CREATING A RESUME

Your resume is an important marketing tool that communicates your experience, education, skills and accomplishments to a potential employer. The goal of a well-written resume is to help you move onto the next stage of the job or internship search -- the interview.

The Process of Developing a Resume

Sometimes the hardest part of developing a resume is starting the process. Here is a simple "checklist" outlining the process of creating an effective and professional resume:

- Gather information – names, places and dates of employment, education.
- Assess your skills and experiences related to the type of position(s) you are seeking.
- Outline your resume and organize effectively.
- Review and edit; ask for feedback and revise accordingly.
- Continue to revisit your resume and revise throughout your academic and professional career.

What Are The Common Elements In The Resume?

There are basic elements that should be included on each resume you prepare - these have been indicated with an asterisk (*) below. Other categories will depend upon your individual experiences and skills:

Heading* - Include your name, address and phone number. If you check your e-mail regularly, then include it as well. You may indicate a present and permanent address, if appropriate.

Objective – An objective can bring focus to the resume by indicating the type of position you are seeking, whether it is an internship, part-time or full-time position. It also shows your areas of career interest or goals, and sets the tone for the remainder of the resume.

Education* - Begin with your most recent education. Include:
- Name of college or university and location
- Degree to be earned (Bachelor's, Master's)
- Date you will graduate or anticipate graduating (month & year)
- Your major(s), emphasis area(s), and minor(s)

Indicate your GPA if it will demonstrate positive academic performance (generally 3.0 or above). You may chose to include your cumulative GPA and/or the GPA in your major. If you will not be including an Honors/Awards section, you could also include your academic achievements, such as semester honors, or if you will receive degree honors (Cum Laude, Summa Cum Laude).

Related Course Work - List related undergraduate or graduate courses, research papers, seminars, or independent projects that are relevant to the type of job you are seeking. This can also demonstrate projects you have completed related to your desired field. If you have extensive related experience, you might not need to include this section.

Experience* - Describe jobs, internships, student teaching, assistantships, clinical work, volunteer work, and research projects. For each experience, include job title, name of organization, location (city and state) and dates. Emphasize experience most closely related to the kind of work you seek. Include skills used, scope of responsibilities and a description of your accomplishments. Do not use narrative; do not use the personal pronoun "I." Instead, use short phrases beginning with action verbs to highlight your skills and present yourself in a dynamic way. Be consistent with your verb tenses and avoid phrases such as "duties included" or "responsible for".

Other Categories - Include additional categories if aspects you wish to indicate about your related skills, education or experiences do not fit into the above-mentioned categories. Possible headings might include:

- Certifications
- Honors and Awards
- Clinical Experiences
- Language Skills
- Computer Languages
- Committees

- Military Service
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Personal Strengths
- Technical Skills
- Professional Memberships
- Publications

References
Do not list the names of individual references on your resume. Create a separate reference page. Select individuals who can attest to your work ethic, academic performance, skills and abilities. Ask individuals to serve as references prior to listing on your reference page. The statement "References available upon request" may be placed at the conclusion of your resume if desired.

How Do I Organize the Resume and Select a Format?
Organize your resume so your most recent and relevant information is viewed first. There are three basic resume formats from which to choose. You will want to select a format that will best allow you to convey your education, skills and experience as they relate to the position(s) to which you are applying and do so in a well-organized and easy to read manner.

The **chronological resume** format lists your education and experience beginning with your most recent. One advantage of this format is that it is easy for an employer to follow your work history. The chronological format also has some disadvantages. It can reveal employment gaps and might put an undeserved emphasis on areas you want to minimize. Also, skills are sometimes difficult to spotlight.

The **functional resume** (or skills-based resume) lists your experience under designated skill areas. One distinct advantage to this format is that it allows you to emphasize the skills you possess and you can downplay positions that are not related to current career goals. It also allows you to emphasize professional growth, and helps to camouflage a spotty employment record. A disadvantage to this format is that some employers will want to see additional work history information. Also, you may not be able to effectively highlight companies or organizations for which you have worked. This format is not recommended for teacher candidates or for recent graduates unless they have a great deal of related work experience.

The **combination resume** uses aspects of both the chronological format -- by listing work experience by dates -- and the functional format -- by highlighting experience under skill headings. The combination format allows you to stress your preferred and most relevant skill areas, and at the same time satisfies the employer's desire to know names and dates of your work history. The combination format has one distinct disadvantage -- it takes longer to read, and an employer can lose interest unless it is very succinctly written and attractively organized.

How Long Should My Resume Be?
Your resume should be long enough to highlight your related skills, education and experience in a concise, yet complete manner. Some individuals can accomplish this through a one-page resume; others may need a two-page resume to convey the extent of their related skills and experience. Keep your resume to two pages at most, as an employer will not want to read more than that. Remember to edit critically, and keep your resume short and easy to scan.

Saving and Printing Your Resume
The key is to have a professional looking resume. Career Services recommends using a blank Microsoft Word document (or equivalent word processing program) to create your resume. Avoid using templates provided in word processing programs, as many of them are not tailored

to meet the needs of a college student or recent graduate. Use a quality laser printer and print your resume on good quality, 8 ½" x 11" bond paper. Copies can also be made at a print shop. Be sure to print on one side of the paper only and do not staple the pages of your resume together.

Items Not To Include On Resume
- **Present Date**: Include in a cover letter.
- **Picture**: Provide only if it is essential for a job, such as in modeling or theatre.
- **Race, Religion or Political Affiliation**: Include only if it is the main thrust of your resume or a bona-fide occupational qualification.
- **Personal Data**: Height, weight, marital status.
- **Salary History or Requirements**: If this is requested from an employer, state your salary history or requirements in your cover letter.
- **References**: As noted before, develop a separate reference page.

