John Carroll University
CENTER FOR CAREER SERVICES

Resume Writing Guide

Resume Writing Guide

What is the *Purpose* of a Resume?

- Your resume gives you a chance to showcase your professional experience, education, and other qualifications that will show employers what you have to offer as it relates to the position for which you are applying.
- A resume is intended not to get you the *job*, but to get you the *interview*.
- Your resume will serve as an outline for the questions presented to you in an interview.

Where do I *Start*?

- **Create an Outline:** Create a master list of any jobs, volunteering, internships, degrees, awards, scholarships, and campus involvement and include the dates of each.
- **Identify Your Transferrable Skills**: These are the skills that you have gained that you will be able to use for the job in which you are interested. Focus only on the skills that potential employers are looking for. These could even be from seemingly unrelated jobs, but the skills can "transfer" from one environment to another (i.e. organizational skills you gained from being an RA can help you in a teaching job as well).
- **Customize Your Resume to the Job Description**: Job descriptions list all of the qualifications required and responsibilities that the position will include. Use this as a guide when you are choosing what responsibilities and skills to highlight so that you can target exactly what they are looking for in a candidate (see example on page 6).

How do I *Format* my Resume?

- **Start from Scratch:** Do not use a template, as it limits editing ability.
- **Remain Flexible:** Your resume does not need to be rigid. Just remember to keep it simple, easy to read, and professional (see sample resumes starting on page 11).
- **Keep it to 1 page:** A resume should be one page unless you have significant related experience in the field. Recruiters do not generally spend much time on one resume so it is important to capture their attention (most college students do not exceed one page).
- **Margins:** They should be no smaller than 0.5" and no larger than 1.0"
    - **Fonts:** Use 10-12 pt font, depending on how much content you have. Font color should always be black and consistent throughout your resume. Recommended fonts include:

        - Georgia
        - Arial
        - Tahoma

        - Calibri
        - Times New Roman
        - Garamond

The HEADER

- Your full name should stand out with a larger, bold font.
- Contact information should be clear and easy to read. This includes:
  - **Address**- This is becoming optional. You may use your JCU address, especially if your home address is a long distance from the job site.
  - **Phone number**- This is typically a cell phone. Only list your main number and be sure you are able to be contacted easily by that number. Have a clear and professional voicemail attached to that number for when recruiters call.
  - **E-Mail Address**- Use an appropriate and professional email, preferably one that simply lists some variation of your name. Avoid numbers, especially ones that are birth years to prevent age discrimination. Your JCU email is a great option! **Remember to remove the hyperlink.

Examples:

John M. Smith
1234 Main St. | University Heights, OH | (216) 123-4567 | student@jcu.edu

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John M. Smith
1234 Main St. ● University Heights, OH
(216) 123-4567 ● student @jcu.edu

John M. Smith
(216) 123-4567
student@jcu.edu

EDUCATION

- Education should be listed above experience if it is current, recent, or the most relevant.
- Schools/Degrees should be listed in reverse chronological order (meaning most recent at the top).
- Information that should be included:
  - Name of the school, the city and state of the school, the exact name of the degree (and minor/concentration of applicable), and the year the degree was earned (or expected date of graduation)
  - GPA (if 3.0 or above), Dean's List, Honors, Scholarships, etc.
- Separate certain information by bolding titles or names but keep it consistent throughout the whole resume.
- If your education is most of your experience, consider adding relevant projects or additional subsections but avoid using more than one subsection (See more options on the following page and "Additional Sections" on page 5).
- High school should only be listed if you are a freshman or sophomore with little experience.

Example(s):

EDUCATION:
John Carroll University, University Heights, OH   May 2020
Bachelor of Science in Psychology; 3.4; Dean's List
Minor in Philosophy

      Relevant Coursework:
- Family Dynamic
- Child and Adolescent Psychology
- Lifespan Development
- Family Ethics and Theory

> **Courses can either be bulleted or simply separated by commas all on one line, depending on how much space you have.

EDUCATION
John Carroll University; Bachelor of Science in Psychology   May 2020
Minor in Philosophy   University Heights, OH

    Relevant Projects:
- **The Effects of Divorce on School Performance in Children with ADHD and Dyslexia:** Comprehensive research study conducted at neighboring elementary schools in conjunction with faculty; Summer 2019
- **The Effect of Empathy on Implicit Bias:** Independent research study conducted on campus consisting of 75 college student participants; Summer 2018

Education
John Carroll University, University Heights, OH, May 2020
Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a Minor in Philosophy

    Scholarships and Awards:
- Faith and Fellowship Service Award; 2020
- Presidential Scholarship; 2018

EXPERIENCE

- Experience should be listed in reverse chronological order (meaning most recent at the top).
- Include the month and year you started and ended (unless "present") in that job. The months must be accurate so if you are unsure, call that employer's Human Resources (HR) department.
- Directly under each position, you should list the following:
    1.) Scope of responsibilities: This could be a standalone statement (shown in example) or your first bullet. It is simply a brief statement that should outline your general responsibilities.

Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield, OH, May 2016-August 2016
Behavioral Technician
Managed patient transport plans for the psychiatric unit to provide a safe and organized environment for patients and their families

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    2.) Bulleted phrases under each job title/experience (4-5 for more recent/relevant jobs, 1-3 for less recent/relevant).

Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield, OH, May 2016-August 2016
Behavioral Technician
Managed patient transport plans for the psychiatric unit to provide a safe an organized environment for patients and their families
- Maintained detailed record keeping of patient medical files and converted all paper files to electronic record keeping systems to give neighboring hospitals direct access to patient data

3.) Keep your phrases concise, relevant, detailed, and results-oriented.
4.) Customize your resume by pulling key words from the posted job description and providing examples of responsibilities or accomplishments of yours that align with what they are looking for in a candidate.
5.) Focus on creating descriptive and detailed work phrases using the charts below.

Skill Verb	The Who or What	Result/Amount/Frequency/Reason
Begin each bullet with a new skill verb that is strong and industry specific. Avoid weak verbs such as "involved with" or "assisted." Use the job description, or the list starting on page 5, for examples.	After the skills verb, tell the reader who or what was the object of that action. Be specific.	**Result**: Did you save time or money? Did you achieve something? **Amount:** Provide $ amounts or percentages when possible **Frequency:** How often? **Reason:** Why did you do this?
Example: Implemented	resident feedback	into training plans to improve satisfaction and increase number of students living on campus. (This uses the "**Reason**")

Sample Descriptions

Good	Better	Best
Interacted with public affairs representatives	Interacted successfully with public affairs representatives and local media	Interacted successfully with public affairs representatives and local media increasing community awareness of agency by 25%
Ensured fellow lifeguards knew policies	Carried out safety precautions and instructed staff in the proper use of equipment	Carried out safety precautions and instructed staff in the proper use of equipment, resulting in a 50% reduction of injury accidents over the summer

Example:

Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield, OH, May 2016-August 2016
Behavioral Technician
Managed patient transport plans for the psychiatric unit to provide a safe an organized environment for patients and their families

- Maintained detailed record keeping of patient medical files and converted all paper files to electronic record keeping systems to give neighboring hospitals direct access to patient data
- Monitored alert system hourly to prepare team for emergency transportation needs and to quickly assess the concerns of the individual patient
- Collaborated with nursing staff to ensure adequate education for families and patients in regards to medication and therapy regiments to ensure proper treatment methods are being followed

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

Remember, this is YOUR resume, so your experiences and achievements are unique to you. Therefore, every resume will be different! If you feel you have enough involvement in a particular area, it may warrant an additional section! Here are a few examples:

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT	**HONORS AND AWARDS**
CLINICAL EXPERIENCE	**RELEVANT COURSEWORK**
COMPUTER PROGRAMS	**RELEVANT PROJECTS**
COMPUTER SKILLS	**CAMPUS INVOLVMENT**
EXTRA CURRICULAR	**SCHOLARSHIPS**
ACTIVITIES	**SERVICE**
FIELD WORK	**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

What **NOT** to Include in Your Resume
Do *Not* Include:

- **Objective Statements:** Resumes are intended to show what YOU can do for the COMPANY.
- **References:** Do not include "References Upon Request" or attach your references to your resume. Have a separate document ready for when the recruiter or hiring manager reaches out to you to provide them (see "How to Write a Reference Sheet" on page 9).
- **Slang or Abbreviations:** An HR representative may be screening your resume first and may not be familiar with certain acronyms.
- **Photos, Logos, or Crests:** These are distracting and take away from the content.
- **Political/Religious Affiliations:** You run the risk of being discriminated against for your beliefs, but it is a personal preference to include these. You can also reference certain clubs by a more general name (i.e. Rather than "Republicans Club," you can call it a "Political Club").

CUSTOMIZING Your Resume

Sample Job Description

To truly understand how your resume should read, you need to see what job openings and positions peek your interest. By having the descriptions of those jobs, you are able to identify exactly what the employer is looking for in a candidate. You are then able to target your resume by using the job description and pulling key words and language from it. It is important that your resume and the job description are closely related.

