

Resume Guide



Center for
CAREER
Development

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

While there are some basic rules (spellcheck is a must!) and standard practices to resume writing, it is largely a personal undertaking. We encourage you to take a holistic approach to creating your resume, considering your unique set of experiences in relation to the types of roles to which you aspire. In other words, think of your resume as a marketing tool that demonstrates how a product (you) meets the needs of a potential customer (employer).

This Resume Guide is designed for both the novice resume writer and the more seasoned candidate. Follow the basic principles, adding in advanced components when appropriate.

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Basic Principles of Resume Writing

1 Your resume's job is to get you an interview.

- Look at job descriptions carefully. If certain keywords, skills, or traits keep popping up, check that they are reflected in your resume in your own words.
- Experience comes not only from internships and jobs but from campus activities, class projects and volunteer work as well. There is value – what employers call transferable skills – in all you do as a Princeton student.
- Readers only know what you tell them. Include concise yet thoroughly detailed **Action-Oriented Accomplishment Statements** to pique a reader's interest.
- Demonstrate skills through your bullet points in addition to listing them in a "Skills" section.
- Think ahead to the interview. Make sure the content you'd talk about is well-represented in your resume.

2 The document should be written with the reader in mind

- Consider the context for which you're using your resume and adjust content, headers and details to match the specific job/internship posting, scholarship application, career fair/ Meetup or other opportunity.
- Note differences in style, tone, keywords and content across industries and around the globe.
- Distinguish yourself from other Princeton students by detailing your individual role and unique impact, especially when several students may have the same experience (e.g., RCA, McGraw Center Tutor).
- Do not include personal information like age, Social Security number, marital status, religion or parents' occupations.
- Do you need a CV or resume? In the U.S., a CV is used primarily for admission to – or roles in – academia. It is a type of resume with an in-depth focus on research, presentations, academic awards, and/or publications.

3 Your resume should be easy to scan and digest in 15-30 seconds.

- Use bullet points instead of paragraphs. Avoid pronouns (I, we) and minimize the use of articles (a, an, the).
- Use CAPS, **bold fonts**, and line spacing to distinguish between sections.
- Keep document to one page. Set the margins between 0.75" and 1" (ideal) and no less than 0.5".
- Use consistent font styles and sizes (10-12pt) throughout the document.
- Save space by leaving off your mailing address. Your phone number and email suffice.
- List content in reverse chronological order in each section of your resume.

4 As long as you are aspiring to professional advancement, your resume is a work in progress.

- Know that resume writing can be complex and take several tries to master.
- Save PDF and .txt versions of your resume. Keep prior versions of your resume for reference.
- Do not fear changing directions. You can reposition any experience by focusing on **Transferable Skills**.
- Ask for feedback from a Peer Career Adviser or [schedule an appointment with a career adviser in Handshake](#).

.....Introductory Resume Worksheet

This worksheet is meant as a guide – not a template – for new resume writers.
Do not feel compelled to fill in every blank or section, just focus on those that reflect your experience.

Firstname M. Lastname

netID@princeton.edu | _ _ _ - _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ Expected Grad Month YYYY

A.B. (or B.S.E.) in Intended Concentration and Certificate

Relevant Coursework: _____, _____, _____

Bridge Year, Location Month YYYY - Month YYYY

Information if you attended a program or completed classes

Prior College or High School, Location Grad Month YYYY

Relevant Coursework: _____, _____, _____

Awards: _____, _____, _____

EXPERIENCE

Title or Role, **Organization**, Location Month YYYY - Present

- List the most recent/current experience first
- Consider formal and informal jobs, volunteer work and community activities
- Start bullet points with **action verbs**, providing context using quantitative and qualitative terms, and demonstrating the end result to show the value of your contributions
- Quantify bullet points with information like number of people involved or time spent on a project

Title or Role, **Organization**, Location Month YYYY - Month YYYY

- Use past tense **action verbs** for experiences that have ended
- Describe the scope/pace of the work and your level of responsibility
- Convey how you contributed, what you accomplished and the results of your efforts

ACTIVITIES

Title or Role, **Organization**, Location Month YYYY - Present

- Can include athletic, academic, performance, professional or social activities
- Consider a separate "Leadership" section for roles with significant decision-making responsibility

SKILLS

Languages: Multilingual abilities (Fluent in Spanish), separate from programming (Proficient in C++)

Certifications: Examples: CPR, Wildlife First Responder, Gold Award/Eagle Scout, technical training

Technology: Software applications, hardware, and other tools relevant to your field(s) of interest

Additional Subcategories: Examples: Social Media, Laboratory, Business and Innovation/Design

INTERESTS

Anything from timpani to Tough Mudder, from modern art to mountain climbing! This is an opportunity to convey personality and perseverance, especially if these interests showcase skills and talents not otherwise evident on your resume.

