Resume Writing Guide

Career Services

Workforce Innovation & Experiential Learning (WIEL) Center North Hennepin Community College

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HOW TO USE THE RESUME GUIDE

Before you begin typing your resume, you should gather important information relating to your education, skills, work history, and experience. Use the worksheets in the *Gathering Your Information* section (pages 4-10) to help you document your details and then decide what is most important and relevant to include in the resume. The resume is a snapshot of you, your accomplishments and experience. Focus on details that will help the hiring manager determine that you are a good candidate for an interview. It is also a good idea to consult a current job posting to understand preferred qualifications and to reference skills, experience and credentials using industry terminology.

Use the resume overview (pages 2-3) to help organize your information under appropriate headings. You can rename the section headings or create additional sections to best suit your personal circumstances. The sample resumes (pages 12-13) offer ideas for headings, layout and content.

Keep the following in mind as you work through this process:

- Everyone is unique and so your resume will tell your own unique story. Avoid using resume templates or copying phrases word-for-word from sample resumes. Design a resume that best meets your needs.
- Show the employer how you would be a benefit to the organization and the position you are seeking. An employer does not want to see a generic resume but wants to hear about your relevant accomplishments and experience.
- Be succinct and focused with relevant information. Rarely should a resume be more than one page.
- Writing a resume is a work in progress. Be patient do not expect to have a stellar resume at the first attempt.

Additional resume resources are provided on page 15.

RESUME OVERVIEW

The resume is a summary of your skills, experience, and education, reflecting your career goals and matching the needs of the hiring manager. It is written without using personal pronouns (such as *I, me, my*) in order to create strong fragmented sentence statements that are quickly scannable by the resume reader. There are different ways to construct a resume, but you should include most or all of the following sections, depending on your background and experience:

- 1. *Heading*. Minimally, you should provide your full name and primary telephone number with area code, and a professional-sounding email address. If you have an online portfolio such as a LinkedIn, you can include the link as long as you are keeping the information current.
- 2. Objective versus Profile Statement. You may be familiar with the use of an objective statement, where you simply state the opportunity you are seeking, such as "A position as a Bookkeeper." Current trends favor replacing the objective with a more meaningful profile, which is a broader statement highlighting a few skills, qualities and experiences that you will bring to the job. The profile should focus on key attributes required for the job and show the organization what you can do for them in the future. It differs from the objective by focusing on what you have to offer the employer rather than what the employer can do for you.
- 3. *Skills*. Highlight the key skills that you possess and that are relevant to your targeted field of work. You can build the skills into the introductory/profile statement or present them as a short-bulleted list. Be sure to reference a current job posting and include as many skills as you possess.

- 4. *Education*. Record your most recent education first, including the degree type, name of the program of study/major, GPA if it is greater than 3.4, date (or anticipated date) of graduation, as well as the school name, city, and state where the credential was obtained. You may reference classes that are relevant to the job application (under a subheading of "Course Highlights") or additional academic information, including honor societies or other significant achievements. You may include high school information if it is fairly recent <u>and</u> you have an outstanding achievement or experience that is relevant.
- 5. Work Experience. Your previous work experience includes paid employment, volunteer work, internships, and tutoring; in fact, any experience that demonstrates to the employer that you have transferable skills that would benefit the organization. Organize work experience in reverse chronological order, that is, the most recent experience comes first. Include the name of the employer, the city and state, your job title (indicate if the position was an internship or volunteer opportunity), the dates you were employed, and a brief description of activities/experience/ accomplishments, starting each idea with a strong action verb (see Skill-Specific Action Words on page 9). Use the present tense for the current job and past tense for all other experiences. If there are chronological gaps or work history that is less than one year that you want to leave out, include the word "Relevant" in the title, which assumes there is experience not included.
- 6. **Additional Information**. If there is information that you feel is important to share with the employer, and it does not fit into the above categories, then create additional headings, such as Computer Knowledge, Activities, Honors and Awards, International Experience, Languages, or Additional Skills. Always keep in mind that the employer is looking for well-rounded individuals, since active people make good employees. Include activities that show leadership ability, interpersonal skills, or that you are a hard-worker or a self-starter. Keep it relevant.
- 7. **References**. Do not list your actual references on the resume. It is sufficient to use a statement such as "References Available on Request" although this statement is no longer necessary on the resume. Create a separate Reference Sheet using the same header formatting as the resume. It is recommended to have a list of at least three professional references (this can include colleagues, instructors, advisors, or activity mentors) who can speak to your qualifications. See page 14 for more information.

