

RÉSUMÉ WRITING



Career Center

California State University, Los Angeles

www.calstatela.edu/careercenter

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Your résumé is your personal marketing tool, designed to secure an interview. It highlights how your education, skills, and experiences meet an employer's needs. Employers expect résumés to be concise, easy to read, and tailored to each job posting—there's no one-size-fits-all version.

CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION

Contact Information. Your name, phone number, e-mail address (and LinkedIn URL) go at the top of the résumé. Review our résumé samples and observe the various ways you can present this information. Also, be aware that U.S. citizenship may be a requirement for certain positions and should be included when applying to organizations that require it. Federal regulations prohibit employers from making inquiries about age, sex, marital status, disability, race, or religion. Do not include this information on your résumé.

Headline or Summary (optional). A headline lists two to three work areas in which you would like to contribute. The headline appears under your contact information. A summary contains two to three clear and concise statements that summarize your accomplishments. The accomplishments in your summary should include quantifiable evidence of your success, meaning you should include measurable outcomes. The summary appears in a separate section.

Education. List your current or most recent degree program first. If you have not graduated, list the month and year you expect to graduate. Previously earned degrees are listed next. If you have a bachelor's degree, do not list associate degrees, and don't include high school unless you are a freshman. Listing your GPA is optional, but some employers may require it. List any honors or awards you have received, as well as the name of the donor.

Certificates or Certifications. List any professional certificates or certifications that demonstrate your qualifications or specialized training. Include the name of the certificate, issuing organization, and date earned or expected.

Major or Relevant Coursework. If you have little or no experience in your field of interest, you can list two to four relevant course titles in this section. This will inform the reader that you have relevant classroom experience with the subject matter and possess the required skills for the position. Include elective coursework relevant to the position to demonstrate your areas of specialized interest.

Class or Relevant Projects. The projects you do in class demonstrate your ability to perform in the major. You should list class or independent projects relevant to the job. List the name of the class project along with a bullet-point description of the process from beginning to end. Indicate whether it was a personal or team project.

Research, Publications or Presentations. If you have conducted research, authored or professionally presented in your field of interest, include these on your résumé if the experience demonstrates subject matter and skills required by the position.

Work or Relevant Experience. Begin with your most recent experience and include the job title, employer, location of the employer, dates of employment, and your job accomplishments. Include paid work and internships. Include unpaid or significant volunteer experiences if they directly relate to the position you seek. If you have extensive work experience, list those that are relevant to the position you seek.

List three to five bulleted descriptions of your accomplishments for each position. An *accomplishment* is something you achieved, overcame, or contributed to the position. Start each description with an *action verb* to describe the skill you used. (An action verb list is on page two.) Continue with a concise description of the scope of the situation in

which you performed the skill. Conclude with the outcome. If possible, qualify the impact. Remember to list job accomplishments that relate to the job role(s) you are seeking and include the required subject matter and skills.

Volunteer Experience. Indicate the name of the organization, its location, and your role within it. Do not include dates of one-time events; however, you can date experiences that demonstrate committed involvement.

Memberships or Involvement Activities. List the names of professional, community, and campus organizations to which you belong, including offices or leadership positions held.

Skills. Include skills specific to your field and the job role(s) you seek. Skills can include research, business, technology, computer languages, and other languages. Use specific names of tools that you are familiar with, especially if they are required for the position.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

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

- Employers generally prefer résumés that start with the most recent information. However, if you have extensive work experience that is unrelated to the job you are seeking, you may consider creating a résumé that emphasizes skills and areas of expertise that can be transferred to the new position. (A “functional” résumé is in the samples.)
- Do not use personal pronouns (I, me, my). Use correct verb tenses and be consistent.
- Do not put text in a table. Résumé scanning software may not be able to read this information.

VISUAL IMPACT – Employers expect a professional-looking product with a consistent format. Use capitalization and/or bold for emphasis, not italics. Use the same font throughout the résumé. Suggested fonts: Times New Roman or Arial. Also, choose to use 10, 11, or 12 pt. font. Proofread to eliminate spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. If you are printing out your résumé, choose 24+ lb. white, gray, or neutral-colored paper.

Sample Action Words

RÉSUMÉ LENGTH – Your résumé should concisely address the needs of the position. If you have little to no experience in the job role(s) you seek, go for one page. If you have some experience and are advancing in your career, go for two *full* pages.

Customize your Résumé

There are many different résumé formats and no one “right” one. Some different résumé samples follow. But no matter which format you choose, **you must focus on customizing the résumé to the needs of the employer whose job you are applying for.**

How can you do this? Carefully read the job description for the position. Then write the résumé to fit the job requirements, using some of the terminology or “keywords” 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 to 20 seconds scanning your résumé and, in that time, they want to quickly see how you fit the position.)

Other Considerations

Emailing Résumés: When emailing your résumé, don’t forget to include something specific in the subject line, such as “Résumé of Victor Vong, Applicant for Accountant I Position.” If you leave the subject line blank or have a general message, it is unlikely your message will be opened.