JOB POSTING:
Case Manager
Impact Lives. Inspire Change. Be the Solution.
Since 1864, we've been an integral part of the Berea community, proudly rooted in **faith** and a **legacy** of serving children and families. While our roots remain in Berea, we've grown to support children and families statewide. OhioGuidestone is always looking for **passionate** people to make a difference in our communities. You can impact lives and inspire change right in your own backyard. Apply today to work at the largest non-profit, mental health service provider in Ohio. We offer FREE CEU trainings, a great support system, education bonuses and incentives, and much more! Full time employees may be eligible for Public Student Loan Forgiveness at OhioGuidestone and are also offered PAID medical benefits for you and your family! The Juvenile Justice department is seeking a passionate and excited individual to provide community-based services to a diverse clientele dealing with behavioral and mental health diagnosis. The Case Manager works diligently to **engage resistant clients** and coordinates a support and resource team around the entire family. This is a position that is focused on **treating the family**, not an individual client. The individual selected plays a very important role as an advocate for children and families, often times within social service and educational settings.

Essential Functions:

- **Develop** and **maintain** a **service** relationship with **youth** and **family.**
- Develop service/treatment plan.
- Provide parents with information on disciplining, behavior management
- Provide household **management** and **communication** and relationship enhancement
- Provide crisis intervention and mediation as necessary.
- **Coordinate**, make referrals, or arrange for appropriate community resources when needed
- Ensure that children are in the proper educational setting.
- Maintains ongoing contacts (phone, meetings, and conferences) with other professionals
- Keeping contacts with **community** resources/services.
- **Organization** and **maintenance** of client information and case notes.
- **Record keeping** and copying of necessary information
- Participates in staff **training, supervisory** and staff meetings

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in the social sciences/related field required

> This intro section is a great way to know what the company is all about. Look for **key words (bolded for example)** that would describe the perfect candidate and if they apply to you, use them!

> The list of duties or job functions should look similar to your own action phrases. Pull out **key words and action verbs (bolded for example)** and apply these responsibilities to your own experience. For example, it looks like this job requires the ability to keep records and be organized! Take note!

Example:
- Coordinated* annual class service* trip for 50+ students to various elementary schools in the community* generating a total of over 250 volunteer hours

*In this example, a real experience was framed in the language of the job description- using three key words in just one phrase!

Consistency is Key

- You will notice in the example on page 8, all cities, states, months, years, headings, and font (style and size) are the same. This allows recruiters to read more content faster, rather than trying to decipher information.
  - **Example:**

John Carroll University, University, OH, May 2025 Bachelors of Science in Psychology

Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield, OH, May 2020-August 2024 Behavioral Technician
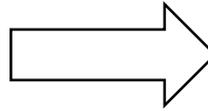
Notice the use of bold and the order in which information presented between a degree and a job are consistent.

- **Proof Read!** Often recruiters will not even keep reading a resume if they catch an error. Common errors include:
  - **Dates:** Keep all dates either in numerical or month form, but not both (writing out the months is recommended).
  - **Punctuation and Spacing:** Remain consistent in your punctuation and spacing throughout the entire document. Use the 'paragraph' function in Microsoft Word to double check.
  - **Verb tenses**
    - If the experience is current (i.e. May 2017 – Present) use present tense
    - If the experience has ended (i.e. May 2016 – May 2017) use past tense
- Be **brief** and **concise** while emphasizing important points.
- Be **creative** but not distracting.
- Check for **grammar** and **spelling** errors! Don't settle with your first draft. Be sure to revise and have a friend, professor, or Career Advisor check your resume before sending it to an employer.

Center for Career Services | John Carroll University 2563 South Belvoir Boulevard, in the house to the right of the tennis courts. Please stop by, call us at 216.397.4237, or email us at careerhelp@jcu.edu any time you have a question.

Remember that this is **YOUR** resume! Make it unique in structure and content to fit your personal style and preferences while maintaining a standard level of professionalism. This will help your resume stand out from the rest of the applicants and help you reach the interview stage of the application process.

EXAMPLE

John M. Smith
1234 Main St. | University Heights, OH
(216) 123-4567 | student@jcu.edu

EDUCATION:

John Carroll University, University Heights, OH   May 2025
Bachelor of Science in Psychology; 3.4; Dean's List

Relevant Coursework:
- Family Dynamic, Child and Adolescent Psychology, Lifespan Development , Family Ethics and Theory

Relevant Projects:
- **The Effects of Divorce on School Performance in Children with ADHD and Dyslexia:** Comprehensive research study conducted at neighboring elementary school in conjunction with faculty; Summer 2016
- **The Effect of Empathy on Implicit Bias**: Independent research study conducted on campus consisting of 75 college student participants; Summer 2015

RELATED EXPERIENCE:

