

Resume Basics Worksheet

Did you find this worksheet helpful? Check out the Career Guide for more info:

<https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/CCPD-professional-handbook.pdf> or access CCPD's Canvas Career Collection, located on your WCU Canvas Dashboard

Sections to include on your resume:

- **Required sections:** Name & contact information, Education, Experience (work, volunteer, or other types of experiences; “experience” doesn’t have to be paid!)
- **Optional sections:** Skills, Relevant Course Projects, Campus Involvement, Leadership, Honors and Awards, Study Abroad, and Professional Organizations.

TIP: These sections can be renamed. Check pg. 21 of the Career Guide for examples!

How to format your resume:

1. **Keep it short.** Resumes should typically be one page.
2. **Make use of negative spaces.** Try not to leave large blank spaces in your resume.
3. **Use professional fonts and consider font size.** Fonts to consider include Garamond, Helvetica, Georgia, and Arial. Text size should be between 10 to 12-point font, headings should be up to 14-point font, and your name should be largest (and in bold) at 18 to 20-point font.
4. **Use boldface, italics, and underlines thoughtfully.** Too much can be distracting.
5. **Consider your margins.** Margins can be as small as 0.5” to increase space.
6. **Be consistent.** Ensure that font types and sizes, as well as where you put locations, position titles, dates, etc. are consistent throughout your resume.
7. **Consider your experiences selectively.** Showcase experiences that are relevant to whatever opportunity for which you are applying.
8. **Highlight your skills.** Do not just list your skills, show how you employ these skills through specific examples and experiences.
9. **Save your resume as a PDF.** This will allow your formatting to stay true regardless of the computer or software that your employer may use to view your materials.

Brainstorm your experiences:

List any relevant courses and projects here. Write a sentence that explains what you learned from that course or project.

List any internships, employment, volunteer work, and/or job shadowing experiences here.

List other items here such as clubs/organizations, athletics, leadership involvement, or study abroad here.

How to develop bullet points:

To describe the experiences above, use this formula:

power action verb + what you did/ learned + how/ why you did it

TIP: Look on pg. 19 of the Career Guide for a comprehensive list of power action verbs!

Example:

Skill set: Written communication skills

Supporting experience: Freelance Writer, The Western Carolinian

Basic: Wrote articles for campus newspaper

Better: Worked with team to brainstorm and write three articles monthly for The Western Carolinian, WCU's campus newspaper.

Best: Collaborated (**action verb**) with a team of six other writers and editorial staff members to brainstorm and write three timely and newsworthy articles (**what you did**) using AP style (**how**) for The Western Carolinian, WCU's bi-weekly campus newspaper.

Now you try:

Skill set:

Supporting experience:

Resume bullet:

Aim for 2-3 bullet points for each experience you want to highlight on your resume. Note, however, you don't need to give everything bullet points! Think about the experiences that are most relevant to the opportunity for which you are applying. A capstone project, for example, could take up more space on a resume than a part-time job, depending on your goals for your resume.

And remember – resume writing takes time! You might need to write several drafts before you're ready to submit. Use your resources like the Career Studio or one-on-one appointments as many times as you wish.

Bullet development guiding questions:

- Are you incorporating transferable skill sets? Industry skills?
- Who did you work with to accomplish something? How many people? Independently?
- What population were you working with/for? What ages?
- What environment were you in? Fast-paced environment? Did you travel? Were you responsible for working with other people outside of your organization?
- What computer programs or specific equipment did you use?
- What was your timeline?
- What were the outcomes of what you're describing? Did you present your findings anywhere? Did you write a report?
- What problems were you consistently solving?
- What accomplishments did you gain from the experience? Were you promoted or given more responsibility? Did you win an award or complete certification training?