GATHERING YOUR INFORMATION

The four worksheets that follow (pages 4-8) will help you pull together details relating to your **goals**, **education and training, skills**, and **work history**. Make extra copies of the worksheets if you need more space. Once you have completed the worksheets, use the content to guide you in constructing your resume in a new Word document.

Worksheet #1 - Resume Header

The employer needs to be able to easily contact you for an interview or to ask follow up questions. Most often an application will ask for your street address, so consider leaving it off your resume for security purposes, especially when posting to an online job board. Include your full address on your cover letter or when applying directly to the employer. Add your personalized LinkedIn address, if applicable.

Below are the two examples from the sample resumes included in this guide:

Example 1:

JESSE FISCHER

Linkedin.com/in/jessefischer (763) 222-4323 jfischer11@gmail.com

Example 2:

TAYLOR WILSON

Linkedin.com/in/taylorwilson Brooklyn Park, MN 55445 763-000-000 Taylor.Wilson@my.nhcc.edu

Either version or something similar is just fine. Notice the name is in a larger font (at least 18pt), CAPITALIZED, and **bolded**. Type the remaining information in 10, 11 or 12 font. Write your header in the box below.

MY HEADER

Worksheet #2 – Profile Statement and Skills

Profile

The profile statement clearly summarizes your next career goal, highlighting your most important skills and qualities that are relevant to the job. It should be no more than three or four short sentences and may include a job title or function area in which you wish to work. Make notes of your own goals and skills below. The examples provided demonstrate information that an accounting graduate or computer science student might consider using. Record your own information in the spaces provided, use it to create a compelling profile statement.

Job Target or Goal may include a job title, the job function, or preferred industry. Examples:

- Job Title/Goal Bookkeeping; Help Desk
- Job Function *Geriatrics; Accounts Payable*
- Industry Healthcare; Education

My Job Target or Goal:

Summary statement may include length of experience in an area or type of training. Examples:

- 5 years' customer service and administrative experience
- Strong communication skills and computer related training

My Summary of Experience or Knowledge:

Skills can include technical skills such as Excel, QuickBooks; job content skills such as customer service; and personal management skills such as organization and planning.

My Key Skills and Attributes:

Identifying Skills

If you find it difficult to identify your skills, think about the following technical, job content selfmanagement and personal skills/attributes you might possess. Check all the categories that apply to you and describe them in the space provided. Once you have completed the list, circle the skills that are **most relevant** to the job(s) you are applying for (these are your transferable skills) and include them in your profile/skills section. Consult a current job posting for preferred skills and include if you possess.

Equipment	Interpersonal/ Communications	Clerical/ Office
Computer/ Software/ Technical	Relationship Building/Team Work	Helping/ Teaching
Customer Service	Management	Creative
Foreign Languages	Personal Management (organization, planning, etc.)	Other

Combine your profile information (goals, summary of experience and skills) to create an introductory statement. Here are two completed profile statements with skills taken from the resumes in this guide:

Example 1:

Recent college graduate with 5 years' customer service and administrative experience pursuing entrylevel **bookkeepin**g position. Committed to supporting community healthcare as an accounting professional, demonstrating the following competencies:

- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access
- Managerial and Financial Accounting
- QuickBooks; Payroll Accounting
- Inventory Management
- Detail oriented; strong time management 0 Fluent in Spanish

Example 2:

Work Study – Help Desk

Second year computer science student seeking opportunity to combine strong communication skills and computer related training in a hands-on setting. Eager to learn and confident in ability to troubleshoot and work effectively with technology team.