Ready to start writing? See page 5 for tips on Crafting Your Descriptions!

Advanced Resume Worksheet

This page is meant as a guide – not a formal template – for students with more experience. The order and content of the categories used should reflect your experience and target audience.

Firstname M. Lastname

netID@princeton.edu | _ _ _ - _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

EDUCATION

Princeton University

Grad Month YYYY

A.B. (or B.S.E.) in Intended Concentration and Certificate

[Cumulative or Concentration] GPA: [If 3.0+]

Relevant Coursework: _____, _____, _____
_____, _____, _____

Prior College, Study Abroad, Summer Coursework, Bridge Year, and/or High School

Month YYYY

Activities: _____, _____, _____

Awards: _____, _____, _____

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Senior Thesis: Title, Adviser

Month YYYY - Month YYYY

- Place more or less emphasis on this section of resume depending on target audience
- Frame content around research questions, lit review, methodology and findings for research roles
- Focus on process of/context around conducting independent research if applying to non-research roles

Junior Independent Work: Title, Adviser

Month YYYY - Month YYYY

- Consider reader when choosing to include technical details, scientific terms or field-specific language

EXPERIENCE

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY - Present

- Can opt for specific header(s), like Healthcare Experience, Design Experience, Technical Experience
- List the most recent/current experience first
- Consider formal and informal jobs, volunteer work and community activities
- Start bullet points with **action verbs**, providing context using quantitative and qualitative terms, and demonstrating end result to show the value of your contributions

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY – Present

- Use past tense action verbs for experiences that have ended
- Describe the scope/pace of the work and your level of responsibility
- Convey how you contributed, what you accomplished and the results of your efforts

LEADERSHIP ROLES

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY – Present

- Can include athletic, academic, performance, professional, or social activities
- Consider roles in which you held significant decision-making responsibility

Title or Role, Organization, Location

Month YYYY – Present

- Quantify bullet points with info like number of people involved or how much time spent on a project

ACTIVITIES

- Princeternship/shadowing, professional organizations or other activities aligned with career path
- Social clubs, sports teams, performance groups, etc., not listed in Leadership Roles section

SKILLS

Languages: Multilingual abilities (e.g., Fluent in Spanish) or computer programming (e.g., Proficient in C++)

Certifications: Examples: CPR, Wildlife First Responder, Gold Award/Eagle Scout, technical training

Technology: Condense/expand list as needed based on your particular skills and field(s) of interest

Additional Subcategories: Examples: Social Media, Laboratory, Business and Innovation/Design

Ready to start writing? See page 5 for tips on Crafting Your Descriptions!

CRAFTING YOUR DESCRIPTIONS

Adapted from South Dakota State University Office of Career Development; includes content from <http://artsbridge.com/how-can-a-theatre-major-prepare-you-for-success/>

Students often lament a perceived lack of experience, struggle to make connections between their experiences and what is required in a job description or worry about how experiences in one realm (e.g., independent research) translate into another (e.g., an industry internship). To allay those fears, use this three-step worksheet to (1) identify your transferable skills or the skills listed in a specific job description (2) note where those skills were learned/developed, and (3) turn these general concepts into **Action-Oriented Accomplishment Statements**.

Step 1: Identify your transferable skills

Place a check mark next to each skill you possess. Think about all settings in which you may have used/developed each skill. Then, circle the ones you consider to be your top 10.

Communication & Creativity

- Writing clearly and concisely
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Using media to present ideas
- Reporting information
- Public speaking
- Making presentations
- Describing feelings
- Improvising
- Doing more with less
- Appreciating diversity
- Providing accurate descriptions

Leadership

- Generating and initiating ideas
- Managing and supervising groups
- Delegating responsibility
- Promoting and adapting to change
- Prioritizing tasks
- Identifying areas for improvement
- Facilitating meetings or group discussions
- Coaching/mentoring/counseling
- Evaluating progress
- Giving praise and credit
- Setting and accomplishing goals

Teamwork

- Making decisions with others
- Respecting others
- Eliciting input and providing feedback
- Developing rapport
- Sharing credit/cooperation
- Interacting effectively
- Collaborating in diverse or multicultural environment
- Meeting team expectations
- Perceiving feelings, situations
- Listening to others

