MI)

Citizenship/Birthdate/SS#/Other Personal Info:

- Never include such info on a resume. If you have an international-sounding name and are a U.S. citizen, it is OK to include that in your Profile.

References:

- Do not include them on your resume. “References available upon request” is a waste of valuable space. You should use a separate sheet for references.

Header matching:

- For cover letters or reference pages, use the same header as on your resume for consistency

E-mail Test: Email your resume to yourself (or us) to make sure the formatting remains intact. Once you upload it into WabashWorks, print it from the system to make sure it looks good.

Creating Powerful Resume Content

When creating content, the most important thing to remember is that your resume is a marketing tool. It must sell you as the most qualified candidate in a very professional but concise manner. Your job is to make it easy for the reader to determine if you are a qualified candidate. Enable the reader as much as possible—don't assume you will have the chance to share additional information with the reader or explain more detail in an interview. **You have only a few seconds to make a good first impression and draw the reader in.**

Planning Your Experience Content

While it is helpful to start with a base resume, you should customize your resume every time you send it. Just like marketers do when selling a product, your content should sell what is most important to your audience (the reader). Because a resume is meant to highlight the most relevant experience from your academic and work experience and your involvement, one way to manage resume customization is to list all of your positions in a separate document including all of your detailed content for each position. You can then cut and paste bullet points each time you prepare to send out a resume. It is important to do several crucial things:

- **Never just list a job responsibility.**
- You have to help the reader not only understand what you did but how you did it better than someone else with the same job description
- **Quantify whenever possible.**
- Include the amount of the budget you managed as fraternity treasurer, the number of people you worked with on a project, the percentage increase in results, etc. This gives the reader more to go on and shows you are detail-oriented.
- **Lead your entries with action words.**
- Active is good, passive is bad
- **Eliminate all vague words and phrasing.**
- Using words like *some* or *various* or *many* gives the impression you are too lazy to be specific. Never use the word *relevant* - this assumes everything else is irrelevant.
- **Never use the words "responsible for."**
- It can leave the reader wondering: "he was responsible for that but did he actually do it?"

Creating Experience Entries

Resume content should start with job responsibilities, but should never end there. If you are struggling to take your content beyond just listing job responsibilities, try to answer these questions for each bullet:

who/what/where/when/why/how?

You need not answer or address all these questions in every bulleted entry, but be sure to incorporate some mix of them. While this may be time-consuming, this method not only ensures your content is powerful, **it will shorten your job search (you will get actual interviews)**. This is also very useful when preparing for interviews as well.

An example: "Managed budget for fraternity". On the surface the entry is vague and boring, but it more or less screams that there are details you left out (readers *hate* that...) Instead -- Who exactly did you do it for? What exactly did you do? How did you do it? Once you answer some of those questions, indicate the **results. This is the key to a great resume entry**. Whenever you detail results, the reader becomes more interested in your candidacy. They assume that if you accomplished something in your previous experience, you could do the same for them.

For the above example, "*Managed budget for fraternity*" would be much better written as "***Managed \$145,000 yearly operating budget for 52-member fraternity; cut costs \$820 by creating Excel spreadsheet to better track accounts receivable***"

Make sure every word on your resume counts. Using power verbs to describe your accomplishments, will aid you in this process. The last page of the resume section is a list of power verbs. Use these power verbs to market yourself and grab the reader's attention. Remember to vary your choice of power verbs.

Do This: Review the following content examples to help you become more efficient in crafting results-oriented and accomplishments-focused content for your resume. Note that you can use such entries to describe your academic projects as well.

- Created detailed informational brochure to better explain the volunteer process which resulted in a 23% increase in participation over 6 months
- Created original lesson plan on Namibian reptiles to better engage class of 23 fourth graders on international habitats. 5 students inquired about furthering readings after the lesson
- Successfully presented business plan to local executives to develop a start-up birthday cake delivery operation on campus. Acquired \$1000 seed financing from 3 investors, developed marketing plan and netted \$5412 in 12 months
- Authored one-act play on a current topic of campus interest, *Greatest Moments at Wabash*, and promoted the play to sports coaching staff; play attracted audience of 110, a 200% increase over average campus play attendance
- Utilized primary research and forecasting techniques to provide competitive market assessments and policy analysis to evaluate emerging trends in the telecommunications industry

Once you have drafted your resume, it is strongly suggested that you have someone look it over for errors, readability, impact, etc. Our staff will be happy to meet with you to help you develop and proof your resume. Stop by our office at 502 W. Wabash, or email it to career@wabash.edu.