- Languages: Java, C# for .NET, C++, HTML, ASP.NET, SQL
- Operating Systems: Linux, Windows 10, Mac OS
- **Object-Oriented Programming** 0
- Web Site Design & Development
 - Customer Service Experience
 - Teamwork and Communications

Write your own profile statement in the box below.

MY CAREER PROFILE STATEMENT

Worksheet #3 - Education and Training

Education

List all the schools, colleges, trade schools, business schools, and adult education programs you have attended. High school is typically not included. Begin with your current or most recent education (usually North Hennepin Community College). For each institution provide the following information:

- School Name, City and State
- Type of Degree (AA/AS/AAS/AFA) or Certificate
- Full name of the program of study (include majors and minors where applicable):
- Date (or Expected Date) of Graduation/Program Completion
- Relevant courses (optional)
- Activities, accomplishments, awards, scholarships, honors, memberships, organizations, study abroad (optional)

Only include what is relevant to show your academic goals and accomplishments, leadership and campus involvement. Here are two examples for the Education section taken from resumes in this guide:

Example 1:

EDUCATION

NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Brooklyn Park, MN Associate of Science: Accounting (May 20xx) Course Highlights: Computerized Accounting, Decision Making Excel

Example 2:

Education NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Brooklyn Park, MN Associate in Science: Computer Science GPA 3.6/4.0 (Graduate Dec 20xx) Certificate: Game Programming (May 20xx) Member of Phi Theta Kappa - Honor Society Member of Math Club Vice President Student Anime Game Club

Write your education information in the box below.

MY EDUCATION

Worksheet #4 - Experience

Gather your employment history, beginning with your most recent employer. You may want to include summer, temporary, part-time, internship, and volunteer work, but indicate if the position is not a permanent position. Make as many copies of this worksheet as you need to document information of your work experiences. As a general guide, you should include your past ten years of work experience or your three most recent jobs. Start by documenting your most recent job, entering information in the box below:

NAME OF ORGANIZATION/EMPLOYER	City and State
Job Title	Start Date (month/year) – End Date (month/year)

Well-written bullet points, describing what you have done throughout your work experiences, are key in letting potential employers know what you have to offer. A strong bullet point offers enough detail about your qualifications for the job, using action words (verbs) that describe your transferable skills, details of the tasks completed, and/or result of these actions. Here are two approaches to structuring concise bulleted information to show case your skills and accomplishments:

Example 1 (showing communication skills):

ACTION VERB	SKILL(S) GAINED	TASK(S) COMPLETED
Developed	excellent interpersonal communication	by meeting the needs of hundreds of guests
	skills	in a fast-paced environment.

 Developed excellent interpersonal communication skills by meeting the needs of hundreds of guests in a fast-paced environment.

Example 2 (showing leadership skills):

ACTION VERB	B TASK DETAILS POSITIVE RESULT(S) FROM ACTION	
Coordinated	Student Volunteer Club meetings and	promoting positive relationships between
	activities	campus and community.

• Coordinated Student Volunteer Club meetings and activities, promoting positive relationships between campus and community.

Transfer employer/job title information from the top of the worksheet and create your own bullets to complete your work experience in the box below (see page 12 for format and layout examples):

MY WORK EXPERIENCE

SAMPLE SKILL-SPECIFIC ACTION WORDS

Strengthen the work experience section of your resume by using effective verbs (action words) to describe your skills and experience.

