



# RESUME WRITING

Career Development Center

California State University, Los Angeles

[www.calstatela.edu/careercenter](http://www.calstatela.edu/careercenter)

(323) 343-3237

The resume is a marketing tool designed to get you an interview. It is a summary of skills and qualifications that advertises what you have to offer to a prospective employer. To interest employers, the resume should be concise (one page is ideal), easy to read, and contain pertinent information directly related to the job for which you are applying. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' resume: keep your audience in mind when you write it!

## CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION

**Identifying Data.** Your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address go at the top of the resume. This information can be centered at the top of the page, blocked in the upper left-hand corner, or designed as letterhead that you might see on stationery.

**Objective.** This is a clear, brief, and concise statement specifying the type of position and the field of work in which you are interested. Use specific objectives when you are applying for individual jobs, and a more general objective when handing out resumes at a job fair.

**Overview Statement.** This statement provides the reader with a broad view of your background, experience and best characteristics. It is often used when the candidate has several years of experience and wants to identify specific areas of expertise. It can be called 'Summary,' 'Profile,' or 'Highlights.'

**Education.** The most advanced degree, certification, or course work you are completing, the area of study (including minor), the institution and the date acquired (or projected) should be listed first. Previously earned degrees are listed next. Don't include high school! If your undergrad GPA was over 3.0, list it.

**Major or Related or Relevant Coursework.** If you have little or no work history, or no experience in your field of interest, you can list from six to ten course titles in this section. This will ensure the reader that you have taken these courses, and it will help you fill up space, if this is needed.

**Experience.** Begin with your most recent experience and include the job title, employer, location of the employer, dates of employment, and job duties. Include internships, cooperative education, and volunteer experience which directly or indirectly relate to your objective. Use *action verbs* to describe your responsibilities. Use specific jargon or phrases that are known in your target industry. Emphasize those skills that are transferable to the type of work you are seeking. If the experience is not related to your objective, use brief statements to describe the job functions you performed.

**Special Skills.** Include items that would apply to your objective, such as computer languages or proficiency in the use of particular software, fluency in foreign languages, public speaking or presentation skills.

**Professional Affiliations, Campus/Community Activities, Honors or Awards.** List the names of professional/campus organizations to which you belong, including offices or leadership positions held. List any scholarships, honors or awards you have received.

**Citizenship.** Citizenship may be a requirement for employment for certain positions in certain industries and should be included if applying to companies that require it.

**Interests.** You could include personal interests that may be related to the position or industry. However, for the most part, school systems tend to be the only employers interested in this information.

**References available upon request.** This phrase should appear last on your resume. Your actual list of references will be on a separate sheet and should only be provided if an employer asks for it. (Remember to take the list with you to your interviews).

**Personal Information.** Federal regulations prohibit employers from making inquiries about the personal information of prospective applicants in the areas of age, sex, marital status, race and religion. Do not include any of this information on your resume!

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

There are no fixed rules to the way resumes are written, but the following guidelines apply in most cases:

- Write your own resume: don't pay someone to do it or use a template. You will need to be able to respond to it in an interview.
- Complete a typed draft of your resume, then schedule an appointment with a career counselor for a resume critique.
- Employers generally prefer well-written, one-page resumes in reverse chronological order.
- Use capitalization and/or bold for emphasis, not italics.
- Do not use personal pronouns (I, me, my). Use correct verb tense.
- Use the same typeface throughout the resume. Suggested typefaces: Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, Optima.

**VISUAL IMPACT** – Employers expect a professional-looking product. Proofread your resume to eliminate spelling, punctuation and typographical errors. Choose 40-60 lb. white, gray or neutral-colored paper. Use a laser printer to generate your master copy and have your resume duplicated on a well-maintained photocopy machine.

## Resume Word List

**200+ Action Verbs That Describe Your Skills.** The following represents a partial listing of action verbs that can help describe your job duties.