Hillcrest Hospital, Mayfield, OH   May 2016-Present
Behavioral Technician
Manage patient transport plans for the psychiatric unit to provide a safe an organized environment for patients and their families
- Maintained detailed record keeping of patient medical files and converted all paper files to electronic record keeping systems to give neighboring hospitals direct access to patient data
- Monitored alert system hourly to prepare team for emergency transportation needs and to quickly assess the needs of the individual patient
- Collaborated with nursing staff to ensure adequate education for families and patients in regards to medication and therapy regiments to ensure proper treatment methods are being followed

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Residence Life, John Carroll University, University Heights, OH   August 2025-May 2026
Service Coordinator and Resident Assistant
Maintained the safety of 75 residents with 24/7 availability within dorm halls
- Coordinated annual class service trip for 50+ students to various elementary schools in the community generating a total of over 250 volunteer hours

Toys for Tots, University Heights, OH   May 2024-August 2024
Activities Coordinator
Organized volunteers to properly staff 13 large events
- Collected and tracked all monetary donations each day through a secure online database

HONORS AND AWARDS:
- Faith and Fellowship Service Award; 2023
- Presidential Scholarship; 2-21-2025

EXAMPLE

References:

John Smith
Assistant Vice President
John Carroll University
E-Mail: email@jcu.edu
Phone: 123.456.7891
Direct Supervisor

Sally Smith
Associate Professor of Psychology
John Carroll University
E-Mail: email@jcu.edu
Phone: 123.456.7891
Faculty Advisor

John Doe
Nurse Manager
Hillcrest Hospital
E-Mail: email@jcu.edu
Phone: 123.456.7891
Manager

Jane Doe
Volunteer Coordinator
Toys for Tots
E-Mail: email@jcu.edu
Phone: 123.456.7891
Colleague

How to Write a Reference Sheet:

1.) Use the header from your resume
2.) Keep the font consistent with your resume
3.) Include job title, company, contact information, and relationship
4.) Remember to contact these individuals before you apply for jobs so they are not surprised when the recruiter calls

Action Verbs

Management/ Leadership
Administered
Approved
Assigned
Attained
Consolidated
Contracted
Coordinated
Delegated
Developed
Directed
Eliminated
Enhanced
Enforced
Established
Evaluated
Executed
Expanded
Generated
Headed
Hired
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Inspected
Instituted
Managed
Motivated
Navigated
Organized
Oversaw
Planned
Presided
Prioritized
Produced
Recommended
Reorganized
Reviewed
Scheduled
Strengthened
Supervised
Unified

Communication
Addressed
Advertised
Arranged
Collaborated
Communicated
Composed
Condensed
Contacted
Convinced
Corresponded
Defined
Directed
Drafted
Edited
Elicited
Expressed
Formulated
Influenced
Interpreted
Interviewed
Marketed
Moderated
Negotiated
Observed
Participated
Persuaded
Presented
Promoted
Publicized
Quoted
Reconciled
Recruited
Referred
Reported
Resolved
Responded
Suggested
Translated
Wrote

Research
Analyzed
Clarified
Collected
Compared
Conducted
Determined
Evaluated
Examined
Extracted
Formulated
Gathered
Identified
Interpreted
Interviewed
Invented
Investigated
Located
Measured
Organized
Researched
Reviewed
Solved
Summarized
Surveyed
Tested

Technical
Applied
Assembled
Built
Calculated
Constructed
Designed
Determined
Developed
Installed
Maintained
Operated
Programmed
Resolved
Specialized

Teaching

Adapted
Advised
Clarified
Communicated
Conducted
Coordinated
Critiqued
Developed
Enabled
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Guided
Individualized
Instructed
Motivated
Stimulated
Taught
Trained
Transmitted
Tutored

Creative

Acted
Composed
Conceptualized
Created
Designed
Directed
Displayed
Entertained
Fashioned
Formulated
Founded
Illustrated
Introduced
Invented
Modeled
Originated
Performed
Photographed
Planned
Revised

Helping

Advocated
Aided
Answered
Assisted
Cared for
Clarified
Contributed
Counseled
Diagnosed
Educated
Encouraged
Explained
Facilitated
Familiarized
Furthered
Helped
Influenced
Insured
Mediated
Mentored
Provided
Referred
Rehabilitated
Resolved
Simplified
Supplied
Supported
Volunteered

Financial

Analyzed
Appraised
Audited
Balanced
Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Estimated
Forecasted
Managed
Projected
Reconciled
Transferred

Achievement

Achieved
Completed
Developed
Implemented
Maximized
Perfected
Reduced
Sparked
Spearheaded
Succeeded
Surpassed

Organizational

Arranged
Catalogued
Categorized
Charted
Classified
Coded
Collected
Compiled
Corresponded
Distributed
Filed
Generated
Inspected
Maintained
Monitored
Operated
Organized
Prepared
Processed
Recorded
Reviewed
Scheduled
Sorted
Standardized
Submitted
Systemized
Updated
Validated
Verified