Problem-Solving

- Anticipating potential problems
- Defining problems and possible causes
- Identifying and selecting solutions
- Creating innovative approaches
- Involving group members in problem-solving
- Developing plans to implement solutions
- Establishing general principles
- Teaching/training others
- Solving problems/mediating
- Implementing sound decisions

Research

- Forecasting/predicting
- Designing an experiment
- Imagining alternatives
- Identifying resources
- Extracting important information
- Defining needs
- Development strategies
- Formulating conclusions
- Conceptualizing ideas
- Observing and discovering
- Analyzing information
- Presenting findings
- Learning new tools/techniques

General Work

- Managing time
- Setting and meeting deadlines
- Accepting responsibility
- Enlisting help
- Editing/proofing
- Negotiating/persuading
- Seeking opportunities for professional growth
- Taking initiative
- Managing time and stress
- Responding well to feedback
- Remaining calm under pressure

ACTION-ORIENTED ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

Showcasing what you've done and why it mattered is the best way to ACE resume writing! Start with an **Action Verb** to show you did something. Then provide the **Context** for that action using quantitative and qualitative terms. Lastly, demonstrate the **End Result** of your actions to show the value of your contributions!

Sample Accomplishment Statements

- Allocated \$1,500 budget to promote annual National Coming Out Day rally, increasing participation 25% over previous year.
- Coordinated three fundraising events for local shelters, raising \$8,000 and greatly improving community awareness.
- Collaborated with a partner to formalize a 400-page training curriculum, creating a structure that made the progression of material clear and logical.

Action Verbs

Management & Leadership

administered
appointed
approved
assigned
attained
authorized
chaired
consolidated
controlled
coordinated
decided
delegated
directed
eliminated
emphasized
enforced
enhanced
executed
handled
headed
hired
hosted
increased
instituted
led
managed
merged
overhauled
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
streamlined
strengthened
supervised

Communication

addressed
advertised
articulated
authored
clarified
communicated
composed
condensed
conferred
consulted
contacted
conveyed
convinced

corresponded
defined
described
discussed
drafted
edited
elicited
enlisted
expressed
influenced
informed
instructed
interacted
interviewed
joined
judged
listened
mediated
moderated
motivated
negotiated
observed
outlined
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
recruited
reinforced
reported
responded
solicited
specified
suggested
synthesized
translated
wrote

Research

analyzed
compared
conducted
critiqued
detected
determined
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
experimented
explored
extracted
formulated

gathered
identified
inspected
interpreted
investigated
located
measured
researched
searched
summarized
surveyed
tested

Technical

adapted
assembled
built
constructed
converted
debugged
engineered
fabricated
installed
maintained
operated
programmed
rectified
regulated
remodeled
repaired
replaced
solved
specialized
studied
upgraded

Financial/Data

adjusted
allocated
analyzed
appraised
assessed
audited
balanced
calculated
computed
conserved
corrected
estimated
forecasted
marketed
projected
reconciled
retrieved

Helping

advised
advocated
answered
cared for
coached
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
counseled
demonstrated
educated
enabled
encouraged
ensured
expedited
explained
facilitated
familiarize
furthered
guided
intervened
motivated
provided
rehabilitated
simplified
supplied
supported
taught
trained
tutored
volunteered

Organization/ Detail

arranged
cataloged
categorized
charted
classified
coded
collected
compiled
distributed
generated
implemented
incorporated
logged
monitored
obtained
ordered
organized
prepared

processed
purchased
recorded
registered
reserved
reviewed
routed
scheduled
submitted
standardized
systematized
updated
validated
verified

Creative

acted
combined
conceptualized
created
customized
designed
developed
displayed
drew
entertained
established
fashioned
founded
illustrated
initiated
integrated
introduced
invented
modeled
modified
originated
performed
photographed
revised
revitalized
shaped

Accomplishments

achieved
completed
expanded
exceeded
improved
pioneered
reduced
resolved
restored
transformed

SAMPLE RESUMES

Early College Resume

Tori Tiger

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EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton NJ Expected June 2022
A.B. Candidate; Intended concentration: Sociology
Relevant Coursework: Inequality, Mobility, and the American Dream; Sociology of Sports; American Society and Politics; Self and Society

Big Public High School, Dallas, TX June 2018
Honors: National AP Scholar, Class Treasurer

WORK EXPERIENCE

Firestone Library, Princeton University – Student Assistant September 2018-Present

- Serve as first point-of-contact for students and other patrons at busy Circulation desk
- Redesigned website using Dreamweaver, increasing visits to page by 15% over 3 months