Critical Thinking/	Leadership/	Teaching/	Innovative/	Initiation/
Problem Solving	Management	Helping	Creative	Improvement
Analyzed	Approved	Accommodated	Amended	Accelerated
Applied	Assigned	Adapted	Arranged	Accomplished
Assessed	Chaired	Advised	Composed	Achieved
Compared	Contracted	Advocated	Conceived	Attained
Conducted	Coordinated	Assisted	Conceptualized	Awarded
Correlated	Decided	Coached	Created	Effected
Critiqued	Delegated	Contributed	Designed	Enhanced
Diagnosed	Developed	Counseled	Developed	Enlarged
Evaluated	Directed	Demonstrated	Drafted	Excelled
Examined	Enforced	Enabled	Formed	Expanded
Experimented	Established	Encouraged	Founded	Fortified
Extracted	Executed	Engaged	Illustrated	Improved
Formulated	Facilitated	Guided	Invented	Increased
Identified	Handled	Inspired	Launched	Initiated
Investigated	Initiated	Instructed	Modified	Instituted
Researched	Interviewed	Motivated	Originated	Introduced
Resolved	Organized	Provided	Revised	Mastered
Searched	Oversaw	Referred	Revitalized	Restored
Simplified	Planned	Rehabilitated	Tailored	Safeguarded
Solved	Prioritized	Remedied	Transformed	Selected
Summarized	Produced	Represented		Stimulated
Systematized	Recruited	Taught		Strengthened
Validated	Supervised			Succeeded
Verified				Upgraded
Technical	Financial	Clerical	Communication	Manual/
Administered	Allocated	Arranged	Clarified	Dexterity
Calculated	Appraised	Catalogued	Communicated	Assembled
Computed	Audited	Categorized	Consulted	Built
Detected	Balanced	Classified	Conveyed	Circulated
Devised	Budgeted	Consolidated	Convinced	Constructed
Diagnosed	Calculated	Detailed	Corresponded	Contracted
Engineered	Determined	Grouped	Defined	Controlled
Fabricated	Earned	Monitored	Influenced	Distributed
Maintained	Estimated	Organized	Informed	Equipped
Overhauled	Forecasted	Prearranged	Interpreted	Inspected
Programmed	Generated	Prepared	Narrated	Installed
Regulated	Increased	Recorded	Persuaded	Operated
Transmitted	Managed	Reviewed	Recommended	Rectified
Upgraded	Marketed	Scheduled	Related	Remolded
	Projected	Summarized	Relayed	Secured
	Sold		Translated	Supplied

Aim for 3-6 bullet points per job, typically providing more bullets for the most recent/most relevant positions. The following examples from the resumes in this guide show the use of strong action verbs to start each bullet, written as fragmented sentences (which is preferred in resume writing) and avoiding personal pronouns such as *I*, *me*, *you*, *them*, *their*. Use bold, capital, and italics to make your section header, job titles and employers stand apart, and include dates of employment and location of employer. Example 1:

xample 1:
WORK EXPERIENCE
HEALTH FOR TEENS, Minneapolis, MN
Administrative Assistant (2014 – present)
 Welcome visitors to the drop-in clinic, completing in-take information and orienting patients to the services available.
• Create and manage electronic records for registered patients, ensuring confidentiality of data at all times.
 Support counselors and medical professionals, filing documentation, following through on patien referrals and communicating with insurance companies.
 Ensure adequate inventory of medical and office supplies, ordering items in a timely manner, and managing accounts payable process.
MOVING FORWARD REHABILITATION SERVICES, Brooklyn Park, MN Nurse Aide (2011-2014)
 Assisted nursing staff with daily rehabilitation activities, guiding patients through routine exercises and offering encouragement.
 Organized and sanitized exercise equipment to maintain a pleasant and safe environment for star and patients.
 Logged daily patient activity in Excel, recording rehab session time and type of services provided.
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Treasurer of Student Volunteer Club: North Hennepin Community College (2015-2016)
Mobile Library Volunteer: Maple Grove Hospital (2014-2015)

Example 2:

Experience

OSSEO SCHOOL DISTRICT, Osseo, MN

Math Tutor (Aug 2015-present)

Provide tutoring services to high school students in after-school math development program

- Work 1-on-1 and in small groups to guide students in learning math fundamentals.
- Assist students in developing effective study habits to advance math skills.
- Support students in understanding curriculum and identifying concepts that need reinforcing.

ABC WIRELESS, Minneapolis, MN

Sales Associate (June 2014-July 2015)

Managed cellular phone sales booth in busy mall setting

- Organized schedule for team of four sales associates to ensure adequate coverage at the booth.
- Advised potential and existing customers on services to best meet individual needs.
- Activated service plans, clearly outlining terms and conditions and payment options.
- Assisted customers in troubleshooting technical issues, referring to corporate office where necessary.
- Promoted special offers and consistently exceeded monthly sales goals by 10%.