Submitting Your Resume
- Each time you submit a resume, include a cover letter. Refer to Career Services' "Writing Professional Letters" information on our website to learn more about the importance of a cover letter and its content.
- When mailing your documents, do not staple your resume, cover letter or other application materials together. It is best to not fold the resume or cover letter; therefore, use a 9" x 12" envelope.
- If you are electronically submitting a resume, make sure to verify whether your format meets the employer's requirements. This can vary depending upon whether you are uploading to the employer's website or application system, submitting through an on-line system, such as Handshake, or emailing your resume as an attachment. In many cases, converting your resume to PDF format will ensure the employer views it as you intended.
- Every time you submit a resume and cover letter, make a record of it so you can refer to this list for future reference.

Positive Aspects of High Impact Resumes
- Visually appealing, easy-to-read, concise and has a consistent format
- Clearly indicates your career aspirations and goals
- Focuses on the employer's need and states the skills, education and experience you offer
- Uses descriptive action verbs
- Emphasizes job-related skills and transferable skills, not only past or present job duties
- Highlights accomplishments (i.e. "…increased sales 14%", or "promoted to team leader")

Most Common Resume Pitfalls
- Too long and contains excessive, unnecessary content
- Too short, crowded and condensed
- Poor layout and physical appearance, poor quality of printing
- Use of narrative ("I")
- Misspelled words, poor grammar or punctuation
- Lengthy phrases, sentences, and paragraphs
- Too many dates or numbers, which make it difficult to read
- Dishonest or lacks credibility and content
- Content does not support objective
- Critical categories missing (i.e., "Where's the Education section?")

- Hard to understand or requires too much interpretation (unclear objective)
- Unexplained time gaps
- Does not convey accomplishments

Resume Critique Checklist
1. Does the resume appear neat, organized and professional? Is the text balanced on the page? Have you avoided having your text cramped or crowded onto the page?
2. Are spelling, grammatical and typographical errors eliminated?
3. Could the resume tell the same story if it were shortened?
4. Does the resume avoid generalities and focus on specific information about education, experience and skills?
5. Do examples qualify and quantify experiences? (i.e. "Manage a $5000 activities budget." or "Counseled 25 disadvantaged 12 year old students.")
6. Is your objective supported by the contents of the resume?
7. Is relevant experience adequately discussed and is unessential information de-emphasized or deleted?
8. Is your information highlighted in a consistent manner using indentation, bold type, underlining, or capitalization?
9. Is your most recent education listed first?
10. Do your statements start with action verbs?
11. Are you sure your resume is not exaggerated?
12. Have you eliminated data such as your social security number, weight, height, age, marital status, religion, and race?
13. Have you eliminated high school information? (*Exception: College freshmen*)

In Summary
Employers don't read resumes ... they skim them. Think of your resume as a marketing tool or piece of advertising rather than as a comprehensive data sheet. Margins, spacing and bullets can make it easily skimmed.

The one who gets the job is not always the one who can do the job best, but who knows best how to get the job!
Each detail of this process should have your meticulous attention since people are often screened out on the basis of a poorly written resume and/or cover letter.

We are here to help! Remember, the staff in Career Services are available to review your resume and help you best market yourself to employers. Call the office to set up a time to have your resume critiqued.

Your resume is a reflection of you – your skills, education and experience. Make certain you spend the time and effort to develop a professional document that will help you in your job or internship application process. Remember…. "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression!"

Resume Samples
Career Services has posted examples of different resume formats and those representing various majors. There is also an example of a references page. View these on the Career Services website at www.uwgb.edu/careers

APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLES OF ACTION VERBS & DESCRIPTIVE WORDS
Here is a sample of some action verbs and descriptive words that you might consider using on your resume. For more ideas, view the thesaurus option available in most word processing programs.

ACTION VERBS

accelerated	accomplished	achieved	adapted	advised
administered	analyzed	appraised	approved	assessed
awarded	bolstered	briefed	budgeted	caused
communicated	compared	completed	composed	conceived
conducted	controlled	convinced	coordinated	counseled
created	delegated	demonstrated	designed	determined
developed	directed	dramatized	earned	effected
elected	eliminated	encouraged	enjoyed	enlarged
established	evaluated	excelled	expanded	expedited
financed	forecast	formulated	founded	gathered
generated	guided	implemented	improvised	identified
included	increased	influenced	instructed	interpreted
interviewed	launched	lead	lectured	maintained
managed	motivated	negotiated	observed	organized
originated	oversaw	participated	performed	persuaded
planned	prepared	processed	provided	qualified
raised	rated	recognized	recommended	reconciled
recruited	reduced	reorganized	rescued	revealed
reviewed	revised	scheduled	scouted	simplified
solved	specified	spoke	streamlined	structured
submitted	suggested	supervised	supported	tabulated
taught	trained	translated	transformed	traveled
tutored	updated	unified	utilized	visualized

SELF-DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

active	adaptable	aggressive	alert	ambitious
analytical	assertive	attentive	broad-minded	capable
competent	competitive	confident	conscientious	consistent
constructive	creative	dependable	descriptive	determined
diplomatic	disciplined	discreet	economical	efficient
energetic	enterprising	enthusiastic	extroverted	fair
friendly	helpful	honest	imaginative	independent
industrious	inventive	logical	loyal	mature
methodical	objective	optimistic	opportunistic	organized
original	patient	perceptive	personable	pleasant
positive	practical	precise	productive	prudent
quick	rational	realistic	reflective	reliable
resourceful	respective	responsible	self-confident	self-reliant
sensible	sense-of-humor	sincere	sophisticated	stable
successful	supportive	systematic	tactful	talented
teachable	tolerant t	rustworthy	versatile	will relocate