

Writing a good resume

✓ Who needs a resume?

- ▶ You need a resume! The time to start working on your “college” resume is as early as Freshman Orientation.

✓ Why do I need a resume?

- ▶ To tell your story by communicating your skills, experiences and accomplishments.

✓ How do I get started?

- ▶ Follow the steps on the next few pages of the Career Handbook to help you create and update your resume.

No resume template needed!

✓ Formatting Checklist

- Font is black type, consistently used throughout and size 10.5 or larger
- Font is easy to read (e.g., Arial, Georgia, Calibri or Tahoma)
- Verb tense is consistent (i.e., put present experiences in present tense and past experiences in past tense)
- **Limit resume to 1 page!**
- Margins are reasonable (no less than .5”) and balanced: Leave room for white space!
- **Proofread: No spelling or grammatical errors!**
- **Information is accurate, up to date and isn’t redundant**
- **Resume highlights can be skimmed in less than 15 seconds**

✓ Parts of a resume

1 Contact information

- Contains name, email, and phone number
- Address and LinkedIn profile link are optional

2 Education

- Includes school, location, expected degree, graduation date (month, year)
- **List Michigan State University information first!**
- High school should be deleted after first year of college

3 Experience: both paid and unpaid

- Includes job title, company name, city, state, dates (month-month, year)
- Contains short bulleted statements, starting with action verbs that go beyond listing job duties
- For more on writing bullet points, turn to pages 34-35

4 Activities/Leadership:

- Focuses on activities that suggest you are well-rounded: teamwork, creativity, volunteering, leadership, interests

5 Skills/Certifications:

- ▶ e.g., computer/technical, language, special trainings, etc
- Includes your level of skill (e.g., proficient, basic knowledge, some training)
- Avoids listing soft-skills that are hard to measure (e.g., good listener, hard worker, quick learner)

basic college resume

Every Spartan needs a resume!

1

Spartan Spartan

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East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 582-5555 • spartan1@msu.edu

2

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Communication

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

May 2021

High School Diploma

North Street High School, City, MI

- Class Salutatorian
- National Honor Society Scholar (2016, 2017)
- 125 cumulative community service hours

May 2017

3

Experience

Senior Class Vice-President

North Street High Student Government, City, MI

August 2016–May 2017

- Served as official liaison between Student Government and NSH administration
- Facilitated monthly senior class meetings with 25 student government members
- Spearheaded “Fall Carnival” fundraiser that raised over \$1,900 for senior class trip
- Oversaw 10 colleagues on Homecoming and Prom Planning Committees

Youth Counselor

North Street YMCA, City, MI

May 2015–August 2017

- Supervised 35 youth campers ranging from 7 to 10 years old
- Coordinated daily activities for campers to keep them active and engaged
- Planned an end of summer event for 200 campers with a group of 4 other counselors

Assistant Trainer, Crew Member

McDonalds, City, MI

October 2014–May 2015

- Received 2 ‘Outstanding Customer Service’ awards for performance
- Trained between 2 and 5 new Crew Members each quarter, providing ongoing coaching and mentoring during their initial months on the job
- Collaborated with a team of 5 to provide efficient service in a fast-paced environment

4

Activities

Member, North Street High Track Team, City, MI

January 2016–May 2017

- Committed 10 hours per week to practice and to developing team-building skills

Volunteer, Boys & Girls Club, City, MI

June 2015–August 2015

- Worked with youth between 3-5 hours per week on interpersonal skills and relationships

5

Certifications/Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Adobe Photoshop
- Certified in CPR/First Aid

resume space allocation

As a general rule, follow this formula to determine how much space you should give to specific kinds of content:

- Name and contact info: 5%
- Education: 10–15%
- Relevant experience and/or skills: 75%
- Other (activities, awards, memberships, computer skills, interests, etc.): 5–10%

Bullet points & action verbs!

✓ Creating an evidence-based resume

- ▶ Your resume is a **marketing tool** that can help you “sell” yourself in a competitive job market.
- ▶ You should **create** an evidence-based resume to:
 - **Evaluate your experiences** to demonstrate your skills, accomplishments and potential
 - **Gain confidence** because you understand who you are and can share what you have to offer
 - **Provide specific proof** to the resume reader that you are a great candidate for the job!