RESUME FORMATTING & PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

You are not limited to one specific *look* when compiling your resume. Your choice of layout and style is usually a combination of personal preference and choosing a format that most effectively highlights your key skills and accomplishments in relation to your career goals. However, there are good resume rules that you should adhere to, and these include:

Templates. These pre-formatted documents force you to present the information in a particular way. *Avoiding using templates!* Not only are they restrictive but they have a "cookie-cutter" appearance, which means your resume looks just like the next. Instead, start with a new Word document and use the **resume overview** to guide you in choosing appropriate headings.

Consistency in presentation. For example, if you use open punctuation at the end of each bullet point, do this throughout the resume. Similarly, all dates should adopt the same format, a job title bolded for one experience means that all job titles should be bolded, and so on.

Font size and spacing. Select the No Spacing style (rather than the default Normal) before typing the document. Ideally, the main body should be in 11 or 12 font size. Do not minimize the font size or create narrow margins to reduce your resume to a single page. For most job applicants, one page is sufficient so if your resume goes over to a second page consider either changing the layout or reducing some of the text. Your information should be concise and to the point; in resume terms "less is best".

Resume language. Avoid personal pronouns such as I, me, my, and their. Use fragmented sentences, starting each statement with an action verb. Typically, you will use the present tense for the current job and the past tense for all others. "Identified and implemented programs to improve service, performance, and productivity" is an example of a past tense statement. Use key words (nouns and verbs) to describe your skills and experience.

Accuracy. Always check your resume for accuracy and proofread it thoroughly. An error free resume shows that you care about your job application, as well as reflecting your attention to detail and writing skills. Use Spell Check, and have someone else read it too – you do not always catch your own errors.

Following this formatting advice, type the information that you have recorded in the boxes on your worksheets to create a resume in a Word document. Refer to the following resume samples for ideas for layout and labels for the different sections of your resume.

JESSE FISCHER

LinkedIn.com/in/jessefischer (763) 222-4323 Jfischer11@gmail.com

Recent college graduate with 5 years' customer service and administrative experience pursuing entry-level **bookkeeping** position. Committed to supporting community healthcare as an accounting professional, demonstrating the following competencies:

- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access
- Managerial and Financial Accounting
- Detail oriented; strong time management
- QuickBooks; Payroll Accounting
- o Inventory Management
- Fluent in Spanish

EDUCATION

NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Brooklyn Park, MN Associate of Science: Accounting (May 20xx) Course Highlights: Computerized Accounting, Decision Making Excel

WORK EXPERIENCE

HEALTH FOR TEENS, Minneapolis, MN Administrative Assistant (20xx – present)

- Welcome visitors to the drop-in clinic, completing in-take information and orienting patients to the services available.
- Create and manage electronic records for registered patients, ensuring confidentiality of data at all times.
- Support counselors and medical professionals, filing documentation, following through on patient referrals and communicating with insurance companies.
- Ensure adequate inventory of medical and office supplies, ordering items in a timely manner, and managing accounts payable process.

MOVING FORWARD REHABILITATION SERVICES, Brooklyn Park, MN

Nurse Aide (20xx-20xx)

- Assisted nursing staff with daily rehabilitation activities, guiding patients through routine exercises and offering encouragement.
- Organized and sanitized exercise equipment to maintain a pleasant and safe environment for staff and patients.
- Logged daily patient activity in Excel, recording rehab session time and type of services provided.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Treasurer of Student Volunteer Club: North Hennepin Community College (20xx-20xx) Mobile Library Volunteer: Maple Grove Hospital (20xx-20xx)

TAYLOR WILSON

LinkedIn.com/in/taylorwilson Brooklyn Park, MN 55445 763-000-0000 Taylor.Wilson@my.nhcc.edu

Work Study – Help Desk

Second year computer science student seeking opportunity to combine strong communication skills and computer related training in a hands-on setting. Eager to learn and confident in ability to troubleshoot and work effectively with technology team.