What is a CV (curriculum vita)? A CV is a different type of “résumé” required for graduate and professional school admission, as well as job opportunities related to science, research, and education. It is an extensive list of your experiences that contribute to the field. You can adapt your current résumé into a CV by adding three sections: research experience, teaching/tutoring experience, publications, poster presentations, and conference attendance.

Verbs

Accelerated	Contributed	Forecasted
Accompanied	Controlled	Formalized
Accounted	Converted	Formed
Achieved	Cooperated	Fostered
Acquired	Coordinated	Fundraised
Adapted	Correlated	Gathered
Addressed	Corresponded	Generated
Adjusted	Created	Governed
Administered	Cultivated	Grouped
Advanced	Customized	Guided
Advertised	Decided	Handled
Advised	Defined	Headed
Advocated	Delivered	Hired
Allocated	Demonstrated	Identified
Analyzed	Designed	Illustrated
Anticipated	Determined	Implemented
Applied	Developed	Improved
Arranged	Devised	Improvised
Assembled	Directed	Incorporated
Assessed	Discovered	Increased
Assigned	Displayed	Influenced
Assisted	Documented	Informed
Audited	Drafted	Initiated
Authorized	Earned	Innovated
Balanced	Edited	Installed
Briefed	Educated	Instructed
Budgeted	Effected	Integrated
Built	Eliminated	Interpreted
Calculated	Enacted	Interviewed
Catalogued	Encouraged	Invented
Centralized	Enforced	Investigated
Chaired	Engineered	Justified
Changed	Enhanced	Kept
Clarified	Employed	Launched
Classified	Established	Learned
Collaborated	Evaluated	Led
Collected	Exceeded	Licensed
Communicated	Executed	Located
Completed	Exhibited	Logged
Composed	Expanded	Maintained
Conceived	Expedited	Managed
Condensed	Explained	Manufactured
Conducted	Explored	Mapped
Constructed	Facilitated	Marketed
Consulted	Finalized	Mastered
Contracted	Focused	Mediated

Mobilized
Modeled
Modified
Monitored
Motivated
Navigated
Negotiated
Observed
Obtained
Officiated
Operated
Orchestrated
Ordered
Organized
Outlined
Oversaw
Participated
Perceived
Performed
Persuaded
Piloted
Planned
Prepared
Prioritized
Processed
Procured
Produced
Programmed
Projected

Promoted
Proposed
Proved
Provided
Publicized
Published
Purchased
Quantified
Realized
Recommended
Reconciled
Recruited
Reinforced
Reorganized
Reported
Researched
Resolved
Responded
Revamped
Reviewed
Revised
Scheduled
Screened
Secured
Selected
Served
Simplified
Solved
Spearheaded

Specialized
Staffed
Streamlined
Strengthened
Structured
Studied
Supervised
Supplied
Supported
Surveyed
Synthesized
Tabulated
Tailored
Targeted
Taught
Tested
Trained
Transferred
Translated
Troubleshoot
Tutored
Updated
Upgraded
Used
Utilized
Verified
Volunteered

Adjectives

Active
Capable
Collaborative
Conscientious
Creative
Dedicated
Dependable
Detail-oriented
Determined
Distinctive

Educated
Effective
Efficient
Exceptional
Experienced
Goal-oriented
Honest
Inquisitive
Notable
Practical

Productive
Proficient
Punctual
Reasonable
Reliable
Responsive
Substantial
Useful
Vital

SAMPLE 1: COLLEGE RÉSUMÉ

JAMAL S. HARRIS

Case Management – Community Resource Advocate
Los Angeles, CA (323) 333-3333 jamalharris@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Option in Inequalities and Diversity May 2027
California State University, Los Angeles GPA 3.5

CERTIFICATES

Project Management, LinkedIn Learning Jun 2025

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Social Policy, Inequity & Non-Traditional Families Sociology of Human Rights
Social Class and Inequality Environmental Policy, Law & Society

PROJECTS

Equity Assessment and Community Empowerment Initiative Jan 2024 – Present
Conduct a community analysis, focusing on education, healthcare, housing, and employment, to identify existing inequalities. Gather and analyze data on demographic disparities and socioeconomic factors to inform policy decisions. Facilitate a post-project assessment of impact, evaluating changes in community perceptions.

Community Diversity Dialogue Oct 2023 - Dec 2023
Fostered connections among community members from various backgrounds, creating an inclusive environment where people felt comfortable discussing their experiences. Empowered individuals to work collectively to address inequalities by bridging divides and building empathy.

EXPERIENCE

Homelessness Advocacy and Support Intern Sep 2023 - Present
Nonprofit Organization for Homelessness Assistance | Los Angeles, CA
Directly assist homeless individuals, including distributing food, clothing, and hygiene products. Assist in organizing and facilitating support group sessions, where homeless individuals can share their experiences, seek emotional support, and discuss potential solutions to their challenges.