Wabash College Resume Example

Clark S. Kent

2001 Marlon Brando Drive, Metropolis, IL 02254
(212) 555-2222 (c)
superhero@wabash.edu

PROFILE

Faster than a speeding bullet, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound and stop a locomotive with bare hands. Significant experience in print and web-based journalism. Seeking a position in news gathering and online distribution.

EDUCATION

B.A. Superheroism GPA: 3.98/4.0

May 2010

Minors: French and Classics

Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN

Study Abroad: The Sorbonne, Paris, France; intensive French language and culture studies

Fall 2008

Research Project: Developed independent theory of existence based on the teachings of Confucius and Gandhi. Theory was adopted by *The National Society of Existential Thought* as the official groupthink belief.

Coursework: Benefits of Superheroism, Musings on the Fantastic Four, The Perils of Kryptonite, Saving Societies and Planets, Consulting Practices in Web Journalism, French Culture and Mores, The Perils of Poseidon

INTERNSHIP

Kryptonite Destruction Technician and Writer

Summer 2009

Luthor Industries, Radioville, IN

- Learned to identify kryptonite within 3 milliseconds via internal and external sensory techniques
- Researched, created, and perfected kryptonite disposal system resulting in 100% success rate
- To befuddle the competition, authored weekly articles for *LuthorLinks* newsletter on world domination

EXPERIENCE

Mild-Mannered Reporter

2006 -present

The Bachelor, Wabash College

- Investigated newsworthy topics, interviewed students and staff and wrote original articles, including a national Newberry Award-winning expose on shenanigans at *The DePauw Daily Planet*
- Authored weekly "Truth Justice and The American Way" advice column; increased readership 34% through humor

Superhero

2000 – present

Omnipresent, The Universe

- Performed 2690 good deeds to date without hesitation, including saving the world from utter destruction
- Protected the lives of citizens here and abroad through the development of WorldWatch, a 24/7 monitoring device
- Awarded keys to 73 cities for heroic efforts, including rescuing babies and stopping runaway trains

Additional Experience: Television Actor, Supermarket Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Dignitary, Phone Booth Repairman

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Involvement

- **Founder, Wabash Comic Book Society**, created 32-member group dedicated to superhero comics; began annual Campus Comics masquerade party, attracting 570 participants the first year through flyer development and chapel presentation
- **Rush Chairman, Social Chair** Sigma Upsilon Pi Fraternity, increased 2006 pledge class size 23% through summer RushFest in Naples, Italy. Planned and executed 45 successful parties attracting 1578 guests, with a combined budget of \$25,956 including the annual SuperBall, which raised \$2200 for Capes for the Community
- **Forward**, Wabash College Frisbee Golf Team – team won the GLCA championship each year

Computer/Technical Skills

- Proficient in MS Publisher, PageMaker; experience with JavaScript; knowledge of Flash, Visio

Training

- X-Ray Vision Certification, LensCrafters
- "Quick Changes to Your Professional Wardrobe" seminar, *Details* magazine

Languages Fluent in French; conversational in Czech, Swahili, Farsi; read Yiddish

Volunteer Crawfordsville Bizarro World for Kids – Tutor 12-year old weekly on alternate universe issues; Capes for The Community - Coach Recreational Flying to 14 students aged 4-93

Professional Affiliations

- Justice League of America, Screen Actors Guild, President - Lois Lane Fan Club

Additional Resume Example

Joe T. Wabash

614 Martindale Hall, Crawfordsville, IN 47933
(765) 555-5555 (c)
name@wabash.edu

PROFILE

Grab the reader's attention. Create 2-3 sentences that tell the reader who you are, what you bring to the table (specific hard and soft skills) and what you are looking for (the kind of position you seek.) Write a general profile to start and then customize it to every job to which you apply. The profile is an overview of your resume—save specifics for the body of the resume. Include information most relevant to the position. **Do not copy a sample profile. Write your own profile that is unique to you.**

EDUCATION

B.A. Subject GPA: 3.45/4.0

Month Year

Minor: Subject

Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN

Study Abroad: School, City, Country; detail what you studied or learned

Semester Year

Optional lines here could include: Passed comps, Scholarships or other awards (be specific regarding why you got this award)

Academic Projects: List academic projects completed, with details on results, methods, successes.