The Clothing Company, Fort Worth, TX – Retail Associate May 2017-August 2018

- Recommended products to customers, generating an average of \$1,200 in sales per shift
- Recognized by management for creating attractive displays that drew attention to new products
- Trained 5 new employees on effective sales techniques and how to master product knowledge during fast-paced summer and holiday hours

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Princeton University Orchestra – Clarinet September 2018-Present

- Rehearse 10 hours per week and perform at 3 recitals each year

Local Community Newspaper – Contributor August 2016-June 2018

- Interviewed 100+ students to capture balanced and fair stories across 5 public schools
- Submitted monthly articles highlighting local students' academic, athletic, and artistic achievements

Girl Scouts of the USA – Gold Award October 2017

- Hosted a “College & Career Night” for 200 students from 3 area underserved communities
- Recruited 20 professionals and marketed event to hundreds of middle and high school students

SKILLS

Language: French (4 years) and Spanish (6 years)

Office Applications: Word (Advanced), Excel (Proficient), PowerPoint (Intermediate)

Graphic Design: Dreamweaver (Advanced), Photoshop (Novice)

Teo Tiger

(210) 987-6543 | t2@princeton.edu

EDUCATION

Princeton University | Princeton, NJ

September 2018-June 2021

A.B. in Politics; Intended Certificates in Spanish & Latin (GPA 3.75)

Relevant Coursework: Campaigns & Elections, American Politics, Microeconomics

Local Community College | Upstate, NY

September 2017-May 2018

Introductory Coursework in Statistics, Literature, and Computer Science (GPA 3.92)

SKILLS

Crisis Management
Publicity

Political Analysis
Opinion Polling

Speechwriting
Fundraising

Campaign Relations
Teambuilding

EXPERIENCE

RESEARCH INTERN, OFFICE OF POLITICAL STRATEGY & OUTREACH

The White House | Washington, D.C.

Summer 2018

- Curated hundreds of news clippings from major media outlets to compile global view of U.S. politics.
- Reviewed and summarized analysis of foreign government policies and practices for OPSO Director.
- Conducted 5 White House tours daily, averaging 25 American and international visitors per tour.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

2017-2018

LCC Undergraduate Student Government | Princeton, NJ

- Directed winning campaign for student body president who received 73% of the votes.
- Managed all aspects of campaign including volunteer recruitment, budgeting, and expense monitoring.
- Raised \$5,000 in campaign funds (86% more than competition), by planning events, contacting donors and taking donations.
- Coordinated voter outreach program, including email, social media and traditional mailers. Increased participation by 13% from the previous year's election.

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

ROWER

Men's Lightweight Varsity Crew Team | Princeton University

2018-Present

- Commit 20+ hours weekly to practices and competition year-round.
- 2nd Place, 2V Boat, Ivy League Champions 2018.

CAPTAIN (2016-2017)

Local High School Varsity Crew Team | Mytown, NY

2013-2017

- Honored as 3-time state rowing champion, Varsity 8 boat, 2013-2015.

MILITARY SERVICE

CADET

U.S. Army ROTC | Princeton University

2018-Present

- Join 100+ cadets weekly in intensive physical and tactical training.
- Prepare to qualify for 2019 Cadet Troop Leader Training.

Industry-Focused Resume

Tammy Tiger

Phone: 609-609-6096

www.linkedin.com/in/tammytiger

tammyti@princeton.edu

EDUCATION	Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 06/2019 BSE, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Certificate in Engineering and Management Systems Cumulative GPA: 3.30 Departmental GPA: 3.65 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Self-financed 100% of college education
SKILLS	Technology: Proficient in Java, Python, MATLAB, Mathematica, SolidWorks, and AutoCAD Languages: Swedish (Native); German (Fluent); Hebrew (Conversational)
ACADEMIC PROJECTS	Box Lift Crane Design 02/2018 - 06/2018 Team Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed a crane in AutoCAD to hold and endure 500 lbs.Oversaw group of 6 students and delegated work to each member. World Geography Card Game 09/2016 - 01/2017 Team Member <ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborated with 3 classmates in creating tool to engage middle-schoolers.Pilot-tested game with 100 local students and presented final product at campus-wide expo.
ENGINEERING EXPERIENCE	Process Improvement Intern 06/2018 - 08/2018 Manufacturing Corp., Miami, FL <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed mechanical products and systems by developing and testing specifications and methods.Evaluated product ideas, models, and requirements and provided suggestions for improvement.Collaborated in cross-functional project team of mechanical, electrical, and system engineers.Developed an understanding of the life cycle of product design. Team Leader 06/2017 - 09/2017 Engineers Without Borders, Chimbote, Peru <ul style="list-style-type: none">Led 5 students in developing an infrastructure plan to improve water quality in a coastal village.Researched technologies and local resources and design infrastructure for water lines.Conducted fundraising efforts and successfully covered team's expenses. Research Assistant 09/2016 - 01/2017 Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Department, Princeton University <ul style="list-style-type: none">Performed computational fluid dynamics to assist Ph.D. candidate with dissertation.Conducted design validation testing of prototypes and presented findings at regional conference.
RELATED EXPERIENCE	Trip Leader 7/2015 - 06/2016 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Princeton Outdoor Action, Princeton UniversityLed group of 8 freshmen on week-long wilderness trip, ensuring physical and emotional health.
CAMPUS ACTIVITIES	Vice President , Princeton Autonomous Vehicle Engineering Team (PAVE) Choreographer , Princeton Bhanga Staff Writer , Daily Princetonian