Skills

- Languages: Java, C# for .NET, C++, HTML, ASP.NET, SQL
- Operating Systems: Linux, Windows 10, Mac OS
- Object-Oriented Programming
- Web Site Design & Development
- $\circ\quad \text{Customer Service Experience}$
- o Teamwork and Communications

Education

NORTH HENNEPIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Brooklyn Park, MN Associate in Science: Computer Science GPA 3.6/4.0 (Graduate Dec 20xx) Certificate: Game Programming (May 20xx)

- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Member of Math Club
- Vice President Student Anime Game Club

Experience

OSSEO SCHOOL DISTRICT, Osseo, MN

Math Tutor (Aug 20xx-present)

Provide tutoring services to high school students in after-school math development program

- Work 1-on-1 and in small groups to guide students in learning math fundamentals.
- Assist students in developing effective study habits to advance math skills.
- Support students in understanding curriculum and identifying concepts that need reinforcing.

ABC WIRELESS, Minneapolis, MN

Sales Associate (June 20xx-July 20xx)

Managed cellular phone sales booth in busy mall setting

- Organized schedule for team of four sales associates to ensure adequate coverage at the booth.
- Advised potential and existing customers on services to best meet individual needs.
- Activated service plans, clearly outlining terms and conditions and payment options.
- Assisted customers in troubleshooting technical issues, referring to corporate office where necessary.
- Promoted special offers and consistently exceeded monthly sales goals by 10%.

REFERENCES

References are *never* included on the resume but are typed on a separate sheet of paper. It is not necessary to type *References Available on Request* at the foot of the resume, although you may see this on some resume samples. Do not staple the reference sheet to the resume. Include the reference sheet with the resume only if the job posting specifically requests the information. It is a good idea to take spare copies of the reference sheet to interview. Otherwise, employers will let you know at what stage in the hiring process they require the references.

Always get the permission of your references before including them in the job application and keep them up-to-date on your job search. Clarify with your references what information you may include such as business or mailing address, telephone numbers and email address. Include a job title with the name of the reference. If you know the reference in a non-business setting, provide an appropriate title that explains your relationship with that person. Examples could be Professor, Instructor, Volunteer Coordinator, Pastor, Football Coach, and so on. It is usual to provide three references that may include work, academic and community activity contacts. Avoid providing references from friends and family unless requested by the employer.

To give your reference sheet a professional look, replicate the heading from the resume. This will provide all your contact information and allows the employer to separate it from the resume. The following example illustrates how Taylor Wilson might present references.

TAYLOR WILSON	
nkedIn.com/in/taylorwilson ooklyn Park, MN 55445	763-000-000 Taylor.Wilson@my.nhcc.ed
REFERENCES	
Ms. Jody Prince	
Computer Science Professor	
North Hennepin Community College	
Email: JoPrinceRN@nhcc.edu	
Tel: (763) 555-5555	
Dr. J. McDonald	
Principal	
Osseo School District.	
Email: <u>JMcDonald@osseo.edu</u>	
Tel: (763) 555-5501	
Mr. Peter Brown	
Regional Manager	
ABC Wireless	
Email: ppbrown@abcwireless.com	

RESUME RESOURCES

The following are additional resources for resume samples and helpful tips to create the perfect resume.

Online Resources:

- Visit the WIEL Center's D2L site to watch a series of short videos on resume and cover letter writing, learning about LinkedIn, and other career development topics. There are also career readiness competency modules you can complete to earn a digital badge for each.
- Visit the CAREERwise website at <u>www.careerwise.minnstate.edu</u>, select the *Find a Job* tab and go to the link for *Write Your Resume*.

Other Resources:

- Stop by the Workforce Innovation & Experiential Learning (WIEL) Center located in LRC 153-155 to obtain resume samples and other printed resources.
- Attend a resume writing workshop (check the scheduled events in D2L or <u>www.nhcc.edu/wfinnovation</u>).
- Meet with WIEL staff to receive comprehensive feedback on your resume draft. Call 763-488-0445, email <u>workforceinnovation@nhcc.edu</u>, or visit the WIEL Center in LRC to schedule a time.

Updated: 4/4/22 WIEL Center North Hennepin Community College