Accounted (for)	Encouraged	Ordered
Achieved	Enforced	Organized
Acted	Engineered	Originated
Adapted	Established	Oversaw
Addressed	Estimated	Participated (in)
Administered	Evaluated	Perceived
Advised	Examined	Performed
Affected	Executed	Persuaded
Allocated	Expanded	Photographed
Analyzed	Experimented (with)	Piloted
Approved	Explained	Planned
Appraised	Expressed	Predicted
Arranged	Extracted	Prepared
Ascertained	Facilitated	Presented
Assembled	Fashioned	Processed
Assessed	Figured	Produced
Assisted	Financed	Programmed
Attained	Fixed	Promoted
Audited	Followed	Provided
Balanced	Formulated	Publicized
Briefed	Founded	Purchased
Budgeted	Gathered	Questioned
Built	Gave	Raised
Calculated	Generated	Read
Cared (for)	Governed	Realized
Catalogued	Grouped	Reasoned
Changed	Guided	Received
Chartered	Handled	Recognized
Checked	Helped	Recommended
Clarified	Hired	Reconciled
Classified	Identified	Recorded
Coached	Illustrated	Recruited
Collected	Implemented	Rectified
Communicated	Improved	Reduced
Compared	Improvised	Referred
Compiled	Increased	Repaired
Completed	Influenced	Reported
Composed	Initiated	Researched
Computed	Inspected	Retrieved
Conceived	Interpreted	Reviewed
Constructed	Interviewed	Scheduled
Consulted	Invented	Screened
Controlled	Investigated	Selected
Converted	Judged	Separated
Coordinated	Justified	Served
Counseled	Kept	Serviced
Counted	Learned	Shaped
Created	Lectured	Solved
Critiqued	Led	Spoke
Dealt (with)	Lifted	Studied
Debated	Listened	Summarized
Decided	Logged	Supervised
Defined	Maintained	Supplied
Delegated	Managed	Supported
Delivered	Mapped	Surveyed
Demonstrated	Mastered	Tailored
Designed	Measured	Taught
Detected	Mediated	Tested
Diagnosed	Memorized	Trained
Directed	Mentored	Translated
Dispensed	Modeled	Troubleshoot
Documented	Moderated	Understood
Drafted	Monitored	Unified
Drew	Motivated	Verified
Drove	Navigated	
Earned	Negotiated	
Edited	Observed	
Elicited	Obtained	
Eliminated	Offered	
Empathized (with)	Operated	

## Tailor Your Resume

There are many different resume formats. Resume samples are available online, and there are hundreds of resume guides available as well. (Check out the Career Center Library, your local public library, or new and used bookstores). Three different resume samples follow on the next page. (We also have a separate flyer featuring sample resumes of teaching credential students). But no matter which format you choose, you must focus on tailoring the resume to the needs of the employer whose job you are applying for.

How can you do this? Carefully read the job description or the ad for the position. Then write the resume to fit the job requirements, using some of the terminology, or “key words” that were used in the description. Remember to put your information in the order of the employer’s preference: in other words, put your ‘best stuff’ or most impressive credentials toward the top. (Employers may spend only 10 – 20 seconds scanning your resume, and in that time they want to be impressed!) Then find out how the employer wants to receive your resume.

**Formatted Resumes.** Samples 1, 2 and 3 on the next page are examples of formatted resumes. The formatted resume is appropriate for mailing (don’t fold it: send in a large envelope), faxing, in person use, or emailing as an attachment. (Don’t assume an employer will open an attachment: many fear viruses or may be unable to open the attachment. Email the resume as an attachment *only if the employer indicates that it is OK to do so*). However, since it is now much more common for the employer to indicate “email resume,” **do not** email the formatted resume, because it is likely to look jumbled and be difficult to read when opened.

**Emailable Resumes.** All job seekers, therefore, must have both a formatted resume and an emailable resume ready to go.

An eResume is a text-only version of your formatted resume that can be pasted into the body of your email. Refer to Sample 4, which is an example of an eResume.

Here are some special points about eResumes. Remember to:

- Left justify all text.
- Convert bullets to asterisks (\*).
- Do not use bold, italics, or underline.
- Tabbed items need their own line, or can be added to the end of a line (see Victor’s dates).
- Category headings should be all in caps.
- Use white space or one of the following to place under category headings.

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**Special Note:** When emailing your resume, don’t forget to include something in the subject line, such as “Resume of Victor Vong, Applicant for Accountant I Position.” If you leave the subject line blank, no one will open your email.

## SAMPLE 1 – Functional (Undergraduate)

### **Esther R. Gomez**

\*243 Maybell Rd. \*Azusa, CA 91802 \*(626)444-4244 \*es77@juno.com

#### **Profile**

Experienced film/video editor, public television fundraiser and administrative assistant. Effective multitasker, proven ability to manage people and projects, committed to quality, solid communication skills, including proficiency in both English and Spanish.

#### **Areas of Expertise**

##### Production Management

- Partnered with Viva editors to create a 30-minute documentary, “Discovering AnnaLiza,” showcased on PBS, as well as other features.
- Edited over 30 student-run video productions.
- Selected film clips for use in nightly newscasts.

##### Project Management

- Managed team of 8 volunteers who raised over \$500,000 in donations.
- Established partnerships with ten new corporate donors.
- Coordinated workshop schedule and secured speakers and facilities for CSU Film Expo.

##### Organizational/Administrative

- Served as liaison to marketing firm’s entertainment clients.
- Worked out logistics regarding photo and film shoots.
- Handled general office management, including mail, email, and appointment scheduling.

#### **Work History**

<b>Editor</b> , Viva Films	1/08 – present
<b>Assistant Coordinator</b> , KCET Donor Relations	6/07 – 9/07
<b>Production Intern</b> , KABC-TV	1/07 – 6/07
<b>Administrative Assistant</b> , Marketing Solutions	6/05 – 12/06

#### **Education**

<b>B.A. in Television, Film &amp; Media Studies</b>	9/08
California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA)	

#### **Co-Curricular Activities**

Vice President, CSULA Film Club; Volunteer, UCLA TV & Film Archives

#### **Computer Skills**

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Sony DNE, Adobe PhotoShop

References available upon request.

