**Great Resumes = Better Interviews**

A strong resume is as important as a good handshake. Both identify you to an employer as a competitive candidate. A great resume will allow the employer to see how well your skills fit for their job or internship. Most employers value customer service skills. If you have customer service experience, be sure to include examples of these transferable skills. Shaping a resume by sharing how you have demonstrated your transferable skills is not hard to do if you use the following guide and template. Studies show managers spend about *seven seconds* looking at resume before deciding if a candidate is a good fit for the position. Your attention to details can help you be competitive in the application process. Career Services staff is available to help answer questions or polish your resume before submitting. Creating a strong and targeted resume is doable – especially if you follow this guide.

Resume Formatting Tips

* Resume should fill the page, but not appear crowded or cramped with spacing and margins consistent
* Name should be in large, easily readable font (16-20pt)
* Font should be consistent throughout the resume
	+ Use bold, italics, and different size font to add visual interest
* Write your resume in bullet point format
* Following your name and contact information – always begin with a section (Summary) that lists experience/examples related to the position for which you are applying. These experiences can come from any area of your life including: class, ongoing volunteer work, projects, student organizations, internships, part or full-time jobs. This is the most important section and must be shaped for each new application to ensure your skills fit their position.

Bullet point format

* Writing your resume in bullet points allows employers to review it quickly, and gives you the opportunity to highlight your best skills easily
* Follow the simple **bullet point formula**: Action word + two of five
	+ Start with an *Action Word* (see attached list for ideas)
	+ Add detail by adding *two of five* (who, what, when, where, how)
	+ Include keywords from the job posting
	+ Use consistent punctuation: use periods at the end of every bullet point or do not use periods at all

Examples:

* Developed social media content for community events

 (Action Word) (What) (Who)

* Monitored program participants during outdoor activity

 (Action Word) (Who) (Where)

1

**Frequently Asked Questions**

* *What if I don’t have recent experience that relates to the job I’m applying for?*
	+ That is okay! Many employers look for **transferable skills** on a candidate’s resume. These are abilities that can be applied to any job; like good communication skills, customer services skills, and work ethic. Research the transferable skills in the field, and define ways you have developed those skills in your previous work experience. Google *Transferable Skills*
* *Should I use full sentences while writing my resume?*
	+ Not if you are creating a general resume. You should use bullet points, and this format makes it easier for an employer to quickly read over your resume, and allows you to highlight your best skills the most efficiently. If you are creating a specialized resume (for example, a resume for a federal job), pay attention to what the preferred formatting is- you may need to convert your bullet points into full sentences.
* *Should I include references?*
	+ Do not include your references on your resume. They should be listed on a separate reference sheet that can be provided at request. Make sure you ask if someone prior to listing them as a reference, and let them know when you share their information with a potential employer. Share your resume and the position descriptions for any jobs to which you are applying to your references, so they can be prepared to discuss your skills that would make you a great candidate for each position.
* *Should I research the company before I place my application?*
	+ Yes, you will be better prepared to reflect important pieces of company information if you know about the company’s mission, goals, history, and products/services.
* *What are keywords in a resume? Why are they important?*
	+ Keywords are skills and abilities from the posting which match your experience. Keywords for you to include are your specific skills and knowledge that are also identified by the employer in the position description. The employer, or the employers Applicant Tracking System (ATS) will screen for these important words/skills.

Google *Keywords for Resumes*

* *What is an Applicant Tracking System?*
	+ Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are software packages designed to streamline the recruiting and hiring process for businesses. As an applicant, it is important to know that these programs scan and process your resume before it ever makes its way to a human. Using keywords, having a clearly formatted resume, and avoiding using any kind of graphics can help your resume pass the ATS and move on to a hiring manager.

Remember – a successful resume can be followed by a request to interview. Don’t wait to begin preparation for an interview! Checkout ***Interview*** tips as soon as you submit your first resume.

**Resume Checklist**

Before submitting, make sure your resume checks all of the boxes

**Formatting**

* Name in large, easily readable font (16-20pt)
* Information fills page, but does not look crowded
* One font used
* Consistent use of bold and italics
* Free of spelling errors (proofread several times!)
* Uniform spacing and margins
* If you are submitting your resume online, formatting is ATS friendly (Google ATS if you are unsure)
	+ File saved as Word Document AND as a PDF – submit a PDF if possible, save the word doc for revisions
	+ Standard font used (Recommended Arial, Georgia, Tahoma, Trebuchet, or Verdana)
	+ No pictures or graphics
	+ Broken into simple, defined sections (Summary of Qualifications, Education, Experience, etc.)

**Summary of Qualifications** - This is the most important section of your resume. It can provide a detailed snapshot of your experience to highlight why you are the best candidate for the position. This section should be reshaped each time you submit your resume to explain what you bring to the specific position/employer.

* List your strongest, most relevant examples of your experience, transferable skills, and job related skills, from any area of your life including: class, on-going volunteer work, projects, internships, part or full-time jobs
* Includes keywords from position description for which you are applying
* Written in bullet point format

**Experience**- Use this area to list your work or internship experience. If you have a lot of work history, only include the experience most relevant to the position for which you are applying.

* Most recent job/ internship experience listed first
* Only most relevant experience listed if work history is extensive
* Employer, city, state, job title, and employment dates are included for each job or internship experience
* Keywords from the position description are incorporated into previous experience
* Job duties listed in bullet point format using the formula
* Duties and accomplishments listed in order of relevance to position being applied to
* Bullet points quantified when possible (Ex. Handled an average of $4,100 worth of sales per day)
* On-going volunteer work is listed if activity is regular and over a period of at least several months

**Education**- This is the area to list your educational experience. Only include your high school if there is sufficient room for the information.

* Most recent institution attended listed first
* Each school listed has degree, graduation year, and major/minor
* GPA is listed only if it is above a 3.0 (if listing a program GPA instead of cumulative, that is specified)
* Class titles and course projects relevant to the position applied for are listed in bullet point format

|  |
| --- |
| First Name **last name****Email · Phone** |

**Summary of qualifications**

* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Honors/Awards
* Professional Certifications/Memberships
* Computer Skills

**Experience**

***Job Title Enter/Exit Dates***

***Name of Employer City, State***

* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point

***Job Title Enter/Exit Dates***

***Name of Employer City, State***

* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point

***Job Title Enter/Exit Dates***

***Name of Employer City, State***

* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point
* Bullet point

**Education**

***Bachelor of Science – Business Administration graduation date***

***College XXXXXX, IL***