✓ Write strong evidence-based bullet points using the **WHO** Method

- **W- What** did you do (tasks/project)
- **H- How** did you do the work (skills, strategies, methods, tools, techniques, attitudes)
- **O- Outcomes** associated with the work (results, impact, contribution, intention, scope)

Action verbs should start all of your resume bullet points. **Organized here by skill areas**, these action verbs are dynamic words that will provide greater evidence of your skills.

ANALYSIS

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| analyzed | determined | prescribed |
| ascertained | devised | prioritized |
| assessed | diagnosed | projected |
| compared | estimated | questioned |
| computed | evaluated | rated |
| conceptualized | examined | recommended |
| concluded | forecasted | researched |
| confirmed | formulated | scrutinized |
| critiqued | integrated | studied |
| deciphered | investigated | substantiated |
| deliberated | justified | synthesized |
| | measured | validated |
| | negotiated | verified |

COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| addressed | explained |
| apprised | informed |
| arbitrated | interpreted |
| attested | lectured |
| authored | marketed |
| clarified | persuaded |
| communicated | presented |
| composed | promoted |
| convinced | publicized |
| corresponded | queried |
| drafted | reported |
| edited | spoke |
| | summarized |
| | translated |
| | wrote |

INITIATIVE

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| accelerated | coordinated | increased | multiplied |
| accomplished | created | initiated | overhauled |
| achieved | dedicated | innovated | pioneered |
| acquired | demonstrated | inspired | revamped |
| advanced | enriched | introduced | revised |
| bolstered | established | launched | spearheaded |
| boosted | expanded | minimized | stimulated |
| built | expedited | mobilized | suggested |
| | implemented | modernized | updated |
| | improved | modified | upgraded |

Don't forget!
Pay attention to the verb tense used describing each experience.

CREATIVITY

brainstormed
constructed
designed
engineered
envisioned
fabricated
illustrated
produced
shaped
visualized

ORGANIZATION

arranged
assembled
budgeted
calculated
catalogued

centralized
charted
classified
collected
compiled
consolidated
correlated
indexed
linked
orchestrated

organized
oriented
planned
processed
purchased
recorded
regulated
scheduled
systematized
tabulated

PROBLEM-SOLVING

aided
alleviated
ameliorated
augmented
counseled
customized
debugged
eased
elevated
enlarged
extended

extracted
finalized
fulfilled
generated
identified
interceded
invented
lightened
polished
procured
reconciled
rectified
reduced

refined
reformed
rehabilitated
reinforced
rejuvenated
relieved
remedied
remodeled
repaired
restored
retrieved
revitalized
revived

settled
solicited
solved
streamlined
strengthened
supplemented
transformed

accommodated
adapted
adjusted
altered
amended

balanced
converted
grew
improvised
tailored

FLEXIBILITY

LEADERSHIP

administered
advised
allocated
allowed
appointed
approved
assigned
authorized
chaired
coached
delegated
designated

directed
educated
elicited
employed
empowered
enabled
encouraged
endorsed
enhanced
facilitated
fostered
founded
guided
hired

influenced
instructed
interviewed
judged
led
moderated
monitored
motivated
officiated
recruited
sanctioned
supervised
trained

Action verbs are also
for **cover letters**
& **interviews!**

TEAMWORK

assisted
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
mediated
participated
partnered

... AND MORE!

acted
activated
added
admitted
apportioned
appraised
approximated
attained

audited
certified
commissioned
committed
consented
contracted
disbursed
dispatched
displayed
enlisted
excelled
executed

exercised
familiarized
figured
guaranteed
indicated
instituted
involved
issued
licensed
maintained
operated
performed

prepared
programmed
realized
related
reserved
reviewed
satisfied
screened
secured
served
set
smoothed

sought
specified
submitted
surveyed
sustained
traced
transacted
transmitted
valued

More resume tips

- ▶ **Resumes are most often skimmed** in seconds (and read more carefully later at interview)
- ▶ Employers are most interested in **what you've done recently**
- ▶ **Resume "keywords"** can be found on job descriptions and employer websites
- ▶ **Use active, skills-based words** in bullet points

creating bullet points: the WHO method

Most employers can look at job titles and accurately guess **WHAT** you did. What excites them more is to know **HOW** you completed the work and the **OUTCOMES** of your contributions.

