

Formatting

Design—Do NOT use the templates in Word to create your resume. Two of them are designed very badly, and all of them insert special codes that are difficult to delete when you try to make changes to your resume. Instead, follow the design rules suggested here to create your very own resume. Some sample resumes are also included on the class website for your reference.

Length—If you are an undergraduate student or a recent graduate, your resume should be limited to one page. Your references should appear on a separate page (but they are not necessary for this assignment).

Paper—Use white, light cream, or very pale gray paper only. Do not use colored, textured, scented, or flecked paper. Do not fold or cut your resume into shapes.

Margins—Use 1” or 1.25” margins in both your cover letter and your resume.

Headers—Use the same header on your cover letter, your resume, and your list of references, in case they get separated from each other. You should design a nice-looking header for this assignment.

Email address—If you include an email address, be certain it sounds professional. Avoid obscene or suggestive terms in e-mail addresses.

Bullets—Try to use bulleted lists in SOME of your sections, but not all of them. All bulleted points must use parallel grammatical construction. In other words, each item must match the others grammatically. If you start one item with a verb, all the others must also start with a verb. (This is true for all writing, including PowerPoint presentations and lab reports.)

Incomplete sentences—The resume is one writing assignment in this class for which you do NOT use complete sentences. Also avoid using “I” or any form of the first person. Start your sentences with action verbs instead of subjects.

Design Principles

Font—For both the cover letter and the resume, you should use the standard 12pt Time New Roman font in your main text. For the resume only, you should choose another font for your section headings, and then use bolding, underlining, italics, different sizes, etc. to differentiate your sections. All first-level sections should use the same font and style, all second-level headings should be the same, etc.

White space—In document design, you should leave about 20% of your page as white space. Otherwise, the document looks too crowded and hard to read.

Balance—Try to vertically and horizontally balance your resume. In other words, avoid having too much text on one side or the other. If one section contains a list that takes up the right side of the page, then spread your next section across the page by using paragraph form.

Sections

Do NOT include more than five sections on your resume. Choose from the following categories, and *put them in the same order* as they appear here.

Objective—This is optional. If you include it, don't make your statement too broad ("To get a job that pays well") or too specific ("To become the night-shift greeter at the Sandy Wal-Mart"). Limit yourself to one sentence and don't go into your lifetime goals.

Education—List your degrees in *reverse chronological order*, with most recent first. If your degree is pending, state your expected completion date. Always list degree and major (B.A., Accounting), and where you studied (name of school and city, state). DO NOT list high school experience. Once you have college credits under your belt, no one cares about your high school degree.

Experience—List work experience in *reverse chronological order*, with most recent first. Include the following elements IN THIS ORDER: job title, company name, location, duration of employment (include months as well as years, e.g., May 2004 – present). Fully describe everything you did on the job, as well as what you learned, emphasizing the most impressive thing first. Think hard. Spin yourself positively without exaggerating. For example, if you flipped burgers at a fast-food joint, you might say, "Worked as part of a food-preparation team." Every sentence in this section should start with an action verb. (See the next page for suggestions.)

Skills and/or Qualifications—This is also optional, but if you choose to include this section, list three or four highlights that are specifically targeted toward the job for which you are applying. Find "key words" in your job ad and include them here. Try not to be too vague ("Detail-oriented") and instead connect your skill with something you actually did, such as, "Learned to focus on details while re-stocking inventory shelves." Or, if you choose, you may start all items in this section with an adjective that describes what you ARE rather than what you DID (i.e., "Fluent in Spanish. Proficient in word processing and spreadsheets.")

Volunteer Experience—As with your work experience, you should list the information in the following order: your title, the organization's name, the location, and the duration of involvement. Then you should specifically explain what you did with that organization, starting all your sentences with action verbs. Don't be afraid to use church experiences, but avoid jargon that is specific to that organization. Instead of "LDS Missionary—Zone Leader," use "Volunteer Church Representative: Selected to supervise 20 fellow representatives."

Miscellaneous Sections—You should only include sections like "Hobbies and Interests" or "Computer Skills" if you are applying for a job that would directly relate to that kind of thing. Do not include any kind of information that is illegal for the employer to ask you about (including marital status, religious affiliation, citizenship, or visa status).

References—Not necessary for this assignment, but the U of U Career Center recommends that you put them on a separate page so they can be separated from your resume when the prospective employer checks them. Even though the CBC suggests to do so in their examples, NEVER put "Available upon request," as this is an extra step for the employer and he/she will most likely chuck your resume to the bottom of their list.

Action Verbs

Avoid starting your resume sentences with passive or vague verbs like “Was” or “Had.” Instead, work the following verbs into the resume wherever possible:

Accomplished	Increased
Achieved	Instituted
Administered	Interviewed
Analyzed	Introduced
Applied	Investigated
Approved	Led
Arranged	Maintained
Assisted	Managed
Authorized	Marketed
Balanced	Modified
Budgeted	Motivated
Built	Negotiated
Changed	Operated
Collected	Ordered
Communicated	Organized
Completed	Oversaw
Conceived	Participated
Concluded	Planned
Conducted	Prepared
Consolidated	Presented
Constructed	Presided
Contracted	Produced
Controlled	Purchased
Coordinated	Recommended
Created	Reported
Delegated	Researched
Designed	Revised
Determined	Scheduled
Developed	Screened
Diagnosed	Secured
Directed	Simplified
Edited	Sold
Established	Studied
Evaluated	Supervised
Forecast	Taught
Generated	Trained
Guided	Transformed
Handled	Updated
Hired	Wrote
Implemented	

On-line Resources

The U of U provides an excellent resource for you at careers.utah.edu. This site has tips for resume-writing and interviewing, and provides sample resumes for you to examine. Also, you may visit their office and receive personal help from a career counselor in designing your resume. This service is free to all U of U students.