

Resume Guide

SUNY Cortland Career Services • Van Hoesen Hall, Rm. B-5
cortland.edu/career • career.services@cortland.edu
607-753-4715

A resume is

- A personalized **marketing** tool to showcase your **skills** and **experiences** and share your **brand**
- A presentation of your accomplishments to document your strengths to an employer
- A way to encourage employers and recruiters to invite you for an interview
- A document customized to your skills, experiences, and to each job application and industry
- Diverse in layout options; there are many correct ways to construct a resume
- Typically read in 30 seconds or less; resumes are focused, career-related, and use keywords
- Organized, consistent in formatting, grammatically correct, and error-free

How you begin

- Choose a style for your resume. See Career Services for examples.
- Open a blank document in Word or Google Docs; **we do not recommend using templates.**
- Create a heading. Include your name, phone number, and email address. You may also include a link to your professional portfolio or LinkedIn profile.
- Make a list of all your experiences (e.g. education, work, volunteer, internships, campus involvement etc.)
- Organize most important first, keep it focused and career-related.

Keep your momentum

- For each experience include the following information:
 - Job title (e.g. server, sales intern, volunteer)
 - Name of the organization or school
 - The location of the organization (City, State)
 - The dates of the experience (Month, Year)

Finish strong

- Turn each experience into a statement! Each experience will have 2-4 bullet point action statements.

Four components of effective action statements

- Start with an action verb (see action verbs on page 2)
- Avoid using first person pronouns like “I” or “me” since it is already implied
- In each statement, answer at least two of the following three questions:
 - a. What did you do?
 - b. How did you do it?
 - c. What results did you get?
- Each statement should be a maximum of two lines long

Build your content

Typical resume components include a heading and sections for your education, relevant experience (paid and unpaid), other work experience, activities and involvement. Organize your categories in order of importance for the position you are seeking. For each experience on your list, turn your job duties into “action statements” that start with a verb. Your content is what sets you apart from other candidates. It is your chance to articulate your skills and accomplishments during each experience. Provide evidence of your transferable skills, such as communication, leadership, technology skills, and more. See reverse for *“Creating Action Statements.”*

What's next?

Have professionals review your resume! Most resumes require *three to four drafts* before they are polished and ready to deliver to employers. Career Services offers resume reviews for our students and alumni.

Visit Career Services during Resume Drop-in Hours, Mondays through Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m. (fall and spring semesters), or call 607-753-4715 to make an appointment with a career coach if you cannot make these hours. Document reviews are conducted in person or via Webex (linked at cortland.edu/career).

Creating Action Statements

4 Components of Effective Action Statements

- Start with an action verb (see action verbs below)
- Avoid using first person pronouns like “I” or “me” since it is already implied
- In each statement, answer at least two of the following three questions:
What did you do? How did you do it? What results did you get?
- Each statement should be a maximum of two lines long

Examples

- Designed and built Baja SAE car with a 5-member team that placed 1st in the 2012 Endurance Race
- Organized and managed a registration day breakfast event for 300 residents including food purchasing, preparation and meal service, receiving outstanding event evaluations
- Led activities for 25 middle school children at a week-long family camp program ensuring children were socially, creatively, and physically engaged
- Directed 25 events per year, including pot-lucks and educational workshops with more than 700 attendees
- Cultivated excellent long-term relationships with 13 clients, maintaining ongoing communication and facilitating solutions to address software and hardware concerns

Action Verbs

Problem Solving

Adapted	Designed	Deliberated	Initiated	Resolved
Altered	Determined	Demonstrated	Investigated	Revitalized
Corrected	Decided	Drafted	Reinforced	Satisfied
Crafted	Deciphered	Enhanced	Represented	Suggested

Helping/Teaching/Communication

Addressed	Coached	Debated	Instructed	Resolved
Advertised	Collaborated	Drafted	Liaised	Taught
Advised	Communicate	Edited	Participated	Tested
Advocated	Cultivated	Encouraged	Rehabilitated	Volunteered

Leadership

Authorized	Delegated	Executed	Led	Oversaw
Chaired	Directed	Facilitated	Mentored	Spearheaded
Coached	Encouraged	Guided	Operated	Supervised
Cultivated	Engaged	Hosted	Orchestrated	Trained

Organization

Arranged	Classified	Designed	Organized	Scheduled
Assembled	Collected	Dispatched	Planned	Secured
Cataloged	Consolidated	Housed	Programmed	Simplified
Charted	Coordinated	Logged	Retrieved	Sought

Technical/Data/Financial

Allocated	Balanced	Distributed	Formatted	Programmed
Analyzed	Budgeted	Dispatched	Interpreted	Rolled Out
Applied	Calculated	Engineered	Merged	Simulated
Assessed	Devised	Enhanced	Processed	Verified