Coursework: (include only upper-level coursework directly related to the position or your goal) Most Exciting Class, Upper-Level Class, , Another Fantastic Class, Still Selling It, Include All Classes You'd Like To Discuss In An Interview

INTERNSHIP (or Field Work, Research...whatever your situation)

Your Title (make it descriptive)

Employer Name, City, State

Season or Year

- Emphasize results and accomplishments in all descriptions
- Never say 'responsibilities/duties included'
- Sell! Make your descriptions action-oriented and detailed

EXPERIENCE

Your Title

Year-present

Employer Name, City, State

- Be sure to use the proper tense
- Quantify whenever possible – use # and \$ entries liberally
- Get the reader excited. Sound positive

Additional Experience Includes: For miscellaneous jobs that show you're not sitting around watching TV, ex: Lifeguard, Landscaper, Dog Walker, Server, etc. Dates/employer names not needed

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (dates not needed in this section)

Involvement (could be sports, fraternity, group, etc. – these headings are just examples)

- **Office**, Organization name, Be specific about your particular role and contribution. Detail the organization as well.
- **Leadership Role, Organization**, Sell your specific accomplishments in these offices. Use # and \$
- **Position Played**, Team or Sport, If you are on an athletics team, list your position(s) played, and awards - team and individual

Computer/Technical skills

- List those specific to your goal; be sure to indicate level of proficiency if appropriate

Training

- Optional section for certifications or training outside strictly academic pursuits

Languages: Fluent in French, conversational in Spanish

Volunteer: Be specific in how you volunteered. Do not just listed places you volunteered or # of hours

Professional Affiliations

- List organizations separately and if you have leadership roles, detail them. Were you an Eagle Scout? If so, list it. Climb Mt. Kilimanjaro? Detail the experience. Make the resume reflect YOU.

List of Power Verbs

eclipsed	increased	performed	sanctioned
edited	indexed	persuaded	satisfied
educated	indicated	pioneered	scheduled
elevated	inferred	planned	screened
elicited	influenced	polished	scrutinized
eliminated	informed	prepared	secured
employed	initiated	prescribed	served
empowered	innovated	prioritized	set goals
enabled	inspected	processed	set up
encouraged	inspired	procured	settled
endorsed	instituted	produced	shaped
enforced	instructed	programmed	simplified
engineered	insured	projected	smoothed
enhanced	integrated	promoted	solicited
enlarged	interceded	publicized	solved
enlisted	interpreted	purchased	sought
enriched	interviewed	qualified	spearheaded
enumerated	introduced	queried	specified
envisioned	invented	questioned	spoke
established	investigated	quoted	staffed
estimated	involved	raised	stimulated
evaluated	issued	rated	streamlined
examined	judged	realized	strengthened
excelled	justified	recommended	studied
executed	launched	reconciled	submitted
exercised	lectured	recorded	substantiated
expanded	led	recruited	suggested
expedited	licensed	rectified	summarized
explained	lightened	reduced	supervised
extended	linked	refined	supplemented
extracted	maintained	referred	surveyed
fabricated	marketed	reformed	sustained
facilitated	measured	regarded	synthesized
familiarized	mediated	regulated	systematized
fashioned	minimized	rehabilitated	tabulated
figured	mobilized	reinforced	tailored
finalized	modeled	rejuvenated	taught
forecasted	moderated	related	tested
formulated	modernized	relieved	traced
fostered	modified	remedied	trained
founded	monitored	remodeled	transacted
fulfilled	motivated	repaired	transformed
generated	multiplied	reported	translated
grew	negotiated	represented	transmitted
guaranteed	nullified	researched	updated
guided	officiated	reserved	upgraded
hired	operated	resolved	validated
identified	orchestrated	restored	valued
illustrated	organized	retrieved	verified