Before: Provided quality customer service

After: Expediently resolved customer concerns to maintain positive relationships and brand loyalty

How: Focus on the outcomes ("positive relationships and brand loyalty") to show your impact

Before: Worked with a diverse group of people

After: Overcame cultural and language barriers with 30+ students by remaining open and encouraging

How: Instead of concentrating on what you did, emphasize your strategies for overcoming challenges

Avery Black

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Education

Michigan State University; East Lansing, MI May 2018
 Bachelor of Arts, Psychology
 • Minors: Education and Spanish
 • GPA: 3.91; Dean's List (all eligible semesters); National Society of Collegiate Scholars

Comparative Cultures in Ecuador; Quito, Ecuador May 2015 - Aug. 2015
 Study Abroad Program Participant
 • Participated in an 8 credit intensive Spanish language and cultural immersion experience
 • Volunteered at a local orphanage, built a new common room, and engaged 3-7 children weekly
 • Strengthened cross-cultural skills by building relationships with on-site instructors and local residents

Experience

NorthWest Initiative; Lansing, MI June 2017 - Present
 Community Outreach Intern
 • Recruit 4 nonprofit organizations and 5 business partners to sponsor and attend workshops and events aimed at building healthy communities through youth engagement and food system development
 • Maintain database of 500 contacts, update events website regularly, and create promotional plans
 • Oversee team of 12 volunteers for event set-up, registration, food service, and take-down
 • Compile conference evaluation reports and make recommendations to Executive Director

J.Crew; East Lansing, MI December 2015 - Present
 Sales Associate
 • Assist manager in training new hires, on-boarding 15 new associates to date
 • Memorize promotions and special order processes to provide expertise for customers
 • Independently processed credit cards, cash transactions, bank deposits, and other store reports accurately
 • Expediently resolved customer concerns to maintain positive relationships and brand loyalty

Michigan House of Representatives; Lansing, MI January 2015 - May 2015
 Office Support Intern
 • Composed 10-12 formal responses to constituents each week on legislative-related topics
 • Used Democratic Party database to maintain constituent contacts on local, state, and federal concerns
 • Addressed high volume calls (20-30 daily), prepared presentations for weekly committee hearings, and managed office's digital and physical records, ensuring accuracy and professionalism on all fronts

Refugee Development Center; East Lansing, MI August 2015 - December 2015
 Volunteer High School Mentor/Tutor
 • Overcame cultural and language barriers with 30+ students by remaining open and encouraging
 • Adapted lessons and activities to students' learning styles and varying levels of proficiency
 • Coached students weekly in reading, writing, pronunciation, and cultural practices

Additional Experience
 Nanny for middle-school student with special needs; Holt, MI March 2016 - Present
 Spanish Tutor/Mentor at Southside Community Coalition; Lansing, MI Oct. 2015 - Dec. 2015

Skills Profile

- **Language:** English (native); Spanish (intermediate)
- **Technical:** Photoshop (beginner); Excel & Google Sheets (intermediate); website updates (beginner)

- ▶ **Your first draft: Just write something down** (then edit to make it better)
- ▶ For most jobs, **colored paper, funky fonts and fancy graphics aren't going to help your resume** to stand out in a good way
- ▶ Your resume should **look clean, familiar and professional**
- ▶ Save your **resume as a PDF** (unless an employer asks for a Word doc)

Taylor Levine

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EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Human Biology
Michigan State University | Lyman Briggs College | East Lansing, MI
May 2019

- Minor in Bioethics

EXPERIENCE

Research Technician
MSU Environmental Health & Safety Lab | East Lansing, MI
Sep. 2017 - Present

- Perform diagnostic testing on fume hoods throughout over 50 MSU laboratories
- Determine cubic feet per minute and face velocities of air ducts as well as room pressurization and satisfactory standards for lab and fume hood safety
- Record data from testing and evaluations using Excel and provide reports to laboratory managers
- Establish and maintain both written and oral communication between lab director and senior industrial hygienist
- Collaborate with 3 coworkers to create graphs, images, and other files used in staff training
- Certification in Chemical Hygiene, Laboratory Safety, and Hazardous Waste Management

Resident Assistant, Holmes Hall
MSU Residence Education and Housing Services | East Lansing, MI
Aug. 2017 - Present

- Develop programs for social outreach and community development for over 1,000 residents
- Administer course and career guidance for first and second-year undergraduate students
- Resident Assistant of the Year, spring 2017

Emergency Room Student Volunteer
Beaumont Health Systems | Troy, MI
May 2017 – Aug. 2017

- Recognized for exceeding performance expectations and taking initiative
- Learned to work and adapt in a fast-paced environment while assisting health care providers
- Communicated with triage nurse regarding changes in the severity of patients' symptoms to provide them with a comfortable and safe environment while waiting to see a physician