Research-Oriented Resume

Tyler Tiger

www.myportfolio.com/tyler

ty-ti@princeton.edu, 774-623-8668

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

June 2019

A.B. in Molecular Biology, Certificate in Neuroscience, GPA: 3.89

Select Coursework: Genetics, Biochemistry, Biological Dynamics, Genome Integrity and Human Disease, Biostatistics, Microbiology

Honors: Biology Society Scholarship, J&J Aspiring Scientist Award

RESEARCH AND LAB EXPERIENCE

"Revising the Phylogenetic Reassignment of *Oxytricha trifallax*"

Fall 2017

- Engaged in independent research culminating in an extensive written paper
- Revised the phylogeny of *O. trifallax* using several conserved gene sequences

Research Assistant, Sussex Lab, Windsor University, England

Spring 2016

- Performed purification of protein using gel electrophoresis
- Conducted analytical experiment on gene expression to determine level of other factors
- Collected data, generated statistical report, and shared findings with Principal Investigator

Lab Technician, Biology Department, West Coast University, CA

Fall 2015

- Analyzed and recorded test data to issue reports using charts, graphs and narratives
- Examined cells stained with dye to locate abnormalities
- Set up, adjusted, maintained and cleaned laboratory equipment daily

PRESENTATIONS

Princeton Research Day, Princeton University

Spring 2018

Poster, "Revising the Phylogenetic Reassignment of *Oxytricha trifallax*"

- Shared findings during poster session attended by 200+ students and faculty
- Earned Silver Medal for effectively communicating research to a non-specialist audience

Statewide Secondary Education Science Symposium

Summer 2014

Presenter, "Healing Garden: Medicinal Plants Native to North Jersey"

- Selected from field of 100 applicants to represent school at statewide event
- Created PowerPoint and written report to share findings with other students

SKILLS

Laboratory: Cell proliferation assays, cell/tissue culture, FACS, ELISA, lymphocyte isolation

Data Analytics: C, Java, R, LaTeX, Excel

Bilingual: English and Spanish

HELPFUL HEADERS

If you are in the early stages of resume writing, stick with standard headers like Education, Experience, and Activities. As your skillset grows and experience deepens, consider broadening and reframing the headers to draw the reader's attention to key sections of your resume.

EDUCATION

- Academic Background
- Educational Background
- Education and Training
- Related Coursework
- Select Coursework
- Senior Thesis
- Study Abroad

EXPERIENCE

- Academic Projects
- Corporate Experience
- Course Projects
- Global Experience
- Independent Research
- Industry Experience
- Internship Experience
- Military Background
- Professional Experience
- Related Experience
- Related Projects
- Work Experience

ACTIVITIES

- Affiliations
- Associations
- Athletic Achievements
- Civic Activities
- Community Involvement
- Extracurricular Activities
- Leadership Experience
- Professional Activities
- Professional Associations
- Professional Development
- Professional Memberships
- Volunteer Work/Volunteerism

HONORS

- Academic Honors
- Accolades
- Achievements
- Awards
- Commendations
- Distinctions
- Fellowships
- Scholarships

SPECIAL SKILLS/TRAINING

- Certifications
- Language Competencies
- Licenses
- Professional Certifications
- Software/Hardware
- Special Training
- Technical Skills

PUBLICATIONS

- Conference Presentations
- Current Research Interests
- Exhibits
- Papers
- Presentations
- Professional Presentations
- Research Projects
- Senior Thesis

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

- Interests
- Portfolio
- Relocation