ORGANIZATIONS

Vice President Jan 2023 - Oct 2023
Sociology Student Association
Led meetings, coordinated events, and fostered a sense of community among sociology students. Initiated and organized a successful panel discussion on "Social Inequalities and Community Empowerment" with notable guest speakers, attracting over 100 attendees and creating a platform for discussion and networking.

SKILLS

Research: Narrative Research, Participant Observation, Survey Design
Communication: Active Listening, Conflict Resolution and Prevention
Technology: Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), MATLAB, Qualtrics

SAMPLE 2: COLLEGE RÉSUMÉ WITH SUMMARY

ISABELLA ROMERO

(310) 111-1111
isabellaromero95@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/isaromero95

SUMMARY

Bilingual accounting graduate student with experience supporting payroll, inventory costing, and bookkeeping processes for multiple departments, ensuring compliance and accuracy across 200+ transactions monthly.

EDUCATION

M.B.A. Business Administration Jun. 2024
Option: Accounting
California State University, Los Angeles

B.S. Business Administration Jun. 2018
Option: Accounting
California State University, Los Angeles

RELATED COURSEWORK

State and Local Taxation; Government and Institutional Accounting, Accounting Information Systems

PROJECTS

"The Profitability of New Technology
Technology Platforms for Inventory Management"
Developed cost/benefit analysis and pilot plans to determine whether Walgreens should invest in new technology platforms for inventory management. Team project for senior capstone course.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Accounting Assistant Jul. 2018 – present
Chem Arrow Corp, Irwindale, CA
• 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.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program
Prepared and filed tax returns for individuals who make \$53,000 or less.

SKILLS

Bilingual: English/Spanish
Microsoft Excel and Access, QuickBooks, EPayroll

SAMPLE 3: FUNCTIONAL RÉSUMÉ

VICTOR VONG

Los Angeles, CA

(555) 555-5555

vvong33@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science
California State University, Los Angeles

Spring 2022
GPA 3.25

HIGHLIGHTS OF EXPERIENCE

Administrative Support

- Assisted the executive director on all scheduling matters by proactively checking for schedule conflicts and coordinating changes that were convenient for clients
- Created a work schedule with deadlines and task delegation to ensure the project consistently moved forward and was completed on time

Customer Service and Communications

- Answered 50+ phone calls per day and directed customers to the appropriate resources, and was repeatedly commended for excellent customer service skills and attention to detail
- Presented to 40+ scholars on the economic factors of voter suppression and fielded a Q&A session to facilitate a group discussion on highlighted issues

Leadership

- Trained 5 employees on procedures and created onboarding materials to smooth their transition
- Co-created a wellness program to promote employee health and well-being

Research

- Researched 15 peer-reviewed articles on voter suppression for the program manager
- Utilized Microsoft Excel to manage data collection and generate visual data reports to inform the community of voter engagement needs

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Accounting Assistant, The XYZ Company

Jan. 2016 – Mar. 2019

Canvasser, Get Out the Vote Inc.

Apr. 2015 – Dec. 2016

Front Office Assistant, Customer Service Depot of America

Feb. 2013 – Feb. 2015

PRESENTATIONS

Political Science in the 21st Century, Conference of American Studies

May 2018

SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint, Qualtrics, GnatPro

Languages: Bilingual Spanish/English

SAMPLE 4: COMBINATION RÉSUMÉ

WEI LI

weili33@yahoo.com

(310) 111-1111

linkedin.com/in/weili33

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communication, Cal State LA

Jun. 2023

GRAPHIC DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Graphic Design Intern

Jun. 2021 – Aug. 2021

Sony Entertainment, Inc., Culver City, CA

- Assisted in the transfer from sketch to digital design of marketing posters for music artist promotional campaigns
- Photographed Sony outreach events to enhance community relations and shared stories in social and print media marketing
- Abided by image licensing procedures to prevent legality issues

Project Team Member

Jan. 2020 – Mar. 2020

Animation 2032, Cal State LA Department of Graphic Design, Los Angeles, CA

- Edited group sketches and transferred them to digital forms while maintaining digital and visual accessibility compliance

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Vice President

Sep. 2021 – Present

Cal State LA Marketing Club, Los Angeles, CA

- Set club meeting agenda through membership surveys to address the needs of the group
- Invite guest speakers to discuss leadership experience and promote professional development

Volunteer

Mar. 2019 – Aug. 2019

Young Adults Health First, Alhambra, CA

- Lead a group of 3 outreach specialists in AAPI neighborhoods to decrease youth stigma about mental health
- Created original marketing materials to motivate youth to engage

AWARDS

Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship

2019

Employee of the Month, Pizza Hut

Nov. 2018

SKILLS

Computer: Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Lightroom, Microsoft Suite

Languages: Fluent in Spanish and basic knowledge of Mandarin Chinese