Participant
MSU Alternative Spring Break Program | Camden, New Jersey
Spring 2016

- Developed an increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation of cultural differences and socio-economic backgrounds
- Completed over 60 service hours with organizations such as New Vision Homeless Shelter, The Francis House for HIV/AIDS, and Hope Network

Front Desk Receptionist
MSU Career Services | East Lansing, MI
Aug. 2015 – July 2017

- Compiled over 200 new job postings into database using attention to detail to ensure accuracy
- Communicated with diverse clientele including students, staff, professors, and employers
- Utilized problem solving skills to remain professional when responding to stress-related situations

AFFILIATIONS

- Human Biology Club: Volunteer Chair
Sep. 2016 - Present
- Read to Succeed: Volunteer Tutor
Mar. 2017 - Present
- Girl Scouts of America: Lifetime Member
Jan. 2014 - Present

Final checklist

- ▶ Leave out personal information
- ▶ Use extreme caution when sharing your GPA
- ▶ List experiences with **most recent first**
- ▶ **use bullet points**
- ▶ **Use active, skills-based words** in bullet points

bullet points using the WHO method

Before: Input data and provide reports

After: Record data from testing and evaluations using Excel and provide reports to laboratory managers

How: Communicate your skills gained by describing the "tools" used to complete your work

.....
Before: Assisted supervisor by compiling job postings

After: Compiled over 200 new job postings into database using attention to detail to ensure accuracy

How: Add scope to your resume by sharing numbers ("200") that provide proof of your impact

Online applications

Many employers are required to have you complete an online application (in addition to your resume)

Use the same care and attention to detail as you would when writing your resume

Save your resume as a Word doc to make it easier to cut and paste in the online application fields

- ▶ Avoid outdated contact info
- ▶ **No photos of yourself**
- ▶ **No Objective** statement
- ▶ Don't write in paragraphs
- ▶ Don't include: "References available on request"
- ▶ Stick with **black type on white paper**

For more Resume Samples: CareerNetwork.msu.edu/SampleResumes

Resume sample & references

Amanda K. Getajob

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EDUCATION

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI May 2018
 Eli Broad College of Business
Bachelor of Arts, Supply Chain Management
Minor in International Business
 Major GPA: 3.75/4.00; Cumulative GPA: 3.35/4.00
 Sparty Foundation Scholarship Recipient; Dean's List: 3 Semesters

International Business Study Abroad, Western Europe May 2016

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

General Motors, Detroit, MI June – Aug. 2016
Supply Chain Intern

- Increased next-day deliveries of dealer referral orders by 50 lines per month, impacting 100 dealers in North America through the creation of a new order pulling process
- Executed a regional \$100,000 materials budget to reduce the expense of required materials
- Managed relationships with 3 suppliers to ensure a collaborative relationship and maximize the interactions
- Presented potential cost-savings plan to 12 upper level executives for further review

EY, Chicago, IL May – Aug. 2015
Core Tax Intern

- Collaborated with a team of 6 interns and professional staff to complete compliance work, finishing 4 weeks ahead of the budgeted schedule
- Provided tax compliance services on an international, federal, state, and local to multiple clients, including trusts and multinational corporations
- Developed an Excel workbook to expedite the preparation process resulting in time saving in excess of 150 hours

OTHER RELATED EXPERIENCE

Michigan State University Culinary Services, East Lansing, MI Jan. 2015 – Present
Student Cook

- Provided courteous and prompt customer service to guests in a dining hall for approximately 7,500
- Attained full responsibility for completion of daily projects of front-kitchen team and supervision of 4 other co-workers in the front kitchen
- Mentored a novice prep chef in basics of food preparation until she attained sufficient competence to be independent contributor to team
- Ensured all service and preparation areas were kept clean and met sanitation standards

Lindow's Lawns, Milford, IL Summers 2014, 2015
Exterior Designer

- Increased revenue by over 9% by implementing "Sunday Special" lawn care promotion
- Designed and implemented a training program to onboard 4 new staff members
- Managed and held responsibility for balancing daily cash flow of \$300

ACTIVITIES & SKILLS

MSU Supply Chain Management Association, *Vice President* Aug. 2016 – Present
Phi Chi Theta, Professional Business Fraternity, *Member* Aug. 2014 – Present
Deloitte Financial Accounting Case Competition, *Participant* Aug. 2015 – June 2016
Chinese and English Language, *Fluent*
Bloomberg Certified in Equities and Commodities