

Create a Great Resume

The CEL guide to writing resumes includes various sample resumes to use as guides in crafting your resume. This information will get you started, but check out the website (www.stolaf.edu/services/cel) for more detailed information on writing a resume and samples to help you get started.



Tips & Hints

There are no absolute requirements in the preparation of your resume, but there are generally accepted guidelines to follow. Here are some tips and hints to help you with your creation:

- A **one-page** resume is considered ideal for college students and recent graduates. There are a few cases where a two-page resume is necessary—check with a CEL counselor to find out if two pages are right for you.
- Be consistent in your choice of font and layout. **Times, Garamond** and **Helvetica** are compact fonts and allow for more information to be presented on one page. Don't use a font size smaller than 10.
- Don't crowd your resume; aim to maintain balance between print and white space. Your resume should be uncluttered and visually appealing.
- Use **bold, bullets, italics, and underlines to highlight** but beware of looking cluttered or busy. Highlights should be used consistently and sparingly.
- Be factual and 100% honest.
- Do NOT use personal pronouns (I, we, my) in your resume. Start all statements with action verbs.
- **PROOF YOUR RESUME!** Your resume should be free of spelling errors and have perfect grammar and punctuation. Keep in mind that the resume is an example of your writing and communication skills.
- Print your resume on a **laser printer**. Use 20# bond resume paper in basic colors (white, off-white, cream, beige, or gray). If sending a cover letter and reference page, make sure they are printed on the same paper as your resume.

Content

Your resume needs to convey what you are capable of doing in the future by summarizing what you have done in the past. You can show your target audience what you can do by strategically selecting key **action verbs** and words that show **transferable skills**, as well as choosing eye-catching **headings** for various sections of your resume. As a unique individual with a distinct history all your own, you must:

- Carefully select what information to include and leave out to present and promote the image you wish to convey.
- Organize categories, focusing attention on your special competencies and qualities.
- Determine the arrangement and sequence of material to best highlight your particular “fitness” for the position.
- Begin descriptions with verbs. Avoid starting your resume descriptions with “responsible for” and “duties included”. Write in the active, rather than passive, tense!

Headings

Though you'll find many options for headings, listed below are some of the more common choices:

- Identifying and Contact Information
- Objective
- Education
- Off-Campus Study Programs
- Work and Internship Experience
- Volunteer and Community Activities
- Awards, Honors, and Distinctions
- Special Skills and Competencies
- Professional Affiliations and Activities

St. Olaf College – Center for Experiential Learning

Career Connections

Internships

Civic Engagement

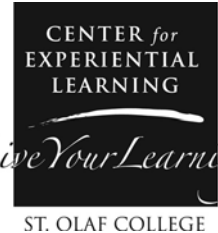
Entrepreneurship

Phone: (507) 786-3268

Fax: (507) 786-3626

www.stolaf.edu/services/cel

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Format

There are three traditional formats used in resume writing: the *chronological*, *functional*, and *combination*. Each format style is described below. Choose the format that will best highlight your background.

- **Chronological Resume:** The chronological resume lists experiences under each heading in reverse chronological order, listing the most recent first. This is the style one typically thinks of when contemplating a resume. The chronological format works well if the majority of your past experiences directly relate to the type of position/program you are seeking.
- **Functional Resume:** The functional resume is designed to emphasize transferable skills and related accomplishments while de-emphasizing the specific positions you've held. It is most useful for those who lack experience directly related to their job objective yet have related transferable skills. It also works well for those seeking a career change.
- **Combination Resume:** The combination resume combines elements of both the chronological and functional formats. It stresses your skills and abilities while including a chronological listing of your experiences. The combination resumes allows the most flexibility in highlighting your background.

Layout

There are two basic options when laying out your resume: the “*two-column layout*” and the “*tuck-under layout*”. Choose one layout and use it consistently throughout your resume. Both choices are professionally recognized and allow you to highlight your capabilities utilizing any one of the three formats listed above.

Two-Column Layout:

EDUCATION St. Olaf College Northfield, MN
Majors: History and Philosophy
GPA: 3.4
Graduation: May of 2010

QUALIFICATIONS Communication Skills—strong oral and written communication abilities as a result of classroom presentations, assisting peers with writing assignments, and giving tours as a guide for the Jesse James Historical Museum.

Tuck-Under Layout:

EDUCATION
St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN Graduation: May of 2010
Major: Mathematics Concentration: Management Studies
GPA: 3.35

INTERNSHIP

Actuarial Intern, *American Memorial Life Insurance Company*, Summer 2007
Researched individual policies and determined incorrect cash values.
Recalculated correct cash values for various policies.
Daily use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, and proprietary programs.

Once you've drafted your resume, visit the CEL to have a Peer Advisor or Career Counselor review it with you!