## SAMPLE 2 - Reverse Chronological (Graduate)

### **CRYSTAL JONES**

710 E. Hodges Dr. #8 Pasadena, CA 91101 (626) 666-6666 2clj@4link.net

**Master’s-educated electrical engineer with significant web design experience and knowledge in computer hardware, computer communications and systems engineering.**

#### **EDUCATION**

<b>M.S. in Electrical Engineering</b>	6/ 2008
<b>B.S. in Electrical Engineering</b>	3/ 2006
California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA)	

#### **COMPUTER SKILLS**

BASIC, C/C++, MATLAB, Verilog, SPICE, PSPICE, Assembly, Java  
DOS, Windows 95/98/NT/2000/Me/XP, Macintosh OS 7.1+, Sun Workstations  
MS Office, WordPerfect, Microsoft Exchange, Lotus, Filemaker Pro, Adobe Photoshop  
Proficiency with internet, browsers, computer networking, Telnet, FTP

#### **EXPERIENCE**

<b>Web Developer</b> , Charo’s Barbeque Restaurants, Covina, CA	2006-present
➤ Design, test, implement and maintain web site for restaurant chain that also has online mail order business.	
➤ Wrote and updated users manual.	
<b>Intern</b> , NASA Undergraduate Research Program, Pasadena, CA	6 – 9/ 2006
➤ Worked with the computer architecture team on a NGST testbed.	
➤ Analyzed the parallel processing and fault detection on DSP processors.	
➤ Surveyed channel models for designing digital image transmissions.	
<b>Sales Consultant</b> , Planetlink, Inc., South Pasadena, CA	3/2005 – 5/2006
➤ Sold internet services and created new customer accounts.	
➤ Exceeded sales quota 70% of the time.	

<b>Math Tutor</b> , McGreevy Middle School, Los Angeles, CA	10/2004 – 6/2005
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#### **HONORS & MEMBERSHIPS**

Recipient of the Ada I. Pressman Memorial Scholarship  
President, Abacus Computer Society (CSULA)  
Member, IEEE, CSULA Student Chapter  
Member, Society of Women Engineers  
Member, Toastmasters International, CSULA Student Chapter

**REFERENCES** available upon request.

**SAMPLE 3** – Reverse Chronological (Undergraduate)

**SAMPLE 4** - Email Version of Sample 3

**VICTOR VONG**

777 Sierra Vista Way (310) 333-3333  
Los Angeles, California 90032 vgvong33@aol.com

**OBJECTIVE** Entry-level accounting position.

**SUMMARY** Quick learner, detail and success-oriented, deadline-sensitive, motivated, effective problem solver.

**EDUCATION** **B.S. Business Administration** 6/08  
**Option: Accounting**  
California State University, Los Angeles  
GPA - 3.75

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** CPA review course 6/08  
Scheduled for CPA exam 11/08

**RELATED EXPERIENCE** **Accounting Assistant** 7/06 to present  
Gerard’s Furniture, Monterey Park, CA

- Examine inventory level and cost.
- Issue all company checks.
- Post entries into journals, which include sales, purchasing, cash disbursement, insurance, payroll, parts and accessories.
- Process all stages of payroll for hourly and salaried employees, and commissions to salespersons.

**OTHER EXPERIENCE** **Cashier** 1/04 – 11/06  
Gigantic Video, Alhambra, CA

**SPECIAL SKILLS** Bilingual: English/Vietnamese  
Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Quicken

**MEMBERSHIPS** Beta Alpha Psi – Vice President  
Accounting Society

**REFERENCES** Available upon request.

VICTOR VONG  
777 Sierra Vista Way  
Los Angeles, California 90032  
(310) 333-3333  
vgvong33@aol.com

**OBJECTIVE**  
Entry-level accounting position.

**SUMMARY**  
Quick learner, detail and success-oriented, deadline-sensitive, motivated, effective problem-solver.

**EDUCATION**  
B.S. Business Administration, option: Accounting  
California State University, Los Angeles (6/08)  
GPA – 3.75

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
CPA review course (6/08)  
Scheduled for CPA exam (11/08)

**RELATED EXPERIENCE**  
Accounting Assistant (7/06 – present)  
Gerard’s Furniture, Monterey Park, CA  
\*Examine inventory level and cost.  
\*Issue all company checks.  
\*Post entries into journals, which includes sales, purchasing, cash disbursement, insurance, payroll, parts and accessories.  
\*Process all stages of payroll for hourly and salaried employees, and commissions to salespersons.

**OTHER EXPERIENCE**  
Cashier (1/04 – 11/06)  
Gigantic Video, Alhambra, CA

**Continue till end. . .** Remember that although your ‘regular’ resume must fit on one page, your email version can be longer. The reader will scroll down to read it in its entirety.